

OUTLOOK AND STRATEGY

Market Review. The Philippine fixed income market experienced a relatively stable month in March 2025, with modest movements in yields and continued investor interest in government securities. The BPI Philippine Government Bond Index returned 0.44% for the month as rates crept higher by 0.7 bps on average, mostly on the very short end of the curve. Both domestic and international factors, including central bank policies, inflation trends, and geopolitical developments affected yield movements for the period.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) kept its key policy rate at 5.75%, citing the need to balance inflation control with economic growth. Inflation for the month of February remained within the target range at 2.1% year-on-year, although there were concerns about potential upward pressures from global commodity prices.

Demand for government securities remained strong, particularly for short to medium-term bonds. The Bureau of the Treasury successfully auctioned off several tranches of Treasury bills and bonds, with yields awarded slightly lower than the previous month. Demand was quite healthy with oversubscriptions seen across all tenors, particularly the 5- and 7-year papers. Overall market sentiment was positive, supported by stable macroeconomic indicators and a favorable investment climate. Nonetheless, investors remained cautious amid the potential impact of US President Trump's tariffs on growth and inflation.

In March 2025, global equities experienced a notable decline, with the MSCI All Country World Index (ACWI) dropping by 3.95%, bringing the year-to-date performance to -1.32%. The US markets were the primary contributors to this downturn as the S&P 500 fell by 5.75% in March, marking its worst quarter since 2022. Heightened uncertainty surrounding tariff policies and potentially firmer inflation rates significantly impacted investor sentiment. The technology sector was particularly hard hit, with major companies like Nvidia and Tesla experiencing substantial losses.

Conversely, European markets showed resilience, with the MSCI Europe Index gaining 2.4% in March, driven by a recovery in China. Chinese tech giants such as Alibaba and Tencent posted strong gains, buoyed by positive developments in the AI sector. Despite the overall negative performance in developed markets, the energy sector emerged as a bright spot, recording gains both for the month and the quarter. Meanwhile, Japanese equities faced challenges, with the TOPIX and Nikkei 225 indices declining by 0.9% and 4.1%, respectively. Concerns over new tariff proposals and a rising yen contributed to the decline.

The mixed performance across different regions and sectors highlighted the ongoing volatility and uncertainty in the global equities markets..

Fund Performance. The Fund returned -0.10% 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.