

# **BusinessWorld** *in-depth*

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## **TRUST CONSCIOUSNESS WEEK**

TRUST: RESHAPING THE INDUSTRY THROUGH INNOVATION





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# Innovation, a key driver of the trust industry

By **Bjorn Biel M. Beltran**, *Special Features and Content Assistant Editor*, BusinessWorld

**T**rust is the cornerstone of banking and financial services. Even in ancient Mesopotamia, when trade and barter was the primary economic model for civilization, temples acted as the repositories for agricultural goods and precious metals, because people trusted their religious leaders to protect their valuables and facilitate equitable lending transactions in the form of grain loans or commodity exchanges.

In the Middle Ages, as merchants started to need safer means of wealth storage and long-

distance commerce, the earliest establishments most resembling the banks of today rose to prominence, such as the famous Medici Bank in Italy and the Fugger Bank in Germany, alongside innovations like sophisticated bookkeeping and paper currencies.

Now in the digital age, innovation once again fuels the engine of progress in the financial industry, nurturing greater trust between financial institutions, their clients, and broader market participants, by enhancing efficiency, transparency, security, and accessibility.

Dr. Robert B. Ramos, CFA, CAIA, president and chief executive officer (CEO) of RCBC Trust Corp.,



said that their clients' habits have been shifting towards digital since the digital transformation took off in the industry a few years ago.

"The use of digital platforms and other electronic means for account opening, order-taking, report generation and investment portfolio monitoring is becoming the norm especially for retail clients," he said in an interview with *BusinessWorld*.

Naturally, this change in consumer demand led to a reevaluation of their strategy. Dr. Ramos explained that the shift to digitalization has not only changed the way they sell their products and process their transactions, but it fundamentally changed how they interact with their clients. "Providing our clients with a convenient and effortless way to access investment products has always been a top priority for us," he said.

"A number of our client meetings are now held virtually. This enables us to 'e-meet' and to discuss our services with several clients in a day. Further, more clients prefer to do their investments online now rather than going to the branch or submitting hardcopy documents," he said.

Ms. Maria Theresa Marcial, president and CEO of BPI Wealth, shared similar comments,

**"We innovate because we always want to elevate the customer experience to the next level. Through our recent innovations, we have improved access to our products and made the process of onboarding virtually 'painless.'"**

saying that major players in the industry have been upgrading their digital platforms to become more intuitive, aesthetic, and make financial content more accessible to the general public.

"More than refreshing the look, the aim is to make content more understandable for those who may not have extensive financial expertise," she said, adding that technologies like artificial intelligence (AI) have been a great boon towards streamlining and enhancing their client services.

"We innovate because we always want to elevate the customer experience to the next level. Through our recent innovations, we have improved access to our products and made the process of onboarding virtually 'painless.' Our turnaround times for transactions have also been significantly shortened. There is an increase in transparency since portfolios can be monitored real-time and reports can be generated online. All these enhanced trust and confidence among our clients," Dr. Ramos added.

On new technologies, Ms. Marcial mentioned that robotic process automation combined with AI in advanced data analytics could potentially enable the handling of large datasets, identification of patterns, and generation of financial insights, ultimately allowing account officers to offer more tailored advice and investment solutions for their clients.

Mr. Raffy Ayuste, former chief trust officer at BDO Unibank, Inc., echoed the sentiment: "AI undoubtedly will have an immense impact on the trust business in the country. It's a reality in trust services as the technology continues to evolve and deepen to provide meaningful results and widen its reach. The major impact will be much felt in the investment advisory aspect."

"It will provide more personalized financial advisory options, given clients' situations and preferences, than what is currently in place in the local market. It will provide better guidance in the generation of return on investments," he added.

Essentially, as the financial landscape continuously adapts to meet changing





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consumer expectations, innovation has become even more compelling, particularly at a time when emergent technology like AI is improving at a lightning-fast pace.

Much has been discussed about the benefits of digitalization towards the pursuit of broader financial inclusion, as the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas has made it a goal to create a digital financial ecosystem with “the right mix and range of financial service providers, digital solutions and delivery channels to promote the efficiency and reach of financial products and services.”

The effort has been paying off. According to BSP Governor Eli M. Remolona, Jr., 65% of the adult population have bank accounts in 2022, up from about 56% of all adults in 2021, and even higher from the 29% recorded in 2019.

This translates to about 22 million Filipinos having gained access to formal financial accounts between 2019 and 2021, driven by accelerated growth of digital payments. In addition, the share of digital payment transactions reached 42% in 2022, from 30.3% in 2021.

Under its Digital Payments Transformation Roadmap, the BSP aims to digitize 50% of total retail transactions and onboard at least 70% of Filipino adults to the financial system by the end of 2023.

“Yes, we are gaining ground, but there is still so much more that we can do,” Mr. Remolona had said.

Technologies like AI promise to transform the landscape even more, breaking down conventional barriers and empowering individuals to participate in the formal economy, thus fostering inclusivity and trust in the system’s ability to serve diverse needs.


AI, according to Dr. Ramos, can be applied in anything from account onboarding, building an investment portfolio, rebalancing a portfolio, and report generation, among others.

“It can also help in slicing and dicing market segments so we can push the appropriate products to clients who actually need them. The possible applications of AI are endless and the industry needs to be able to capitalize on this to be able to compete,” he said.

Ms. Marcial said that unrelenting digitalization will only serve to improve customer experience, making investment processes transparent and understandable, thus building trust and confidence in the services provided.

“The integration of digital technologies, automation, a forward-thinking workforce, and a redefined advisory role collectively contributes to enhancing trust and confidence in the trust and asset management industry,” she said.

A technological revolution in banking is underway, and it will not be limited to these technologies either. As advancements such as blockchain, biometric authentication, and AI-driven fraud detection become more prevalent, consumers can expect heightened security, transparency, and truly personalized experiences from their trusted financial partners.

Not only can the integration of these technologies forge deeper relationships between banks and their clients, it will foster a banking environment where trust is not only upheld but strengthened—an environment where consumers are empowered, confident, and included in the country’s economic development. 





# BPI Wealth Leads the Way in Product and Digital innovation

BPI Wealth, the wealth management arm of the Bank of the Philippine Islands (BPI), stands out as a beacon of innovation and trust continuously pushing boundaries to provide client-centric products and services.

**"At BPI Wealth, we are not just innovating products; Our commitment to innovation drives us to create investment solutions that cater to the evolving needs of our clients. We strive to deliver excellence in every aspect of our business, setting us apart as leaders in the industry."** Noted Maria Theresa D. Marcial, President and CEO of BPI Wealth.

Over the years, BPI Wealth has remained steadfast in its commitment to go beyond traditional investment products through its a range of pioneering funds. A recent testament to this was the launch of the BPI Sustainable Fund Suite in 2022, a first in the industry. This suite stands out with its multi-theme investment strategy, providing investors with access to various offshore funds that integrate environmental, social, and governance (ESG) criteria, along with various sustainability-related themes in their investment process. Aligned with BPI Wealth's diversification strategy, the Fund Suite includes the BPI Sustainable Global Bond Fund-of-Funds, BPI Sustainable Global Balanced Fund-of-Funds, and BPI Sustainable Global Equity Fund-of-Funds. These funds, utilizing a fund-of-funds structure, invest in portfolios carefully selected from global target funds associated with global leaders in asset management and sustainable investing such as Janus Henderson Investors, Schroder Investment Management, Wellington Management, JP Morgan Asset Management, and PIMCO that adhere to the highest ESG standards or directly involved in sustainability projects. These funds allow us to provide investment alternatives, particularly to our institutional investors seeking long-term stability through companies that exhibit resilience and forward-thinking.

To continue the promotion of sustainable investing in the Philippines, BPI Wealth will launch the Philippine Peso Class of sustainable global investments using the local currency.

In 2023, BPI Wealth launched its groundbreaking Multi Family Office solution, another pioneering initiative in the country, providing our High Net Worth clients with expert wealth planners for multi-faceted aspects of family governance, including investment management, legal advisory, structuring, documentation, and comprehensive planning of short and long-term goals. This personalized end-to-end solution underscores BPI Wealth's dedication to exceptional client service.

In the same year, BPI Wealth adopted a digital-first approach with its fully digital account opening platform ensuring a seamless customer journey from account enrollment to suitability assessment to making an initial subscription for as low as PHP 1,000 for Peso-denominated funds and USD 100 for Dollar-denominated funds. BPI Clients may conveniently open an investment account through BPI's future-ready mobile app with AI-powered personal finance insights to help clients stay on track in the management of their finances.

To complement these innovations, customers can now inquire about investments from BPI's BEA chatbot which provides 24/7 customer support. This chatbot not only enhances customer experience but also reflects BPI's commitment to providing convenient and accessible financial services.

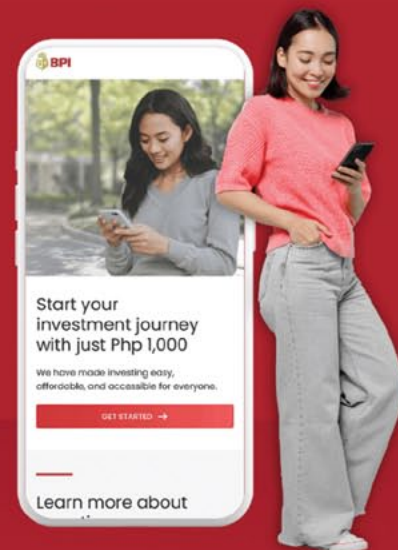
Overall, these digital advancements not only streamline processes but also demonstrate BPI Wealth's commitment to innovation and customer-centricity, setting it apart in the competitive landscape.

Ms. Marcial concludes, **"At BPI Wealth, we are shaping the future of investing. Our relentless pursuit of innovation and excellence underscores our commitment to delivering unparalleled value to our clients, empowering them to live their best life."**

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## MESSAGE

**O**ur warmest greetings to the Trust Officers Association of the Philippines. We, in the government, recognize your immense role as one of our reliable partners in building a resilient and robust financial landscape.

We convey our utmost support as you observe the annual Trust Consciousness Week with a series of information-sharing activities that is geared towards public awareness for the trust industry and the products and services it provides.

May the discussions and ideas that will emerge from this gathering encourage the investing public to monitor the emerging trends and evolving demands of the local and global markets. With your proficiency and expertise in fiduciary responsibilities, we are certain to be on track towards a more inclusive, impactful, and productive fiscal environment that is conducive to the overall upliftment of the Filipino citizenry.

We wish you a successful and engaging event. 



  
**FERDINAND R. MARCOS, JR.**  
*President*  
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## MESSAGE


**P**lease accept my warmest greetings to the Trust Officers Association of the Philippines (TOAP) on its celebration of the Annual Trust Consciousness Week.

This annual event geared towards raising public awareness for the trust industry and the products and services TOAP members provide is an important public advocacy to build financial literacy among our people.

Aligned with this year's theme: "Trust: Reshaping the Industry through Innovation," the Department of Finance (DoF) joins TOAP's mission of revolutionizing the financial landscape, not only through embracing digital transformation but also through pioneering innovative approaches to deliver more secure, affordable, and accessible investment opportunities to all Filipinos.

Broadening public participation in the financial system is key to achieving a more inclusive economy. With this, I ask TOAP to continue supporting our ongoing efforts to simplify the tax structure on passive income, financial products, and its transactions in order to promote more attractive and dependable investment products available for small savers.

Rest assured, the DOF will continue fostering a stronger economy conducive to investing by bringing in more investments that create high-quality jobs for Filipinos, ensuring ample liquidity in the financial system, and strengthening local capital markets.

Together, let us build a future where every Filipino has the opportunity to participate actively and prosper within our financial landscape. 



  
**RALPH G. RECTO**  
*Secretary*  
**Department of Finance**





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## MESSAGE

**T**he Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas joins the Trust Officers Association of the Philippines (TOAP) on the celebration of the Trust Consciousness Week.

The Bangko Sentral supports the deepening of the Philippine capital markets to strengthen the transmission mechanism of monetary policy and to diversify the sources of financing for our economy. We consider the trust industry as an important contributor toward this objective. As the industry continues to grow, the ability of trust entities to channel client funds into productive enterprises through investment in domestic debt and equity securities becomes ever more essential. We count on the membership of the TOAP to be prudent and judicious in your investment decisions on behalf of your clients.

Your theme for this year, “Trust: Reshaping the Industry Through Innovation,” recognizes the need for the trust industry to continue to change with the times, as you have over the past 60 years. The BSP supports this thrust, as it continues to enhance the regulatory environment to ensure that it is conducive to digital transformation, product and process innovation, and the sustainable growth of the trust industry.

The BSP is confident that the changes that you will pursue will always be accompanied by good governance and effective risk management, and that these are done in the best interests of the public that you serve.

Here’s to a fruitful Trust Consciousness Week! 



  
**ELI M. REMOLONA, JR.**  
*Governor*  
**Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas**






## MESSAGE

**M**y warm greetings and earnest felicitations to the Trust Officers Association of the Philippines (TOAP) as it celebrates this year's Trust Consciousness Week. I commend your organization's incessant work in professionalizing the trust and asset management industry in our country. The theme for this year, "Trust: Reshaping the Industry Through Innovation", urges our industry leaders and professionals to stay at the forefront of emerging trends by being proactive and adaptive in embracing technology and innovation for a more resilient and sustainable future.

With the constant advancement in technology, shifting regulatory landscapes, and changing consumer behaviors, it is crucial for the trust companies to adapt and evolve in order to meet the needs and expectations of their clients. By utilizing technologies, the trust industry can streamline processes, reduce costs, and enhance risk management. Technology can also help expand financial inclusion by reaching underserved populations through digital platforms, thus promoting a more inclusive and sustainable economy.

As we move forward, I have faith that TOAP will remain as a partner of the Insurance Commission in raising the financial literacy and awareness among our countrymen. Your organization's mission runs parallel with our aim to educate our people on the importance of various financial instruments and services that can help secure their future. Together, let us work towards the realization of a financially-inclusive and progressive society for the Filipinos.

Congratulations and *Mabuhay!* 



  
**REYNALDO A. REGALADO**  
*Commissioner*  
**Insurance Commission**

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## MESSAGE


**C**ongratulations to the Trust Officers Association of the Philippines (TOAP) as it celebrates Trust Consciousness Week.

This year's theme - "Trust: Reshaping the Industry Through Innovation" - is apt as the fiduciary business is ever evolving. It is imperative for trust entities to continue to innovate and develop financial products and services suitable to your customers' changing needs. We remind the industry that successful innovation includes harnessing technological advancements to increase efficiency in the delivery of financial services and improve the entirety of the customer experience.

The BSP commends the initiatives of the TOAP to enhance public awareness on financial, retirement, and estate planning solutions that the trust industry offers. We hope that the social media campaigns on unit investment trust funds and the personal equity and retirement account spur increased participation in these products. We also look forward to further TOAP programs geared toward increasing financial literacy and education among Filipinos.

I wish the TOAP success in its Trust Consciousness Week celebration. Cheers for your 60 years of service to the investing public! 🍷



  
**CHUCHI G. FONACIER**  
*Deputy Governor*  
 Financial Supervision Sector  
**Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas**

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## MESSAGE

**W**armest greetings from the Trust Officers Association of the Philippines!

The trust industry marked a noteworthy achievement by the close of 2023, with its assets under management reaching a milestone of over ₱6 trillion, specifically at ₱6.22 trillion. This accomplishment is highlighted by a robust double-digit growth of 16.3% year-on-year and a compounded annual growth rate (CAGR) of 12.8% over the past five years.


In today's rapidly evolving financial landscape, the concept of trust plays a pivotal role in shaping the industry and influencing the way we conduct business. As trust professionals, we understand the fundamental importance of trust - not just in our relationships with clients, but also in our commitment to upholding the highest ethical standards and driving innovation within the industry.

The theme for this year's Trust Consciousness Week, "Trust: Reshaping the Industry Through Innovation", embodies the core principles that guide us as we navigate the complex challenges and opportunities in the trust banking sector. Innovation is the catalyst that propels us forward, enabling us to adapt to changing market dynamics, harness emerging technologies, and deliver value-added solutions to our clients.

By embracing innovation, we have the power to reshape the industry landscape, redefine traditional practices, and unlock new possibilities for growth and success. Whether through digital transformation, product development, or enhanced customer experiences, innovation enables us to stay ahead of the curve, differentiate ourselves in the market, and elevate the standards of excellence in trust banking.

I invite my fellow trust professionals to reflect on the role of trust and innovation in our work, and to consider how we can contribute to reshaping the industry for the better. Let us engage in meaningful dialogue, exchange insights and best practices, and collaborate on ways to drive positive change and transformation within the trust banking sector.

Together, we have the opportunity to redefine industry standards, shape the future of trust banking, and leave a lasting legacy of innovation and trust. Let us seize every opportunity to inspire one another, challenge the status quo, and embark on a journey towards a more innovative, resilient, and trusted industry.

Thank you for your dedication, passion, and commitment to excellence. Together, we can reshape the industry through innovation and reaffirm the fundamental importance of trust in all that we do. 



  
**STEVEN C. TE**  
*President*

**Trust Officers Association of  
the Philippines**

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## MESSAGE

**T**he Trust Institute Foundation of the Philippines extends its greetings and best wishes to the TOAP for a successful observance of the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in the recent Trust Industry Convention at the Samal Discovery. We also wish you all the best in this year's observance of Trust Consciousness Week.

The TIFP, with full support of its original founding institutions and its faculty members, remains committed to providing the kind of education and training that aspiring trust practitioners will need in serving trust clients professionally.

The TIFP is confident that graduates of our full-year course on Trust Operations and Investment Management will be instrumental in enriching the lives of their clients and constituents with the use of relevant trust arrangements and proper investments.

The Trust Consciousness Week is really a time for the public to take advantage of the information and online briefings made available on digital platforms.

Again, our congratulations to our colleagues and partners in this year's celebration especially the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, and our best wishes to the investing public. 



**ROBERTO S. VERGARA**

*Executive Director*

**Trust Institute Foundation of  
the Philippines**





# Trust's remarkable evolution in the Philippine financial landscape

By **Angela Kiara S. Brillantes**,  
*Special Features  
and Content Writer,*  
BusinessWorld

**B**anking is a fundamental aspect of the economy. It provides financial security among individuals, businesses, and government agencies to manage their finances, investments, and loans.

Throughout the years, prominent drivers of the sector have contributed to the growth of banking. Among these drivers is trust services which not only develop financial health but also cater to the growing demand for services that goes beyond safekeeping, borrowing, and lending.

The trust industry is a key driver to financial stability in the Philippines. As the country's credit and investment rating improved in recent years, the business of trust has become more important than ever.

To ensure better quality financial services and contribute to the development of capital markets in the country, the Trust Officers Association of the Philippines (TOAP) was founded in 1964; and since then it has been at the forefront of financial management and services.

In its earlier years, the association focused on managing court trusts, land registrations,



and selective trust funds; and later on, as the business of trust began to grow, TOAP played a wider role in further pioneering the Philippine financial services sector.

Since its inception, the association has been working closely with the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) to further promote trust, investment, and fiduciary services in the Philippine market.

“The trust industry today has transformed significantly since its entry into the local financial system at the start of the 20th century. Although the development of the trust concept was slow in the beginning, the local trust business has steadily evolved to reach a level comparable to its counterparts in the Southeast Asian region in terms of structure, investor sophistication, and product offerings,” TOAP said in its 50th anniversary coffee table book.

Through the years, TOAP has seen a lot of changes, one of which is embracing digital transformation for investments. Since the pandemic hit the Philippines, the trust industry has adapted to new ways of working and doing business/es. The pandemic has driven hybrid and digital forms in work and transactions, which places an even stronger emphasis on enhancing services to clients using digital tools.

“As the economy re-opened post-pandemic, we are now seeing a combination of return to physical engagement and higher digital usage as compared to pre-pandemic,” Mr. Rafael G. Ayuste, Jr., former chief trust officer of BDO Unibank, Inc., shared. “Also, more and more trust entities are providing seamless digital investment transactions thus giving the investing public more options, variety and flexibility.”

At present, the investment landscape

**“Although the development of the trust concept was slow in the beginning, the local trust business has steadily evolved to reach a level comparable to its counterparts in the Southeast Asian region in terms of structure, investor sophistication, and product offerings.”**

offers many options that are designed to address consumers’ financial needs. Unit investment trust fund (UITF), for instance, is a type of investment pool that distributes an individual’s investments in a portfolio of securities like stocks, bonds, or money market instruments.

As financial markets evolve, investment opportunities grow as well. Different types of UITFs can be explored,

such as global funds that focus on global investments, feeder funds that pool money from multiple investors and invest in a master fund, and other arrangements, including investment management account (IMA) for purely investing purposes, and personal management trust (PMT) that allow clients to control their assets and provide for their beneficiaries even beyond their lifetime. These products and arrangements open the door for the Philippines to access and invest in various financial markets.

TOAP has been a witness to bringing these tools closer to Filipinos. Dr. Robert B. Ramos, president and CEO of RCBC Trust Corp., recalled that TOAP worked closely with the BSP to expand UITF structures and thus made significant progress in that regard. Such progress includes the use of banking technology, which changed the game for the sector. For instance, digital banking simplifies access to financial transactions using the internet and mobile devices, anytime and anywhere, removing the need to go to a physical branch.

Since post-pandemic, as the overall economy regains momentum, TOAP has been quickly evolving. According to TOAP data, the Philippine Trust AUM saw an increase from P5.35 trillion in 2022 to P6 trillion as of third quarter of 2023. These figures bear witness



to how the association continues to be a great champion in addressing the investment needs of investors.

In line with this objective, Mr. Ayuste also shared that the association is continuously working with regulators to improve the regulatory framework, collaborating with industry players to develop top-quality products and practices, and keeping Filipino investors informed of industry developments and the benefits they can expect from these changes and initiatives.

### **HARMONIZING WHILST MITIGATING RISKS**

These developments notwithstanding, the trust industry faces its own set of challenges. The primary issues stem from the increasing competition posed by brokerage houses, treasury departments, fintech, and other investment structures, as Mr. Ayuste shared.

To address such risks, TOAP is working closely with regulators to boost the industry's position in the market.

"TOAP continues to work with regulators to strengthen trust industry's dominant position in the market by improving products and services as well as simplifying rules and regulations to improve efficiency and productivity. Given the highly regulated nature of the trust industry, we have seen institutions veering away from the trust structure and using the brokerage model," Mr. Ayuste said.

To do this, the association is also taking part in legislative decisions to standardize investment structures.

"The harmonization of the rules and regulations across different regulations and regulators have been in the works for quite some time now but this goal remains to be just a plan," Mr. Ayuste added. "The harmonization is crucial to ensure leveled playing fields among the market players to enable best-in-class products for the benefit of the investing consumers."

Another challenge in the market lies within global events and their potential impact on the Philippine economy. Dr. Ramos believes that industry players must strive to mitigate such risks by guiding clients towards diversifying their portfolios. By doing so, it will help them better manage potential risks.

### **NEXT STEPS FOR TRUST**

Moving forward, the sector remains optimistic about how the industry will continue to grow in the following years. With the increased interest in investing, the importance of digital investment channels will become more prominent.

According to Dr. Ramos, the association will need to keep abreast of and keep adjusting to fast changes, such as in how and where consumers get their content, to drive growth in the trust industry.

"Adapt to different market conditions, changing regulatory frameworks, a more global financial marketplace, and shifting client preferences," he advised. "TOAP members have to use the new tools that we have available to serve our clients better and serve them through the channels they prefer to use."

Moreover, the industry will continue to thrive as the economy grows. "The increasing wealth of the Filipinos should provide the industry with solid ground to push trust as the dominant platform for wealth management in the Philippines. Already, we are seeing more players in the wealth management arena using trust as its platform," Mr. Ayuste said.

"To this end, TOAP should push for more definitive regulations that serve the needs of the more sophisticated investors. This market requires greater access to the global investment opportunities that they get from their off-shore bankers. This market is very ripe for the picking, but regulations must be able to distinguish between protecting the ordinary Filipino investors and the needs of the sophisticated Filipino investors," he added.





# The Trust Institute Foundation of the Philippines

**T**he Philippine Trust Institute was established in 1977 to create a venue which would formally educate trust practitioners further about the concepts of trusts and investments. It has since then become the educational arm of the Trust industry and the Trust Officers Association of the Philippines (TOAP). The only established institution for trust education in the country, it would later change its name to Trust Institute Foundation of the Philippines (TIFP) in 1993.

To carry out the objectives of the TIFP, the One-Year Course on Trust Operations and Investment Management was formulated. The course is divided into two semesters. The first semester deals with the fundamentals of the various trust arrangements and the legal environment under which they are established and carried out. The second semester is about the services rendered by trust departments in order to fulfill their duties under the various arrangements learned in the previous semester. Since the second semester builds on the first, participants achieve a more



**The One-Year Course on Trust Operations and Investment Management is divided into two semesters. The first semester deals with the fundamentals of the various trust arrangements and the underlying legal environment, while the second semester is about the services rendered by trust departments.**

systematic view and learning if they are enrolled for both semesters and in the order given.

Classes were originally held at the old Ateneo Graduate School along Fr. Horacio V. De La Costa, S.J. Street, in Makati, until the first semester of 1998 and later transferred venue at the AIM Conference Center along Benavidez corner Trasierra Streets, Legaspi Village, Makati City. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, classes and examinations were held online, and we continue to do so in order to accommodate participants in the provinces who need not travel every week to attend the classes. Conducting these sessions are seasoned trust officers from various banks, other trust practitioners, fund or investment managers, and other professionals in related fields. This program runs for three hours every Saturday, a total of forty sessions, including examinations.

As a testament to its being acknowledged as an effective training venue particularly for trust practitioners, no less than the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP), recognizes the completion of the one-year course in TIFP as additional requirement for would-be Trust Officers. (BSP Circular 655 describes the qualifications of

a Trust Officer. In lieu of at least five years actual experience in trust operations, one may have only three years of actual experience but must have completed a one-year training program acceptable to the BSP.)

When the Unit Investment Trust Fund (UITF) was introduced in the market, the BSP issued BSP Circular No. 447 which required all marketing personnel who will handle the sale of the UITF to undergo the Standardized Training Program which was offered by the TIFP in cooperation with the TOAP. The institute conducted twenty-one (21) batches since 2004 and submitted to BSP a total of six hundred twenty-three (623) Certified UITF Trainors as of Sept. 15, 2015. In coordination with the BSP, the institute came up with a revised module of the UITF Certification Program, renamed Enhanced UITF Certification Program, which includes changes/revisions in the BSP Circulars affecting the UITF. The institute has offered a total of nine (9) batches of the enhanced program and has submitted to the BSP a total of three hundred eighty-one (381) Certified UITF Certified Sales Persons as of Aug. 31, 2018. The new UITF Certification Program (UCP) is now in place where TOAP has been designated to handle the

on-line examinations for would-be UITF Certified Sales Persons. The examinations are based on the revised TIFP curriculum as prescribed by the BSP. For its part, the TIFP may come up with UCP Review Classes on-line, as needed by constituents and practitioners.

Starting with but a few students during its early days — an initial enrollment of eighteen (18) students — today the institute is proud to have three thousand five hundred three (3,503) graduates coming from, to name a few, the banking and non-banking sectors, investment institutions, government regulatory bodies, food and beverage corporations, manufacturing firms, the House of Representatives, SSS, PNOC, AFP-RSBS, AFP-SLAI, law firms, insurance companies, actuarial sector, and educational institutions, either as part of their employer's training program or as individuals on their own simply in pursuit of additional knowledge towards self-development.


The current batch of the Online One-Year Course on Trust Operations and Investment Management (School Year 2023-2024) officially started last July 29, 2023, with one hundred twenty-eight (128) enrollees from various banking and non-banking institutions. With the One-Year Course conducted online, the TIFP gets enrollees from the provinces, who do not have to travel to Manila to attend the course.

The institute is now accepting enrollees for the next batch (2024-2025) which will start on July 27,

**As it enters its forty-seventh year, TIFP is gearing up to handle more students in its trust school and provide more seminar modules, thus allowing it to inch closer to its lofty goal of providing excellence in trust education.**

2024, and will run until May 30, 2025. For inquiries, please email us at [trust\\_institute1977@yahoo.com](mailto:trust_institute1977@yahoo.com) or [ofiejunio@yahoo.com](mailto:ofiejunio@yahoo.com).

The institute hopes to carry on with its activities with more vigor and enthusiasm in the years to come. As it enters its forty-seventh year, it is gearing up to handle more students in its trust school and provide more seminar modules, thus allowing it to inch closer to its lofty goal of providing excellence in trust education.

Looking back at the vision of its founders, led by the late Victorio T. Gomez, then trust officer of Solidbank, and the late Atty. Lauro J. Jocson, then vice-president and trust officer of Prudential Bank, TIFP has gone a long way in its 46 years of existence. 





TRUST INSTITUTE FOUNDATION OF THE PHILIPPINES, INC.  
**EDUCATION COMMITTEE**



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Former Chief Trust Officer  
*Metropolitan Bank & Trust Company*



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Former Chief Trust Officer  
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**OFELIA R. JUNIO**  
*TIFP Administrator*

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## TRUST CONSCIOUSNESS WEEK 2024: CALENDAR OF EVENTS

DATE	ACTIVITY
March 18, 2024 (Monday)	<b>Trust Consciousness Week Supplement Release (BusinessWorld) &amp; start of display of TOAP TCW Banner</b>
March 20, 2024 (Wednesday)	<p><b>Free Public Online Seminar</b>  <b>@03:00pm - Innovations in Investments</b>  Mark Jasson C. Ilao, CFA, CIPM  Head of Market Education for Wealth Management  GCash Philippines</p> <p><b>@04:00pm - Personal Equity Retirement Account (PERA)</b>  Danielle M. Tonel, Deputy Director and Group Head  Capital Markets and Trust Supervision Department  Financial Supervision Sector  Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP)</p>
March 21, 2024 (Thursday)	<p><b>Free Online Seminar</b>  <b>@02:00pm - Macroeconomic Outlook</b>  Tamara Henderson, South East Asia Economist  Bloomberg</p>
March 22, 2024 (Friday)	<b>Election of 2024-2025 TOAP Board of Directors/ TOAP General Membership Meeting</b>







FREEPIK

# 60 and beyond: Continuing TOAP milestones

By **Gina D. Lumauig**, *Contributor*

**T**he Trust Officers Association of the Philippines (TOAP), a professional organization that aims to professionalize and promote the trust and investment industry in the Philippines, has been at the helm for six decades this year.

Bestowed with the highest fiduciary mandate, TOAP continues to actively contribute to the development of capital markets, promoting the interest of its clients and the investing public, while thriving as part of a dynamic sector in the Philippine financial system.

## FROM EVOLUTION TO INNOVATION

Established in 1964 by a group of trust practitioners with the objective of uniting and growing the Philippine trust and investment management industry through professionalization and promotion, the industry was, by then, preparing to offer new and innovative trust products.

Ensuring that the trust officers and leaders were ready with the necessary skills and knowledge, formal training was provided for the enhancement and growth of the industry in the coming years.

The early 1980's until 1991 saw remarkable growth in the industry, with trust assets doubling and reaching the P100-billion mark in 1991, as public awareness on the more sophisticated asset and trust management services increased.

By the year 2000, however, the global foreign exchange and financial markets saw challenges brought about by several crises. This led to the General Banking Act of 1948 being replaced by Philippine Congress into the General Banking Law of 2000. This new law, which effectively strengthens the banking sector and effectiveness of the supervision of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas over local banks, now contains a chapter on trust operations, amending laws from the previous act.

Within ten years, the Philippines saw an economic exponential growth, beginning with Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) remittances, and increase in consumer spending. By 2010, GDP ended at 7.3%, growing more than twice after a decade, according to Asian Development Bank's Key Indicators. This period likewise saw the trust industry breaching the trillion mark in 2007 with P1.176 trillion assets under management and 34% higher than the previous year. By 2012, the trust industry had doubled this figure to P3.1 trillion. The investment grade ratings secured during this period until 2013 set the stage for the industry's further growth the next decade.

Recognizing the importance of good corporate governance, effective risk management and strong consumer protection, reforms were implemented,

**Since its inception in 1964, TOAP has seen key leaders and strategists at its helm, introducing landmark innovations and growth, supporting inclusivity, transparency and active regulation, adapting to challenges and changes, thereby strengthening the Philippine financial industry through trust.**

which included comprehensive investment guidelines for trust entities and guidance to better align the management of trust assets with international standards.

Steven C. Te, first vice-president and institutional sales head of BDO Unibank's Trust and Investments Group and current TOAP president, shares that with the entry of foreign players into the Philippine financial community through the ASEAN integration and the AEC Blueprint, the trust industry has been positively impacted and strengthened. This has led to increased competition, which drives local trust companies to enhance their services, improve efficiency, and offer more competitive products to attract and retain clients.

Access to expertise and technologies has benefited the local trust industry, with foreign players bringing their know-how, best practices and advanced technologies. This transfer of knowledge and technology helped strengthen the capabilities of local trust companies and enhanced their service offerings.





**Trust Officers Association of the Philippines Board of Directors 2023-2024 (standing from left): Director for Investor Relations and Education Ma. Michelle S. Valeriano, Director for Members Development Herbert Glen D. Arabelo, Director for Capital Markets Development Stella A. Sampayan, Treasurer and Director for Finance Carina L. Yandoc, President Steven C. Te, Director and Corporate Secretary Atty. Christiane B. Alonzo-Velasco, TOAP Vice-President and Director for Fiduciary Products Development Joy Jasmin R. Santos, Director for UITF Development Dreda Teresa D. Mendoza, and Director for Taxes and Regulated Products Reena Marie G. Franco**

Furthermore, the participation of foreign players has expanded the range of investment options available to clients of Philippine trust companies. This diversification of investment options means better risk management, higher returns, and increased investor confidence in the trust industry.

The entry of foreign players has prompted local regulators to align standards and regulations with international best practices. This alignment has led to a more robust regulatory framework, improved governance practices, and enhanced transparency within the trust industry, as well as increased awareness and trust from clients and investors.

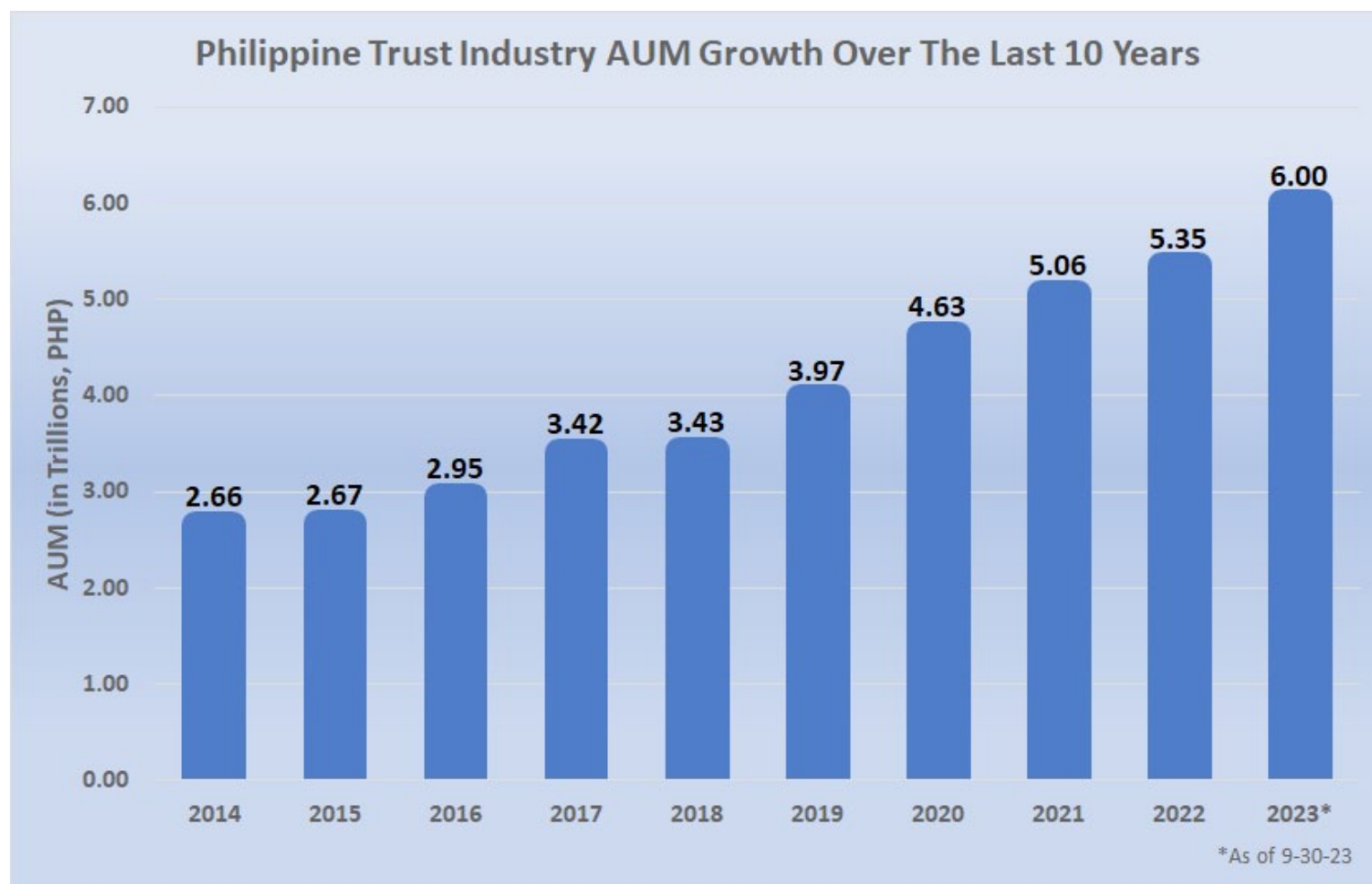
While the integration of foreign players into the Philippine financial community through the ASEAN and AEC Blueprint may have brought about various opportunities and benefits for the industry, Mr. Te adds that “ongoing monitoring and assessment are essential to ensure that these developments indeed add to the strengthening and

sustainable growth of the industry over time.”

Another key contribution during this decade worthy of note is the expansion of Unit Investment Trust Funds (UITF). This product line provided the greater public an investment opportunity that has significantly impacted the trust industry.

In August 2021, then-BSP Governor Benjamin Diokno said that “the BSP recognizes the importance of UITFs as an avenue for small retail investors to participate in the securities markets. Certainly, the online accessibility of UITFs contributed to their growth.”

Mr. Te further expounds that the introduction of a broader range of UITF products increased investment options for investors, giving them a wider range of preferences according to their risk tolerance. It has also contributed to the growth of assets under management (AUM) for trust companies, as it has become a popular choice for both individual and institutional investors. In fact, by end of 3rd quarter 2023,



UITF's AUM was reported to be at P815 billion.

Additionally, UITFs have expanded to include regular income paying funds, hence investors appreciate this as part of the inclusive growth process offered by the trust industry. There were also investment structures under UITF that include feeder funds, multi-class funds, and fund of funds, with the same objective of bringing in more investors and presenting them a diverse menu of choices for their financial investments.

Regulatory compliance and investor protection were also implemented, adhering to regulatory guidelines set by governing bodies, to safeguard investors' interest and maintain trust in the industry. Access to professional fund management expertise allowed retail investors

to benefit from the skills and knowledge of seasoned portfolio managers. Overall, the expansion of UITFs as an investment opportunity has brought about positive changes in the trust industry in the last decade, resulting in increased market participation, enhanced competitiveness, and a broader array of investment options for investors seeking to grow their wealth and achieve their financial goals. More information can be found on [www.uitf.com.ph](http://www.uitf.com.ph).

By the third quarter of 2023, just several months after the declaration of the end of the COVID-19 pandemic, the banking system's trust and investment management business reached the P6.0 trillion mark, a milestone achievement equivalent to a 10-year compounded annual growth rate (CAGR) of 8.8%. The trust industry's





**Steven C. Te**  
***President***

resiliency even during the height of the pandemic in 2020, with a growth of 16%, proved TOAP's continued and unrelenting efforts to push forward and rise above the global health challenges.

### **TOAP: LEADING THE TRUST INDUSTRY**

Since its inception in 1964, TOAP has seen key leaders and strategists at its helm, introducing landmark innovations and growth, supporting inclusivity, transparency and active regulation, adapting to challenges and changes, thereby strengthening the Philippine financial industry through trust.

First to lead TOAP was Graelan C. Yarisantos in 1964 who had the big task of gathering trust officers to steer the trust industry into something the public will fully understand, accept, and embrace.

The subsequent TOAP presidents and board of directors stayed true to TOAP's mission "to grow the trust and asset



**Joy Jasmin R. Santos**  
***Vice-President and Director  
for Fiduciary Products  
Development***

management industry to a level at par with international standards," ensuring that the organization lives its values of Integrity, Fidelity to Client, Innovation, Teamwork, Leadership, Professionalism, and Excellence.

Rafael G. Ayuste, Jr., who served as TOAP president four times between 2005 and 2018, believes that "assuming an industry leadership role is inherently personal and time-intensive, involving a wide array of responsibilities. This includes regulatory engagements across various trust products and services with regulatory bodies, notably the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, and maintaining ongoing communication with industry stakeholders, such as industry players, clients, and financial associations. The personal reward for this level of involvement is significant, as it reflects active participation and contribution towards the industry's growth."

Meanwhile Mr. Te, who is wrapping up his second



**Atty. Christiane B. Alonzo-Velasco**  
***Director and Corporate  
Secretary***

consecutive term as TOAP president, emphasized that "the TOAP leaders and board members can further solidify the trust industry's position as a dynamic and forward-looking sector that caters to a diverse range of clients, organizations, and partners while driving sustainable growth and development."

Through its thought leadership and advocacy, TOAP has led industry discussions on emerging trends, best practices, and regulatory updates. Its active advocacy efforts and promotion of industry standards drive positive change and influences policy decisions that benefit stakeholders.

Its innovation and technology adoption enhances operational efficiency, improves customer experience, and develops cutting-edge services. By staying ahead of technological advancements, TOAP positions itself as a forward-looking organization that drives industry innovation. Additionally,



**Carina L. Yandoc**  
*Treasurer and Director for Finance*

establishing collaboration and strategic partnerships with industry stakeholders, fintech firms, academic institutions, and regulatory bodies foster knowledge-sharing. By working together with diverse partners, TOAP is able to create synergies, explore new opportunities, and drive collective industry growth.

As of this year, 30 institutions consisting of banks and trust corporations are active members of TOAP.

### **ROAD MAP: TOAP MOVING FORWARD**

TOAP's position as the authority for trust, fiduciary, and asset management in the Asia Pacific region is reinforced by its proactive approach in maintaining proper safeguards, fostering an effective relationship with regulatory bodies like the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP), and enforcing stringent measures to ensure investor protection and transparency.

Raul C. Diaz, TOAP president from 2008 to 2009, said that "being part of the



**Dreda Teresa D. Mendoza**  
*Director for UITF Development*

trust industry for the last 40 years that actively promoted and nurtured the industry to what it is today, it certainly has been a huge leap from when TOAP started 60 years ago. It remains in good hands, with the younger generation now carrying the torch of leadership."

What then, is in the pipeline?

As it celebrates six decades of actively steering the Philippine financial management industry, TOAP commits to focus on and strengthen the following:

#### **Digital Transformation.**

Continuing to embrace technology to enhance efficiency, improve customer experience, and streamline processes involves digitizing operations, implementing online platforms for client interactions, and leveraging data analytics to drive informed decision-making. These new digital trust solutions give clients easier access to their accounts, enabling them to make more knowledgeable investment decisions in the process.



**Herbert Glen D. Arabelo**  
*Director for Members Development*

Comprising 70% of the Philippine population are the Generation Z and millennials, who contribute to the e-commerce boom. Their financial habits contribute to the growth of all things online, so the creation of easy customer experience and digital capabilities is essential.

Last year, TOAP embarked on a six-month digital marketing ad campaign aimed at reintroducing UITFs in the market. The campaign's objective was to attract the younger generation to this product through a series of regular social media posts featuring art cards, explainer videos, and album posts. The attractive design, theme, and feel of all materials used were tailored to appeal to the millennial and Gen Z markets.

#### **Sustainable and Responsible Investing.**

Promoting sustainable and responsible investing practices to align investments with environmental, social, and governance (ESG) criteria.





**Stella A. Sampayan**  
*Director for Capital Markets  
Development*

In 2008, the Personal Equity and Retirement Account (PERA) Act of 2008 was signed into law. PERA helps Filipinos invest in a more comfortable retirement. TOAP has been actively promoting this as part of their financial literacy campaign as it helps strengthen and identify small, medium and long-term financial goals. To demonstrate its commitment in supporting this government initiative, TOAP collaborated with the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas last year to conduct a PERA webinar for the families of overseas contract workers and to launch an information campaign on social media.

The annual Trust Consciousness Week, celebrated every March, advocates for financial literacy and consciousness. Aware of the vast market of young professionals and other sectors who remain



**Ma. Michelle S. Valeriano**  
*Director for Investor Relations  
and Education*

unengaged in financial wellness, TOAP aims to help the next generation of trust investors attain financial growth through simplified financial opportunities.

The coming years may well see TOAP focusing on aggressively offering ESG-integrated investment products and educating clients on the benefits of sustainable investing.


**Enhanced Customer Engagement.** Implementing personalized and tailored services to meet the diverse needs of clients, involves deploying customer relationship management (CRM) systems, conducting client feedback surveys, and offering educational resources to empower clients in making informed financial decisions.

The trust industry is in constant exploration for alternative investment products amidst the evolving market demands.



**Reena Marie G. Franco**  
*Director for Taxes and  
Regulated Products*

Customizing wealth management solutions, launching thematic investment funds, and forming strategic partnerships with fintech companies, industry partners and regulatory bodies help leverage collective expertise and resources to create value for stakeholders.

With 60 years of driving the trust industry into exponential growth in an inclusive financial market, TOAP remains a testament of its enduring commitment with its role as a catalyst of change in the trust, fiduciary, and asset management industry. The innovation, best practices, and sustainable, stable growth of the trust industry have greatly contributed to the continued confidence of investors, upholding the highest global standards of professionalism and integrity. 

# Understanding trust services: How they work and how to avail of one

By **Mhicole A. Moral**, *Special Features and Content Writer, BusinessWorld*

**T**he sheer number of investment options, tax laws, and financial regulations may leave even the most astute individuals feeling overwhelmed and uncertain. As financial transactions are becoming increasingly complex, both individuals and businesses are seeking trustworthy partners for their assets and financial affairs.

One of the most important non-banking services is what is commonly referred to as the trust service. At its core, a trust entity is a legal entity that holds and manages assets on behalf of individuals, families, or organizations. Trust arrangements are created for various purposes, including wealth preservation, estate planning, and charitable endeavors. Trust services, therefore, involve the administration and management of these trusts by financial institutions or professional trustees.

A trust company is empowered to act as an agent or trustee on behalf of an individual or group for the purpose of the administration, management, and eventual transfer of assets to a beneficiary. These services are designed to provide solutions to specific requirements of clients such as the administration and distribution of assets in accordance with the wishes of the client.

In the Philippines, the TOAP is the country's oldest professional association in the financial industry, working closely



with the Banko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) to unite, professionalize, and promote the trust and investment management industry. The association works closely with the government to discuss regulations and issues concerning the trust industry in a way that suits the best interest of the investing public.

“Trust is still predominantly used by clients for investments though there is increasing



interest among the wealth management players to use trust for wealth management, estate planning, protection of interest of minors and the incapacitated as well as the achievement of lifegoals. This expansion of trust beyond investment is crucial in ensuring the growth and longevity of the trust industry,” said Rafael G. Ayuste, Jr., former president of TOAP and former chief trust officer of BDO Unibank, in an interview with *BusinessWorld*.

Trust services, according to Dr. Robert B. Ramos, CFA, CAIA, president and CEO of RCBC Trust Corp. and former president of Trust Officers Association of the Philippines (TOAP), contribute to the overall financial landscape, offering individuals and businesses a variety of options to secure their financial future.

“Generation of income and growing your funds? We have UITFs (Unit Investment Trust Funds) and IMAs (Investment Management Accounts) for retail clients. Providing retirement benefits to the employees of our corporate clients? We offer retirement fund accounts. Wealth preservation and succession planning? We provide customized estate planning services. There are various tools and products at our disposal that can help us craft a bespoke plan that addresses the complex and special needs of our high-net-worth clients,” said Dr. Ramos.

TOAP’s member-institutions provide a range of trust and fiduciary products, each serving specific purposes within the financial ecosystem.

One commonly known type is personal management trust, an arrangement that helps individuals manage their personal affairs, including financial planning, estate management, and asset protection. The primary goal of personal management trust is to ensure that the beneficiary’s interests are protected and that the trust assets are managed effectively. A revocable living trust allows individuals to maintain control of their assets during their lifetime while facilitating a seamless transfer of those assets upon death. Irrevocable trusts, on the other hand, are often used for tax planning and asset protection, providing a more secure structure.

Trust entities acting in a fiduciary capacity may act as executors in probate cases, ensuring the deceased’s wishes are carried out and overseeing the distribution of assets to heirs. They can also assume the role of guardians, managing the financial affairs of minors or incapacitated individuals.

In an institutional trustee capacity, such as in the case of escrow services, it protects the interests of two contracting parties by ensuring the fulfillment of agreed-upon terms and conditions. This service is valuable for transactions like installment-based purchases or asset dispositions subject to restrictions or clearances.

While personal management trusts cater to individual needs, other fiduciary services extend their scope to corporate and organizational requirements. Corporate trust services involve a trustee acting on behalf of a corporation to manage and safeguard assets, typically related to bonds and securities. Corporate trustees ensure compliance with legal and financial obligations, acting as intermediaries between issuers and investors.

Another common trust service is the UITF. It is an open-ended pooled trust fund, denominated in pesos or acceptable currencies, operated and administered by a trust entity. Governed by a Declaration of Trust, that provide a mechanism for investing, operating, and administering the fund, UITFs allow participation by any type of investor, whether conservative, moderate, or aggressive, and for as low as P1,000 only.

## **THE IMPORTANCE OF FINANCIAL GOALS**

Trust services encompass a range of offerings designed to manage assets and meet financial needs regardless of time horizon. This involves thoughtful consideration of short-term and long-term objectives, risk tolerance, and the desired legacy.

Mr. Ayuste emphasizes that the most important step before embarking on the investment journey with trust services is understanding one’s goals. Whether it’s saving for retirement, funding education, or wealth preservation, identifying the

**“We always start with the question – what are your goals and objectives? We then find out what the risk appetite of the client is and if there are other considerations that we need to take into account before we come up with a recommendation, such as liquidity needs, financial capacity, and investment horizon.”**

purpose of the investment sets the direction for the entire process.

“This understanding determines what the investment will be and how long it will stay invested. A second factor and just as critical is the investor’s capacity to undertake risk. This is easily determined through the Customer Suitability Assessment (CSA), which is provided by all trust entities,” he explained. “An investor with medium- to long-term horizon and aggressive risk profile can invest in securities with higher risks such as equities. In return for undertaking such risk, the investor should be rewarded with a higher return on investment. A conservative investor with a short-term goal, on the other hand, can invest in less risky outlets such as short-term government securities and money market securities.”

Similarly, Dr. Ramos noted that it is important to have a thoughtful and strategic approach in determining the right trust products and services that best suit the financial goals and needs of the individuals or businesses.

“We always start with the question – what are your goals and objectives? We then find out what the risk appetite of the client is and if there are other considerations that we need to take into account before we come up with a recommendation, such as liquidity needs, financial capacity, and investment horizon. We always explain to our clients that when it comes to investments, there is no one-size-fits-all approach. What works for one client may not work for another. So, it is important to establish the goals and preferences of the clients first before deciding which investment product to go for,” Mr. Ramos explained.

According to the former TOAP presidents, trust services allow individuals and corporations to tailor their approach based on their unique financial objectives. This customization ensures that the chosen trust structure aligns seamlessly with the overarching financial goals.

Trusts also serve as powerful tools for risk management,



mitigating the risks against potential threats to financial stability.

### **BRIDGING MORE FILIPINOS IN A DIGITALIZED ENVIRONMENT**

According to Mr. Ayuste, the advent of online shopping has already familiarized Filipinos with the convenience of accessing goods and services from the comfort of their homes. However, this digital access has not translated proportionally to investments in the financial sector.

The lack of investment in the financial sector can be attributed to the lack of understanding of trust services. While many Filipinos may be familiar with traditional banking services, trust services are often overlooked and underutilized.

Trust services, such as IMAs, personal trust and estate management (PMT), and escrow, can offer clients a range of benefits that traditional banking services may not be able to provide.

“A number of different factors come into play, such as confidence to use digital facilities for other than payments and fund transfers of small amounts of money, challenges in terms of internet speed, and product availability being limited to UITFs, among others,” he mentioned. “A factor, within the reach of TOAP, is the expansion of products and services available digitally. This should contribute to greater participation from the consumer.”

Furthermore, TOAP understands that the younger generation, particularly Gen Z and Millennials, are tech-savvy and prefer to consume information through digital

platforms. As a result, the association has taken an innovative approach to engage this market by offering personalized and digitalized financial planning advice and investment opportunities.

For instance, digitalization has enabled more banks to reach more clients and improve their efficiency.

“Because of digitalization, our clients are able to avail of our products and services wherever they are 24/7. Because of the improved access, more Filipinos are able to invest their hard-earned money in the products that they prefer,” Dr. Ramos said.

Steven C. Te of BDO Unibank Inc. - Trust and Investments Group and the current president of TOAP, said that engaging the youth in financial education and trust services requires innovative approaches that resonate with their digital-centric lifestyle.

“TOAP has recognized that to be able to connect to younger individuals, it needs to immerse itself into their world that is primarily driven by social media, digital and mobile banking, electronic wallets, and, recently, artificial intelligence or AI,” Mr. Te said.

Moreover, financial literacy is an essential skill that every individual needs. Mr. Te said that trust services further empower individuals to make informed financial decisions, ultimately contributing to economic stability and individual well-being.

For more information on TOAP and its initiatives, visit their official website at <https://www.toap.org.ph/>. Get to know TOAP's member-institutions and know what products and services they offer by visiting <https://www.toap.org.ph/members-directory>.



## JULY

For the month of July, we focused on communicating how UITF can help in preparing for one's future to kickstart our campaign. Using the UITF acronym, we made art cards that will explicitly convey the messages that we want to impart.





**NITFUNDS**  
Unit Investment Trust Fund

**USEFUL INVESTMENT TIPS FOR A CAUTIOUS INVESTOR**

If you're someone who prioritizes safety and security, low-risk **MONEY MARKET FUNDS** are suited for you!

Visit: [www.uitf.com.ph](http://www.uitf.com.ph) for more details.

**NITFUNDS**  
Unit Investment Trust Fund

**USEFUL INVESTMENT TIPS FOR A RATIONAL INVESTOR**

If you are looking for both income and growth, you might want to find out more about **BALANCED FUNDS**.

Visit: [www.uitf.com.ph](http://www.uitf.com.ph) for more details.

**NITFUNDS**  
Unit Investment Trust Fund

**USEFUL INVESTMENT TIPS FOR A PRACTICAL INVESTOR**

If you want a more predictable return over the medium to long term, **BOND FUNDS** might be the right UITF for you

Visit: [www.uitf.com.ph](http://www.uitf.com.ph) for more details.

**NITFUNDS**  
Unit Investment Trust Fund

**USEFUL INVESTMENT TIPS FOR A GO-GETTER**

If you can ride the risk of market volatility if it means higher returns, **EQUITY FUNDS** may be right for you!

Visit: [www.uitf.com.ph](http://www.uitf.com.ph) for more details.

## AUGUST

To continue the momentum of the campaign, we've decided to communicate useful tips for different types of investors in the market for the month of August. We still retained the creative use of the UITF's acronym and suggested a specific Unit Fund product to a specific type of investor.



## SEPTEMBER

Since we have now established the different kinds of UITF products available in the market and the types of investors available, we proceeded to discuss the pros and cons of investing in Unit Funds.

**NITFUNDS**  
Unit Investment Trust Fund

### UITF Investing Tutorial For Starters

**PRO ↑**

Puts your money in **DIVERSE INVESTMENTS** to lower your risks

**CON ↓**

Returns may **VARY** over time depending on the investments' performance



Visit: [www.uitf.com.ph](http://www.uitf.com.ph) for more details.

**NITFUNDS**  
Unit Investment Trust Fund

### UITF Investing Tutorial For Starters

**PRO ↑**

Managed by **EXPERT FUND MANAGERS**

**CON ↓**

**FUND MANAGERS**, not the investors, **DECIDE** what investments are in the fund



Visit: [www.uitf.com.ph](http://www.uitf.com.ph) for more details.

**NITFUNDS**  
Unit Investment Trust Fund

### UITF Investing Tutorial For Starters

**PRO ↑**

Allows you to start investing for **AS LOW AS PHP 5,000**

**CON ↓**

Returns are **NOT** guaranteed



Visit: [www.uitf.com.ph](http://www.uitf.com.ph) for more details.

**NITFUNDS**  
Unit Investment Trust Fund

### UITF Investing Tutorial For Starters

**PRO ↑**

**HIGHLY REGULATED** by government regulatory agencies

**CON ↓**

**NOT INSURED** by PDIC\* like bank deposits



Visit: [www.uitf.com.ph](http://www.uitf.com.ph) for more details.

\*Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation



**NITFUNDS**  
Unit Investment Trust Fund

**Debunking UITF Myths:  
Know the truths of investing**

**MYTH:**  
Unit Funds are only for people with a large amount of investible funds.

**FACT:**  
Investments in Unit Funds can start for as low as P5,000!

Visit [www.uitf.com.ph](http://www.uitf.com.ph) for more details.



**NITFUNDS**  
Unit Investment Trust Fund

**Debunking UITF Myths:  
Know the truths of investing**

**MYTH:**  
Unit Funds are high-risk investments.

**FACT:**  
There are low-risk investments in Unit Funds.

Visit [www.uitf.com.ph](http://www.uitf.com.ph) for more details.



**NITFUNDS**  
Unit Investment Trust Fund

**Debunking UITF Myths:  
Know the truths of investing**

**MYTH:**  
Unit Funds are not for the younger generation.

**FACT:**  
Unit Funds are good entry-level investments for young investors.

Visit [www.uitf.com.ph](http://www.uitf.com.ph) for more details.



**NITFUNDS**  
Unit Investment Trust Fund

**Debunking UITF Myths:  
Know the truths of investing**

**MYTH:**  
Unit Funds are not easily available.

**FACT:**  
Unit Funds are offered by the major banks in the country. You can start your investment with only P5,000.

Visit [www.uitf.com.ph](http://www.uitf.com.ph) for more details.



## OCTOBER

For October, we continued to provide relevant information about Unit Funds by debunking myths and misconceptions and communicating facts that are helpful if one wants to start their investing journey.



## NOVEMBER

For November, we focused on how investing in UITF can strengthen one's financial goals. We incorporated specific tips on how to maximize their investing journey with Unit Funds.



**STRENGTHEN YOUR FINANCIAL GOALS**

### TIP #1: SET SHORT, MEDIUM, AND LONG-TERM FINANCIAL GOALS

Choose your short, medium, or long-term investments that match your desired financial journey with Unit Funds.

Visit [www.uitf.com.ph](http://www.uitf.com.ph) for more details.

TOAP



**STRENGTHEN YOUR FINANCIAL GOALS**

### TIP #2: SAVE TO INVEST

By setting aside P5,000, you can now have your investment with Unit Funds.

Visit [www.uitf.com.ph](http://www.uitf.com.ph) for more details.

TOAP



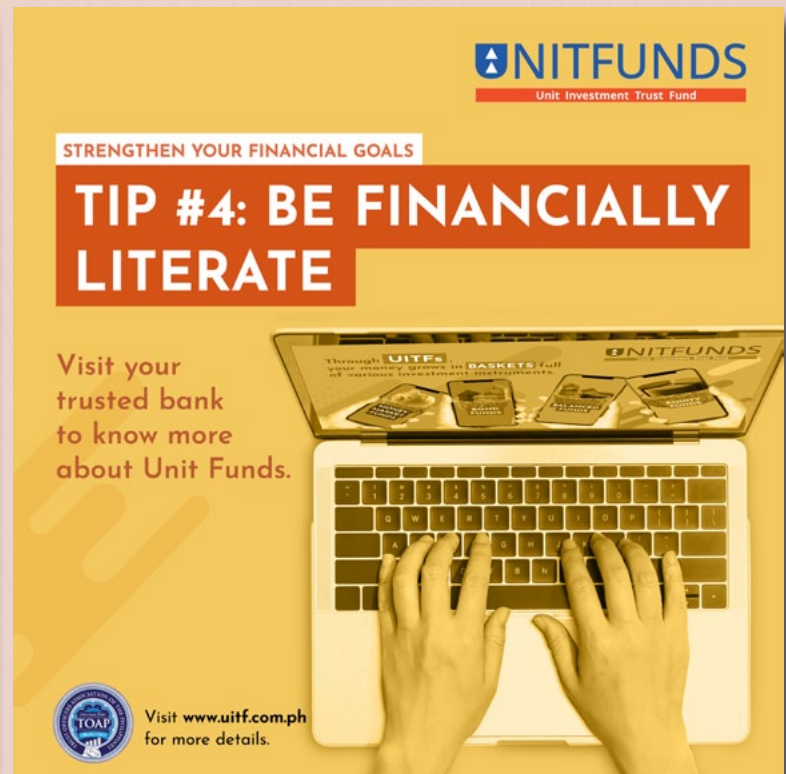
**STRENGTHEN YOUR FINANCIAL GOALS**

### TIP #3: MAKE SMART INVESTMENTS

Unit Funds offer a variety of investment types that can cater to your current investing portfolio.

Visit [www.uitf.com.ph](http://www.uitf.com.ph) for more details.

TOAP



**STRENGTHEN YOUR FINANCIAL GOALS**

### TIP #4: BE FINANCIALLY LITERATE

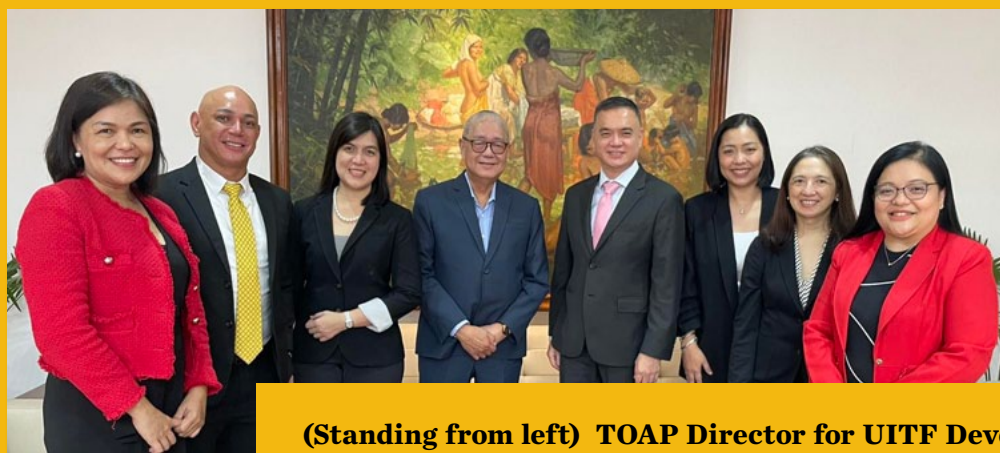
Visit your trusted bank to know more about Unit Funds.

Visit [www.uitf.com.ph](http://www.uitf.com.ph) for more details.

TOAP



## TOAP COURTESY CALL ON THE BSP



**(Standing from left) TOAP Director for UITF Development Dreda Teresa D. Mendoza, TOAP Director for Members Development Herbert Glen D. Arabelo, TOAP Vice President and Director for Fiduciary Products Development Joy Jasmin R. Santos, BSP Governor Eli M. Remolona, Jr., TOAP President Steven C. Te, TOAP Director and Corporate Secretary Atty. Christiane Alonzo-Velasco, TOAP Director for Taxes and Regulated Products Reena Marie G. Franco and TOAP Director for Investor Relations and Education Ma. Michelle S. Valeriano.**

*Photo taken: September 6, 2023*



**(Standing from left) BSP Director – Capital Markets and Trust Supervision Department Thea Josefina Natalia W. Santos, TOAP Director for Taxes and Regulated Products Reena Marie G. Franco, TOAP Director for Capital Markets Development Stella A. Sampayan, TOAP Director and Corporate Secretary Atty. Christiane Alonzo-Velasco, TOAP President Steven C. Te, BSP Governor Felipe M. Medalla, TOAP Vice-President and Director for Fiduciary Products Development Joy Jasmin R. Santos, TOAP Director for Investor Relations and Education Ma. Michelle S. Valeriano, TOAP Treasurer and Director for Finance Carina L. Yandoc, TOAP Director for Members Development Herbert Glen D. Arabelo and BSP Senior Assistant Governor Edna C. Villa.**

*Photo taken: June 13, 2023*



## TOAP 2023 & 2024 CONVENTION



**2023 TOAP Convention  
April 21-23, 2023  
Henann Lagoon Boracay**



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## TOAP 2023 & 2024 CONVENTION



**2024 TOAP  
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Samal Davao City**



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# TOAP SUMMIT

September 20, 2023 | The Westin Manila



**TRUST OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF THE PHILIPPINES (TOAP) 60TH ANNUAL SUMMIT 2023**  
September 20, 2023



**SEC. BENJAMIN E. DIOKNO**  
DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE

**Improving pension systems to boost capital market development and economic growth**



**Military and Uniformed Personnel Pension Reform**



**Capital Market Development Act**

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## TOAP CHRISTMAS PARTY

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## TOAP CHRISTMAS PARTY

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