

OUTLOOK AND STRATEGY

Market Review. The bond market was relatively flat end-July as participants stayed sidelined ahead of final details on the new RTB tranche, with the 10-year benchmark going down only about 2 bps on the month. Headline inflation printed benignly in July at roughly 0.9% year-on-year. At the same time, growth remains positive, with Q2 2025 GDP expanding around 5.5% year-on-year but still below the target of the BSP. Overall, the macro backdrop tilted toward lower rates, reflecting low inflation, slower but still-solid growth, and subdued volatility. Liquidity conditions stayed orderly, with limited knee-jerk moves across the curve. This combination left yields narrowly traded and anchored just below recent levels.

The Bureau of the Treasury announced RTB 519 with an initial offer size of PHP 200bn, pricing scheduled for 5 August, a public offer window through 15 August, and settlement on 20 August. Market expectations are that the accepted size will exceed the initial PHP 200bn, driven largely by the sizable R-513 maturity in August of around PHP 500bn, which will create strong rollover demand from institutional holders.

Looking ahead, the bias remains toward lower yields as benign inflation, slower growth and fading trade policy-related volatility. The combination of slower but still positive growth and the prospect of very strong demand for RTB 519 suggests continued compression, particularly in the belly of the curve. Key risks that could derail this path include a sudden global risk-off episode, materially higher imported inflation, or a surprise change in BSP guidance. For now, however, the prevailing view is that subdued inflation, ample demand for government supply, and a benign macro backdrop keep yields on a downward trajectory. Investors should monitor upcoming inflation prints and auction subscription results for confirmation.

The Philippine Stock Exchange Index (PSEi) suffered a 1.8% decline in July following a myriad of domestic and international macro-economic developments. The PSEi started off strong, on-pace to what it seemed like a breakout of the 6,500 level until overnight secondary share placements from two index heavyweights SM and SMPH pulled the market back. Corporate earnings also started to come out with mixed results. Meanwhile, on the international front, the US and the Philippines reached a tariff deal where Philippine exports to US will be levied by 19% while the US being charged with zero. Towards the end of the month, the benchmark index slumped even further as the peso weakened back to the 58-level following the US dollar's strength. The US Federal Reserve held its FOMC meeting where they decided to keep interest rates unchanged. After which, expectations of further rate cuts were somewhat trimmed following several favorable US economic data such as US Personal Consumption Expenditure still recording above targets and strong 2nd quarter US GDP at 3.0% quarter-on-quarter. The PSEi breached below the 6,300 level to close at 6,252.73 in July.

In terms of trading activity, the PSEi recorded an Average Daily Turnover of Php6.5 billion in July, or 1.07% lower on a month-on-month basis. Meanwhile, foreigners are still net sellers for the fourth straight month at US\$29 million, but with lower participation at 47%.

On a per stock basis, the top three index gainers for the month include: PGOLD (+11.11%), ICT (+9.00%) and EMI (+8.58%). Meanwhile, the bottom three performers were: BLOOM (-20.55%), AGI (-14.63%) and AEV (-9.17%).

Fund Performance. The Fund returned 0.88% for the month.

Fund Strategy. The Fund Manager will continue to build accrual income by investing in high grade corporate and government securities with attractive yields. Meanwhile, volatility in the global financial markets should provide opportunities for capital appreciation in riskier assets. The Fund will maintain nimble positions in order to take advantage of this. Investors in a multi-asset fund must have a longer time horizon as value is typically achieved over the long-term.