

Investing in Narratives:

How Beijing promotes its development projects in the Philippines

TECHNICAL APPENDIX

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Appendix A. Data sources summary

Table A-1. List of Primary Variables Analyzed in the Report, Coverage, Source, and Details

Variable	Coverage Period	Source and Details
Philippine expert opinions	n/a	The report incorporates perspectives from 12 Philippine elites with diverse backgrounds, including media, think tanks, government, civil society, the military, and academia, many of whom hold roles encompassing multiple domains. The interviews were conducted by AidData and Asia Society Philippines between June and July 2024. The study's limitations arise from challenges in engaging pro-China voices, as several individuals who initially expressed interest either did not follow through or canceled their interviews. These issues may impact the report's comprehensiveness and balance.
Chinese official development finance	2000-2022	Data on official government-backed loan and grant commitments from the People's Republic of China (PRC). Please note that the data for 2022 will be considered to be provisional only. This data likely undercounts the total number of projects committed by the PRC because it relies upon identifying relevant activities from global news databases (Factiva DNA). The relative recency of the projects and the limited scope of this report constrains our ability to cross-verify due to the limited publication of official sources as of 2024. Source: AidData's Global Chinese Development Finance Dataset, Version 3.0 (Custer et al., 2023; Dreher et al., 2022).
PRC Ambassador op-eds	2002-2024	Number of publications of op-eds written by the highest echelon of Chinese Ambassador in local media by country-year. Source: AidData (2022), plus supplemental desk research. AidData extended it for additional years (through Aug. 2024).
Content-sharing partnerships	2000-2024	Agreements brokered between a Chinese state-run media outlet and a Philippine media outlet to share, reprint, and co-create content. Source: AidData (2022), plus supplemental desk research. The base data was originally created by Emily Feng (2018). AidData validated this data, fixed some errors in the mapping of partnerships to countries, and extended it for additional years (through Aug. 2024).
Dow Jones Factiva DNA	2017-2023	Factiva is a business intelligence platform that provides access to content from 33,000 news, data, and information sources across 200 countries in 32 languages. It offers millions of corporate profiles and includes research tools for analyzing media coverage.

Variable	Coverage Period	Source and Details
		We pulled media content from this database to perform text analysis throughout the report (unless noted otherwise).
The Manila Times opinion section	2010-2024	AidData scraped all op-ed pieces mentioning "China" from https://www.manilatimes.net/opinion to perform text analysis found in Section 4
FanKarma	2024	FanKarma is a social media analytics platform designed to track and analyze audience engagement, sentiment, and influence across various social media channels. We utilized it to grab PRC social media followers across Facebook, TikTok, and Instagram as of August 28, 2024. See: fanpagekarma.com .

Appendix B. Footprint of PRC State-Owned Media in the Philippines

Methodology

For PRC TV outlets, we began by using Digital TV Research’s Global Pay TV Forecasts databook as a baseline to identify major cable operators in the Philippines.¹ Digital TV Research provides extensive data on the top TV providers in a country for a fee but makes the top providers publicly available. The first round of open-source research involved adding the following query to Google: "[country] [cable operator] [PRC TV outlet]", and was limited to the first 10 pages of Google results. If no relevant information appeared within the first 10 pages, we moved on to the next PRC TV outlet, then eventually repeated the search using the next cable provider. We did this for each cable operator and PRC TV outlet combination. If no relevant information appeared, we then conducted a broader search using only "[country] [PRC TV outlet]" in Google, applying the same first-10-page limit. If we found any evidence of the PRC TV outlet's presence in the country, we marked "Yes" in the relevant field and moved on. Only after this exhaustive search, if no evidence was found, did we mark the field as "No."

For Print bureaus and outlets, we used only the broader search described above "[country] [PRC outlet]" in Google, applying the same first-10-page limit. For radio, we utilized the World Radio Map website (<https://worldradiomap.com/>) to determine if any PRC stations were broadcasting in the Philippines. Radio was challenging because some stations do not broadcast at certain times and occasionally have dead air. To account for this variability, we conducted

¹ We use the most recent version publicly available online from September 2023 (Digital TV Research, 2023).

two readings—one in the morning and another in the late evening—to increase the likelihood of capturing an active broadcast.

Table B-1. Results

Television	Result/Link
CCTV 4	https://www.cctv.com/english/cctv4/individual_e.html
CCTV (other)	no presence found
CGTN	https://news.cgtn.com/news/2024-04-07/VHJhbnNjcmlwdDc4MTAz/index.html
Xinhua/CNC	no presence found
Print Bureau	Result/Link
Xinhua	https://freedomhouse.org/country/philippines/beijings-global-media-influence/2022
People’s Daily	no presence found
Print circulation	Result/Link
China Daily Global Weekly	no presence found
China Daily Global Edition	https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/201901/11/WS5c386bbea3106c65c34e3fbc_15.html
Radio	Result/Link
China Radio International	https://chinaplus.cri.cn/

Appendix C. Text Analysis

Text and sentiment analysis featured prominently in this report. We describe our approach to both analyzing (i) PRC and Philippine media content, and (ii) the more targeted Manila Times op-eds. For the former, we collected articles using Factiva DNA, while for the latter, we scraped opinion articles directly from <https://www.manilatimes.net/>.

Factiva DNA Analysis

Main Sample Corpus

We utilized English-language articles pulled from the Dow Jones DNA API covering the period from 2017 to 2023. The dataset included articles that matched one of the following criteria: the term "China" or "Chinese" appeared in the title, or "China" or "Chinese" were mentioned twice in the concatenated title, snippet, or body fields. Additionally, articles were included if "China" or "Chinese" appeared twice in combination (i.e., "China" followed by "Chinese" or vice versa) in the concatenated fields, or if "China" was flagged in the 'region_codes' field, which identifies articles that mention China.

For articles between 2017 and 2020, additional filtering was applied, making the query more specific during these years. Specifically, at least one of the following financial terms had to appear in the title, snippet, or body: assist, grant, loan, lend, lent, concession,

non-concessional, donat, donor, interest, preferential, fund, invest, finance, package, aid, scholarship, capacity building, train, coop, exchange, medical team, expert, provide, support, debt, export credit, mixed credit, buyer credit, disburse, feasibility study, relief, project, partner, program, or agree. The articles were also filtered based on DNA's subject codes to exclude articles that were tagged as Advertorials/Sponsored Content, Advice, Artist Profiles, Horoscopes, Letters, Obituaries, Personal Announcements, Real Estate Listings, Recipes, Routine Traffic Reports, Routine Weather Reports, Travel Reviews, or TV/Radio Listings.

For the Philippines-specific analysis, we applied additional filters to identify relevant articles. To find articles from Philippine outlets that mention China, we selected any article with "Philippines" in the 'region_of_origin' field, indicating that the article originated from a Philippine source. For articles from PRC outlets that mention the Philippines, we filtered for those with "China" in the 'region_of_origin' field and "Philippines" in the 'region_codes' field. Finally, we extracted data from the 'source_name', 'subject_name', and 'industry_name' fields to gather information on the sources, subjects, and industries relevant to each article.

PRC and Philippine Content Samples

The Factiva DNA corpus consisted of two separate document extractions of articles: Set 1, articles from PRC-based outlets that discussed the Philippines (determined by greater than two references in the text of the article); and Set 2, articles by Philippine outlets that discussed the PRC (determined by references in the text of the article or a Beijing/PRC region code applied by Factiva DNA). The total size of Set 1 was 8,276 articles published between January 1, 2017, and December 31, 2023. The total size of Set 2 was 62,989 articles published between January 1, 2017, and December 31, 2023. These counts may, in some instances, include republishing or revision of articles if they have a unique title or publication date. It also may reflect the republication of media wire articles in several distinct outlets. These are treated as separate instances due to appearing in multiple outlets and/or being presented to audiences multiple times.

Text Analysis Pre-process

Except where noted, all steps apply to the articles for both Set 1 and Set 2.

Step 1: Read all articles into one dataframe object in R statistical software.

Step 2: Extract publication date and source outlet as a distinct variable.

For Set 1: Ensure all branches of South China Morning Post, Xinhua, People's Daily, and China Daily are renamed to reflect their parent source (i.e. change "scmp.com" to "South China Morning Post" or ensure that different language editions of Xinhua were all labeled as "Xinhua News Agency."

For Set 2: Ensure that the Philippine Daily Inquirer and its online presence, "Inquirer.net" are both renamed "Philippine Daily Inquirer."

Step 3 (*For Set 2 Only*): Add binary tag if the source publisher had an identified Content-Sharing Partnership with a PRC outlet.

Step 4: Remove metadata from the article text field, deleting source name, byline, Factiva DNA tags for region and industry, and copyright line. This ensures that the sentiment analysis later only reflects meaningful text.

Step 5: Transform the cleaned dataframe of media articles into a corpus using the `Quanteda` package's `corpus()` function.

Step 6: Construct a tokens object of meaningful keywords for the media corpus using the `Quanteda` package's `tokens()` function.

Include function calls to split hyphens, remove numbers, remove punctuation, remove symbols, remove URLs, stopwords from `Quanteda`'s English, French, and Spanish dictionaries, as well as Factiva field titles ("Copyright", "Publisher", "Source", "Snippet:", "Publication Date", "Region Codes", "All rights reserved", "Title:", "Byline", "Body", "Region:", "n.d.")

Step 7: Create a Document Term Matrix of the text corpus using the `DocumentTermMatrix()` function from the `TermDocumentMatrix`. Construct this matrix without term weighting, using a "scan" method for tokenization. This matrix contains each term with the source document ID.

Step 8: Join the Bing sentiment dictionary to the Document Term Matrix to assign each term a positive or negative sentiment.

Step 9: To examine media coverage of specific projects, the `AidData` team first identified the 10 highest-financial-value projects from `AidData`'s Global Chinese Development Finance Dataset, Version 3.0. Regex search function using tokenized key terms was used to create separate data frames using the following keyword-in-context matching using package `Quanteda`'s `kwic()` function:

1. MW Dinginin Coal-Fired Power Plant Construction ([AidData ID #96052](#)): `kwic(token, c("Dinginin*", "GN Power*", "GNPower*", "Therma Power*", "Shanghai Electric*"), valuetype = "regex", case_insensitive = T)`
2. Lanao Kauswagan Coal-Fired Power Plant Construction ([AidData ID #96053](#)): `kwic(token, c("Lanao*Kauswagan*", "GN Power*", "GNPower*", "Shanghai Electric*"), valuetype = "regex", case_insensitive = T)`
3. Mariveles Coal-Fired Power Plant Construction ([AidData ID #63960](#)): `kwic(token, c("Mariveles*", "GN Power*", "GNPower*", "China National Electric*"), valuetype = "regex", case_insensitive = T)`
4. Phase 1, Section 1 of the Northrail Project ([AidData ID #63805](#)): `kwic(token, c("Northrail*", "North Luzon Railways Corporation*", "Northrail and China National Machinery and Equipment Group*", "CNMEG*"), valuetype = "regex", case_insensitive = T)`

5. Manila Water Company Capital Investment ([AidData ID #88846](#)): kwic(token, c("Manila Water Company*", "Manila Water*", "manila water*"), valuetype = "regex", case_insensitive =T)
6. Clark Global City Project ([AidData ID #63671](#)): kwic(token, c("Clark Global*", "Global Gateway*", "Global City*", "GGDC*"), valuetype = "regex", case_insensitive =T)
7. Chelsea Logistics and Infrastructure Holdings Corp. acquisition of 2GO Group ([AidData ID#65253](#)), related to [project #96037](#): kwic(token, c("Chelsea Logistics*", "2GO*", "KGLINM*", "Udenna*"), valuetype = "regex", case_insensitive =T)
8. Phase 1 of the Safe City Project ([AidData ID #63248](#)): kwic(token, c("Safe City*", "Safe Cities*", "CITCC*"), valuetype = "regex", case_insensitive =T)
9. Project Management Consultancy of the Philippine National Railways South Long Haul Project ([AidData #63627](#)): kwic(token, c("National Railway*", "long haul*", "crdc*"), valuetype = "regex", case_insensitive =T_)
10. New Centennial Water Source-Kaliwa Dam Project ([AidData ID #63942](#)): kwic(token, c("New centennial*", "centennial water*", "kaliwa*", "kaliwa dam*"), valuetype = "regex", case_insensitive =T)

Articles were then manually reviewed to ensure relevance to specified projects and reduce unnecessary or inaccurate overlap.

Step 10: Re-join the sentiments to media data (this may be the full corpus or the project dataframes), summarize the number of positive and negative tokens per article, and calculate each article's overall positive or negative sentiment (positive tokens as a percent of all meaningful terms). This value is 0-1, however, most articles have weights between 40-60 percent positive, given the large number of meaningful terms in each article. Given the binary nature of the sentiment tag, the intensity of sentiment at the article level is not a recommended unit of analysis, as most articles with a score closer to 0 or 1 were short and included few tokens at all. This method is more useful for analysis across an aggregated pool of documents.

Throughout this process, validation was performed to ensure that tokens corresponded with sentences that reflected their sentiment. A manual review of the articles also confirmed their overall tone and relevance to the topic of selected PRC investments.

Sentiment Analysis: Bing Dictionary

Once the content was prepared for analysis, we employed the Bing sentiment lexicon (Minqing and Bing, 2004). This English-language lexicon is a sentiment-based word list that classifies words into two categories: positive or negative. Originally developed to analyze the sentiment of online reviews, the lexicon has broader applications and can be used to assess the sentiment of any text. The summation of positive and negative words generates the positive or negative scores of news articles in our corpus.

Manila Times Op-ed Analysis

To surface elite opinions of the PRC in a Philippine outlet that has a content-sharing partnership with a PRC state-run media outlet, we conducted a text analysis of opinion articles from the Manila Times using the Lexicoder Sentiment Dictionary (LSD) (Young and Soroka, 2012). The key steps of this process are outlined below.

Capture the Corpus

We gathered the corpus for the Manila Times text analysis by scraping all opinion articles from the "Opinion" section of the Manila Times website (<https://www.manilatimes.net/opinion>) from 2010 to August 23, 2024, using the R package *rvest* (Wickham, 2024). In total, we captured 14,255 articles. From there, we filtered for those that mention "China," resulting in 1,552 articles (about 10.9 percent).

Pre-process Corpus

Once we captured the corpus, we did the following to pre-process the text for analysis:

Step 1: Remove Title. We removed the title, which was the first line of each article, to focus on the body of the text.

Step 2: Remove Link and Associated URL. We stripped out any links and URLs embedded in the text, while saving them in a separate file to later extract the article's publication date.

Step 3: Lowercasing. We converted all text to lowercase to ensure uniformity and consistency in analysis, eliminating case sensitivity.

Step 4: Remove Punctuation Except Apostrophes. We removed all punctuation marks except for apostrophes, which are useful for contractions and possessive forms.

Step 5: Remove Numbers. All numeric characters were removed, as they are not relevant to sentiment analysis.

Step 6: Apply Lexicoder Sentiment Dictionary (LSD) Preprocessing Rules. We applied the LSD preprocessing rules (handles negations, etc.), excluding the 'punc' and 'caps' modules (already covered above).

Step 7: Lemmatization. We performed lemmatization to reduce words to their base forms, ensuring that different forms of a word are treated as the same.

Step 8: Remove Remaining URLs. As a final check, we removed any remaining URLs that might have been missed in earlier steps.

Lexicoder Sentiment Dictionary

The Lexicoder Sentiment Dictionary (LSD) is a bag-of-words tool designed for automated sentiment analysis across various types of text, including news articles, legislative speeches,

and policy documents.² We chose LSD over the Bing Sentiment Lexicon for this analysis because it provides a more nuanced and tailored approach, particularly suited for the complexity of opinion pieces, which require deeper sentiment analysis than general news reports. Bing's simplicity made it ideal for scaling up sentiment analysis across multiple outlets in both the PRC and the Philippines. In contrast, we used the more nuanced Lexicoder Sentiment Dictionary (LSD) specifically for a corpus from a single outlet—The Manila Times—to better capture the complexity of its opinion pieces.

Once the text is preprocessed, the LSD matches each word in the corpus to predefined lists of positive and negative words. For each match, the word is coded with its corresponding sentiment. The occurrences of positive and negative words are then counted, and a sentiment score is calculated by subtracting the number of negative words from the positive ones. This produces an overall sentiment score for the article, which can be further aggregated to analyze sentiment trends across the entire corpus.

Appendix D. PRC Public Diplomacy Updated Methodology

For Ambassador op-ed and content-sharing partnership data, we draw from China's Global Public Diplomacy Dashboard Dataset (GPDDD), Version 3.0, then update these indicators through the present. We detail the steps and approach below.

PRC Ambassador Op-eds Methodology and Results

AidData's GPDDDv3 dataset includes PRC ambassador op-ed data spanning from 2002 to 2017, for which the Philippines had 0. To update this indicator, we identified op-eds written by PRC ambassadors in Philippine media, using a multi-faceted search. We focused on identifying opinion pieces authored by Ambassador Huang Xilian, who has served since December 2019 and is currently in office, as well as Ambassador Zhao Jianhua, who served from February 2014 to December 2019. Our search began with the Factiva DNA database, where we applied the following query: *([diplomat name]) and (op-ed OR editorial OR opinion)*. For Huang Xilian, we searched between December 1, 2019, and August 23, 2024, while for Zhao Jianhua, the query was limited to the period between January 1, 2018, and December 31, 2019.

In addition to Factiva, we conducted a broader search using Google with the same query terms, further narrowing results by including "Philippines" and limiting the search to the first 50 hits. This search covered the same time period and aimed to capture any op-eds not indexed by Factiva. To enhance our efforts, we used the Gemini platform, an AI tool that scans real-time content across the web.

² (Young and Soroka, 2012)

We also targeted specific Philippine media outlets, including The Manila Times, Manila Bulletin, The Daily Tribune, Philippine Star, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Malaya Business Insight, BusinessWorld, and Philippine News Agency. For The Manila Times, we found multiple opinion pieces by Huang Xilian, though they required a subscription. Other outlets, such as The Daily Tribune, presented challenges as certain op-eds seemed to have been scrubbed, despite reports from other sources indicating their previous existence.³ In these cases, corroborating authorship proved difficult.

Additionally, we searched official government websites, such as the Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs and the PRC's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Using terms like "China" and "ambassador," we navigated these sites to locate any official content or statements issued by PRC diplomats that could qualify as opinion pieces.

Throughout the process, the focus remained on identifying op-eds. Articles that did not meet this criterion were excluded. Ultimately, only confirmed opinion pieces were included for further analysis (Table D-1). Certain limitations arose during the search, including access restrictions for subscription-based content and the potential removal of online articles, which may have impacted the comprehensiveness of the results.

Table D-1. Results of Ambassador Op-ed Search

Title	Link	Date	Author	Outlet
Remarks by H.E. Zhao Jianhua	https://www.manilatimes.net/2016/09/29/opinion/analysis/remarks-by-h-e-zhao-jianhua/288638	9/29/2016	Zhao Jianhua	Manila Times
China: A Determined Cooperative Anti-Narcotics Partner	https://www.manilatimes.net/2017/09/28/opinion/analysis/china-determined-cooperative-anti-narcotics-partner/353241	9/28/2017	Zhao Jianhua	Manila Times
China and the Philippines: Riding Winds and Breaking Waves	https://www.manilatimes.net/2018/04/11/opinion/analysis/china-and-the-philippines-riding-winds-and-breaking-waves/391871	4/11/2018	Zhao Jianhua	Manila Times
A New Window on China	https://www.manilatimes.net/2018/06/15/opinion/analysis/a-new-window-on-china/408369	6/15/2018	Zhao Jianhua	Manila Times
China Will Always Stay Open	https://www.manilatimes.net/2018/09/29/opinion/analysis/china-will-always-stay-open/446392	9/29/2018	Zhao Jianhua	Manila Times
Forging a Closer China-Philippines Partnership	https://mb.com.ph/2021/1/14/forging-a-closer-china-philippines-partnership-in-the-n	1/14/2021	Huang Xilian	Manila Bulletin

³ Han and Elemia (2023).

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Truth Is the Best Illustration: The Real Xinjiang in My Eyes	https://mb.com.ph/2021/4/12/truth-is-the-best-illustration-the-real-xinjiang-in-my-eyes	4/12/2021	Huang Xilian	Manila Bulletin
China-Philippines Friendship and Cooperation Will Withstand the Test of Time	https://mb.com.ph/2021/5/1/china-philippines-friendship-and-cooperation-will-withstand-the-test-of-time	5/1/2021	Huang Xilian	Manila Bulletin
China-Philippines Cooperation: Moving Towards the Post-COVID-19 Era	https://mb.com.ph/2021/5/14/china-philippines-cooperation-moving-towards-the-post-covid-19-era	5/14/2021	Huang Xilian	Manila Bulletin
China-PH Relations Shine Brighter	https://www.manilatimes.net/2021/06/09/opinion/china-ph-relations-shine-brighter/1802446	6/9/2021	Huang Xilian	Manila Times
One Cannot Whitewash Its Wrongdoings by Smearing the Other	https://www.manilatimes.net/2021/08/29/news/one-cannot-whitewash-its-wrongdoings-by-smearing-the-other/1812761	8/29/2021	Huang Xilian	Manila Times
China-ASEAN Economic and Trade Relations: Opportunities and Challenges	https://www.manilatimes.net/2021/09/18/opinion/columns/china-asean-economic-and-trade-relations-opportunities-and-challenges/1815160	9/18/2021	Huang Xilian	Manila Times
Pulling Together Through Adversity Toward a Brighter Future	https://www.manilatimes.net/2021/10/01/opinion/pulling-together-through-adversity-toward-a-brighter-future/1816638	10/1/2021	Huang Xilian	Manila Times
How CPC Can Continue to Succeed in the Future	https://www.manilatimes.net/2021/11/27/news/national/how-cpc-can-continue-to-succeed-in-the-future/1823800	11/27/2021	Huang Xilian	Manila Times
Hand in Hand for a Stronger and Reinforced China-Philippines Friendship	https://www.manilatimes.net/2022/01/21/news/national/hand-in-hand-for-a-stronger-and-reinforced-china-philippines-friendship/1830088	1/21/2022	Huang Xilian	Manila Times
Pursue China's Modernization and Look to New Opportunities for China-Philippines Relations	https://www.manilatimes.net/2022/11/12/opinion/columns/pursue-chinas-modernization-and-look-to-new-opportunities-for-china-philippines-relations/1866021	11/12/2022	Huang Xilian	Manila Times
Honoring the Dead and China-PH Ties on Tomb-Sweeping Day	https://www.manilatimes.net/2023/04/07/opinion/columns/honoring-the-dead-and-china-ph-ties-on-tomb-sweeping-day/1886018	4/7/2023	Huang Xilian	Manila Times
Full text of Chinese Ambassador Huang Xilian's remarks at the 8th Manila Forum	https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2023/04/17/2259558/full-text-chinese-ambassador-huang-xilians-remarks-8th-manila-forum	4/17/2023	Huang Xilian	Philippine Star

Jointly Building a Community with a Shared Future for Mankind: The Chinese Solution to Addressing Common Global Challenges for All Humanity	https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/01/16/opinion/contributors/jointly-building-a-community-with-a-shared-future-for-mankind-the-chinese-solution-to-addressing-common-global-challenges-for-all-humanity/1928192	1/16/2024	Huang Xilian	Manila Times
China Pulse: High-quality development and high-standard opening up	https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/08/21/opinion/contributors/china-pulse-high-quality-development-and-high-standard-opening-up/1965522	8/21/2024	Huang Xilian	Manila Times

Philippine-PRC Media Content-sharing Partnerships

To identify content-sharing partnerships between Philippine outlets and PRC state-owned media outlets, we conducted a Google search using the query:

site:[Philippine outlet website] "PRC outlet".

This search was applied to a wide range of Philippine media outlets, including television stations such as GMA 7, GNTV (GMA News TV), IBC 13, INC TV, NET 25, PTV 4, TV5, UNTV News and Rescue, ABS-CBN, SolarFlix (formerly ETC), and People's Television. We also searched print and online publications such as Abante, Abante Tonite, Balita, Bandera, Bulgar, BusinessMirror, BusinessWorld, Manila Bulletin, People's Tonight, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Philippine STAR, Pilipino Star Ngayon, SunStar, The Daily Tribune, and The Manila Times. Additionally, we searched radio stations including Radyo Singko (DWRM 92.3), Radyo La Verdad (DWUN 1350), DZBB 594 (GMA Network), Radyo Patrol (DZMM 630), Radyo ng Bayan/Philippine Broadcasting Service (DZRB 738), DZRH News/Manila Broadcasting Company (DZRH 666), ABS-CBN Radio, and Radio Mindanao Network.

In addition to traditional media outlets, we searched major online platforms such as GMA Network (gmanetwork.com), Inquirer (inquirer.net), Interaksyon (interaksyon.com), Malaya Business Insight (malaya.com.ph), Manila Bulletin (mb.com.ph), Philippine STAR (philstar.com), Rappler (rappler.com), SunStar (sunstar.com.ph), and The Daily Tribune (tribune.net.ph). Lastly, we included the Philippines News Agency in our search to identify any relevant content-sharing relationships. In some cases, the online outlet and the traditional outlet had the same website. This method helped identify any content-sharing relationships between these outlets and PRC media, including People's Daily (PDChina), China News Service, China Radio International (CRI), China Central Television (CCTV), Xinhua (XH News), China Global Television Network (CGTN), China Daily, and Global Times.

Along with the entries found in AidData's GPDDV3, the final list totaled 12 (11 outlets with the Philippine News Agency having two different content-sharing partnerships with a PRC state-owned media outlet).

Appendix E. Qualitative Profile of PRC Journalists Trainings

In the absence of quantitative data on the frequency and volume of journalist workshops in China attended by Philippine media personnel, the report's section *3.2 Training Philippine Journalists* profiles these programs through a targeted search using Factiva DNA, open-source sources, and key informant interviews. We describe the open-source research approach here.

The primary focus is on identifying media outreach and engagement efforts specifically targeting journalists, with a particular emphasis on those involving travel to mainland China. While not exhaustive, this exercise seeks to collect sufficient data to construct a comprehensive profile of the types of training provided.

Data Sources

- Factiva: <https://libraries.wm.edu/databases/factiva>
- Google Search Engine: <https://www.google.com/>

Search Query

For both Factiva and Google, the following search query was used:

Search Query:

("journalist" OR "journalists") AND ("train" OR "training" OR "workshop") AND "China"

- Factiva: Limit searches to the "Philippines" region and "English" language. Sort results by "Oldest First."
- Google: Review the first 200 hits.

Procedure

1. Search for instances of journalist training from 2015 to August 1, 2024, using Factiva and Google.
2. Scan article titles for relevance without clicking on every article, especially if clearly off-topic.
3. Identify articles that seem relevant to Philippine journalist trainings or the broader report context, including adjacent areas of interest.
4. Review the selected articles for direct relevance to Philippine journalist trainings.
5. Remove duplicates and set aside related articles that do not directly address Philippine journalist trainings.

Results

AidData's research team located 39 articles used to build this section, along with insights from Philippine expert interviews. We provide a sample of those results below. Please reach out to the corresponding authors for more details about this sample (Jonathan A. Solis).

Table E-1: Results of Journalist Trainings in China Query (sample)

Source	Article title	Article year	Article link
Google	China boosts soft power by training foreign journalists	2016	https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2016-10/17/content_27077588.htm
Google	PH journos take part in China's seminar for media practitioners	2019	https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1070144
Google	China starts training journalists from Asia-Pacific, Africa	2019	https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1063034
Google	An oral history of China's foreign press training programs	2019	https://www.cjr.org/special_report/china-foreign-journalists-oral-history.php
Google	US think tank wary of China-funded training for Filipino journalists	2020	https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2020/01/16/1985293/us-think-tank-wary-china-funded-training-filipino-journalists
Google	How China uses the news media as a weapon in its propaganda war against the West	2021	https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/news/how-china-uses-news-media-weapon-its-propaganda-war-against-west
Google	China Regional Snapshot: Exposing the CCP's Global Malign Influence	2021	https://foreignaffairs.house.gov/chinas-malign-global-influence-regional-snapshots/
Google	Beijing's Global Media Influence 2022: Philippines	2022	https://freedomhouse.org/country/philippines/beijings-global-media-influence/2022
Google	China's NRTA holds seminar for journalists and info officers	2023	https://mindanaotimes.com.ph/72501/
Google	More than 60 journos join China's exchange program	2023	https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1196510

Appendix F. Environmental, Social, and Governance Context

Sections 4.1.2 Project Procurement and Regulatory Concerns and *4.1.3 Environmental and Social Issues* of the report address the environmental and social challenges associated with PRC-funded projects and their media coverage. To enhance context, we delve further into how we conceptualize environmental, social, and governance (ESG) issues. For a more detailed exploration of ESG concerns related to PRC-funded projects, refer to Custer et al. (2024).

As adapted from Parks et al. (2023), the environmental safeguards criteria consider whether there is/are: (i) environmental clauses or conditions included in the agreement; (ii) a requirement to conduct an environmental impact assessment (EIA); (iii) a requirement to develop an environmental management plan (EMP); (iv) a requirement to report to the lender on implementation of EIA recommendations or the status of the EMP; (v) environmental conditions precedent for entry into force or disbursements; (vi) specifications that noncompliance of environmental rules, standards or laws is a sufficient basis to demand early repayment of the loan or cancel the loan; (vii) a requirement for the borrower to indemnify the lenders or guarantors against any loss or liability as a result of a breach of environmental law or standard; and (viii) a requirement to comply with international environmental standards.

As adapted from Parks et al. (2023), the social safeguards criteria consider whether there is/are: (i) social clauses or conditions included in the agreement; (ii) a requirement to conduct an environmental and social impact assessment (ESIA); (iii) a requirement to develop an environmental and social action plan (ESAP), a resettlement action plan (RAP), or the functional equivalent; (iv) a requirement for the borrower to report to the lender on its implementation of the ESIA recommendations or RAP; (v) social conditions set as a precedent for entry into force or disbursement; (vi) specifications that violating social standards/laws is a sufficient basis to demand early repayment of the loan or cancel the loan; and (vii) a requirement for the borrower to indemnify the lenders against any loss or liability as a result of a breach of a social law or standard.

As adapted from Parks et al. (2023), the governance safeguards criteria consider whether there is/are: (i) governance clauses or conditions included in the agreement; (ii) a requirement for independently audited financial statements; (iii) a requirement that the borrower's financial statements comply with International Financial Reporting Standards; (iv) competitive bidding requirements; (v) a requirement that bidding documents or bid evaluation reports be subject to prior approval by the lender; (vi) requirements regarding anti-corruption or anti-money laundering; (vii) a requirement to indemnify lenders, guarantors, or insurers against any loss or liability through the breach of a governance law or standard; and (viii) the right for the lender to prevent or investigate anti-corruption or anti-money laundering crimes.

Appendix G. LOESS Function (Figure 9)

A LOESS (Locally Estimated Scatterplot Smoothing) line is a type of non-parametric regression used to create smooth curves through scatterplots.⁴ It is particularly useful for visualizing trends in data that do not follow a simple linear pattern. LOESS works by fitting multiple regression models to localized subsets of data, allowing it to produce a curve that adapts to the shape of the data rather than assuming a single global pattern.

⁴ Cleveland and Devlin (1988).

The "local" aspect of LOESS means that, for each point on the x-axis, a regression is calculated using only the data points within a specified neighborhood, or window. The degree of smoothing depends on the width of this neighborhood, with smaller windows producing curves that closely follow the data points (less smoothing) and larger windows generating smoother, more generalized curves. LOESS is commonly used to identify patterns in noisy data, making it an effective tool for understanding complex or non-linear relationships.

Appendix H. Sources

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