ILO and Embassy of Finland renew partnership > page 2

Gender Audit > page 3

Partnerships to promote safety and health expanding > page 4

Decent Work for All

International Labour Organization

Quarterly Newsletter of the ILO in the Philippines

Volume 5, Issue 3 • October 2007

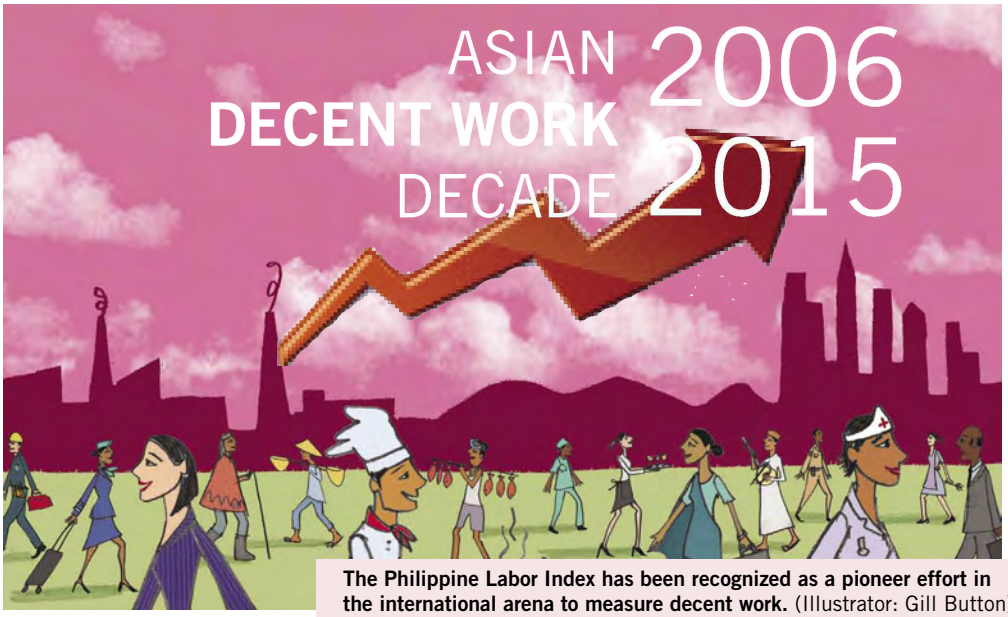
Putting youth employment at the center of policy agenda

By Lourdes Kathleen Cacho
Programme Assistant

The Asia Pacific Region must confront today's youth employment challenges, multiply and accelerate tripartite or government, employers and workers' efforts to promote decent and productive work in national and local policies.

The ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, ILO Training Center, ILO Headquarters and ILO Subregional Office in Manila organized a regional training workshop to strengthen the technical capacity of ILO constituents and staff who are engaged in policy design related to youth employment in Asia and the Pacific last 27-30 August. This tripartite workshop convened 32 representatives from governments, employers, workers, NGOs coming from nine participating countries in Asia, namely: China, India, Indonesia, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Vietnam.

Pro-youth, Pro-employment was the overall theme of the workshop. Hand-in-hand with partners and constituents, the ILO makes bold and brave steps towards integrating youth issues in national employment policy; expanding opportunities for relevant basic education; reforming technical and vocational education and training system to reduce skills mismatch and increase employability; developing school to work transition programmes along with labour market information and career guidance and increasing labor demand for young people through active labor market policies.



The Philippine Labor Index has been recognized as a pioneer effort in the international arena to measure decent work. (Illustrator: Gill Button)

Measuring progress towards better and decent jobs in the Philippines

By Minette Rimando
Senior Public Information Assistant

Christina, a 28-year old data encoder works on a contractual basis. For two years, she is struggling to find a regular job. "It is hard to change jobs every six months," said Christina "but I need to provide for my family so I have to settle for whatever work is available."

In the Philippines, the labour and employment statistics is relatively well organized but does not capture the full situation. Christina is not unemployed but the statistics do not reflect whether or not the Philippines has made progress in providing better and decent jobs.

The Department of Labor and Employment developed the Philippine Labor Index (PLI) to gauge progress and gaps in achieving decent work. Begun in 2001, PLI measures opportunities for work, freedom of choice of employment, productive work, equity in work, security at work and representation or dignity at work. It is expressed in index points where the perfect score is 100, the closer the value of the index to 100 indicates a more favourable labour situation.

In coming up with the PLI, the Philippines is a leader in assessing its own performance and evaluating decent work progress PLI joined the roster of official statistics in the Philippines with the signing of an agreement among data source agencies held in early 2007. This included the National Statistical and Coordination Board (NSCB), National Statistics Office (NSO), Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), Social Security System (SSS), Government Service Insurance System (GSIS), and AFP Retirement and Separation Benefits System (RSBS). A number of these agencies even gave access to statistics that are not usually released to the general public.

The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) will conduct regional activities to advocate the use of PLI and to gain better understanding. PLI was presented in a special session of the 10th National Convention on Statistics held on October 1-2, 2007.

"The ILO is in search of best ways to capture and measure decent work, but equally important is the political will to ensure that what is measured is acted upon," said Linda Wirth, ILO Subregional Director for South-East Asia and the Pacific.

Annual release of the PLI will help workers like Christina as it provides greater focus to policymakers and stakeholders on areas of labour and employment which must be strengthened.

Decent Work for All

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Linda Wirth

MANAGING EDITOR
Minette Rimando

CONTRIBUTORS
Lourdes Kathleen Cacho
Michihiro Ishibashi
Jesus Macasil, Jr.
Arthuso Malo-ay
Ma. Theresa Matibag
Diane Lynn Respall
Hilda Veronica Tidalgo
Sanchir Tugschimeg
Julita Yap

LAYOUT & DESIGN
Minette Rimando

Decent Work for All is published quarterly by the ILO Subregional Office in Manila. The electronic version can be accessed at www.ilo.org/manila. Opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect the views of the ILO.

ILO SUBREGIONAL OFFICE FOR SOUTH-EAST ASIA AND THE PACIFIC
19F Yuchengco Tower RCBC Plaza
6819 Ayala Avenue,
Makati City, Philippines
Tel. No. +63 (2) 580 9900
Fax. No. +63 (2) 580 9999
E-mail manila@ilomnl.org.ph
www.ilo.org/manila

EDITORIAL

Asian Decent Work Decade 2006-2015

Tripartite members (governments, workers and employers) of the ILO in the Asia Pacific region last year at the Asian Regional Meeting in Korea committed themselves to intensify their efforts up to 2015 to attain Decent Work for All in the Asian Pacific region.

The Decade seeks to link the goal of decent work with the global poverty reduction agenda through promoting coherence between social and economic policies so that economic growth translates into productive employment and decent work for all. This would help address the growing economic inequalities both within and between countries in the region, and thus, make an important contribution to the achievement of a fair globalization and the Millennium Development Goals.

Support of the ILO secretariat to the Asian Decent Work Decade is primarily through the implementation of Decent Work Country Programs (DWCP). These are results based programs aligned to both national priorities and the globally specified operational objectives adopted by the Organization within the four pillars of the ILO strategic framework: employment, rights at work, social protection and social dialogue. The DWCPs are also the ILO contribution to the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF).

In the Philippines, by the end of 2007 the tripartite constituents will be completing the second phase of the National Plan of Action for Decent Work (NPADW) and preparing for the third phase up to 2010. ILO Manila staff will be reviewing the effectiveness of the current DWCP (2006-07) in supporting the NPADW and preparing the next 2 year cycle of the DWCP for 2008-09. A key issue to address is how to better strategically prioritize together with the Philippine constituents among the many burning issues, needs and demands of the Decent work Agenda and to systematically and comprehensively follow through on these to achieve with limited resources significant outcomes that can assist men and women in the Philippines to work their way out of poverty.

Linda Wirth
Director

ILO and Embassy of Finland renew partnership with indigenous peoples to reduce poverty and promote human rights

The Embassy of Finland and the International Labour Organization renewed their partnership with the signing of the second project agreement aimed at reducing poverty and promoting human rights among indigenous peoples.

In the Philippines, most of the estimated 13.5 million indigenous peoples or about 17 per cent of the population are marginalized. They face poverty, oppression, discrimination and exploitation. From being custodians of the land, they now confront the challenge of being the poorest of the poor in their own country.

Since 2000, the Embassy of Finland has partnered with the ILO to assist indigenous peoples, using a community-driven approach where indigenous peoples themselves are involved.

In 2005, the area of Lake Sebu, Cotabato ranked as the 57th poorest province out of 82 provinces in the Philippines. Named as the Summer Capital of South Cotabato, Lake Sebu has the biggest concentration of indigenous peoples population with over 54,000 (2000).

The remoteness of Lake Sebu has resulted in marginalization and poverty, with indigenous peoples not having access to basic social services including health and education. However, major tribes in Lake Sebu such as the T'bolis are known for weaving colorful T'nalak made of fine Abaca fibers, as well as for their brassware production and fishing skills.

In 2006, the ILO and Embassy of Finland assisted indigenous peoples in Lake Sebu, South Cotabato through a three-year project and signed the first year Finland-ILO agreement. This resulted to increased awareness of indigenous peoples' rights. Two domain-wide federations of Ubos and T'bolis were also formed enabling indigenous men and women to manage, access and control their ancestral domains.

Ambassador Riita Resch of the Embassy of Finland (left) with ILO Director Linda Wirth

On September 17, 2007, Ambassador Riita Resch of the Embassy of Finland and ILO Director Linda Wirth reaffirmed their commitment of assisting indigenous peoples through the second agreement which will continue to cover the area of Lake Sebu, South Cotabato. This Finland-ILO agreement will include activities on upholding human rights and para-legal training. Indigenous groups will also identify income and employment opportunities, conduct training on sustainable livelihood and entrepreneurship, set-up small and micro enterprises as well as develop investments and mechanisms to mitigate environmental threats.

Participatory Gender Audit
A tool for organizational change

By Hilda Tidalgo
Senior Programme Assistant

Government, representatives from employers and workers' organizations, academe, non-government organizations, United Nations agencies, and the Supreme Court joined the Participatory Gender Audit (PGA) held on August 7-10 in Olongapo City.

The PGA as it is commonly called is an ILO tool for organizational change. This tool was developed and enhanced by the Gender Bureau in Geneva since year 2000 based on a Dutch development cooperation model. As a tool and at the same time a process, the PGA is done in a participatory manner to promote organizational learning at the individual, work unit and organizational levels on how to practically and effectively mainstream gender equality. The Gender Bureau has been conducting PGAs in Africa, South Asia and in other member countries of the ILO.

Participants in the Gender Audit.

The Philippine PGA was received well by the participants as this was the first time all of them have undergone this kind of training. They all agreed the practicality and relevance of the process and its potential application in their respective organizations. They also realized the PGA can also establish a baseline, spot critical gaps and challenges and recommend ways and solutions, and also identifies good practices in their organizations. Another realization by the participants was the fact that the PGA is a "social audit" and it belongs to the category of "quality audits" and not as intimidating as the traditional financial audit.

Apart from the participants' respective plans to echo their newly acquired skill to their respective organizations, another motivating factor for them was ILO's encouragement to support those who are willing to establish teams as PGA facilitators. These teams will be called upon to facilitate gender audits in different organizations who may request for their services. The ILO will provide technical updating for these teams.

ILO internship for indigenous peoples

The International Labour Organization has launched an internship programme for indigenous and tribal peoples. Arthuso Maloay also known as Datu Pignanawan was one of the first batch of interns. Art comes from the Higaonon tribe, one of the 118 indigenous communities in the Philippines.

The Higaonon tribe are living in between the mountain ranges of Mindanao. Most of their forests reserves, however, have been depleted due to illegal logging. In 2005, Art led the formation of Apo Ginopakan Higaonon Tribal Council to protect and conserve the remaining tropical forests. He organized a small consumers' cooperative to provide sustainable livelihood. After his internship at the ILO, Art or Datu Pignanawan will continue to serve his community through initiatives that will provide greater employment and income opportunities. He also hopes to gain more knowledge in protecting and promoting the rights of indigenous peoples as well as in addressing issues faced by indigenous peoples in the country.

EVENTS CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER-NOVEMBER 2007

- Consultations on the Matrix on Extent of Philippine Compliance to the ILO Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 (October)
- Capacity Building for Trade Union Youth Leaders (October 4-6)
- Case Conference: Featuring Good CSR Initiatives on Youth Employability, Entrepreneurship an Equal Opportunity Including Partnership of Jollibee with STEAM on Training and Employment of Deaf Youth (October 14)
- Strategic Youth Development and Employment Program Agenda for 2007-2010, Inter-government (September 20-22)
- Final Evaluation of the Training of Rural Economic Empowerment Project (September 24-28)
- Strategic Youth Development and Employment Program Agenda for 2007-2010, Public-Private Sector (September 26)
- Consultation-Meeting on the Catalogue of Skills and LivelihoodTraining Programmes and Other Support Services, ILO Human Trafficking Project (September 5)
- Launching of Career Guidance Tool Kit for Youth Employment Service Providers and for Job-seeking Youth (September-October 2007)
- Results-Based Management Workshop (October 10-11)
- Follow-up Workshop on ODA-Gender and Development Harmonized Guidelines (October 15-17)
- Launching of the Localized Know About Business (October 2007)
- Philippine Youth Employment Project Conference (November 2007)
- Orientation and Planning Workshop for DOLE Focal Persons of Indigenous Peoples' Desks in all Regions (November 2007)

Improving effectiveness of employers' organizations in the Pacific

By Sanchir Tugschimeg
Employers' Activities Specialist

Strengthening employers' organizations is one of the strategic priorities for the ILO. An employers' organization is necessary for business to defend and advance its collective interests in the labour market and to provide value-added services. To fulfill its role effectively, an employers' organization need to have well-organized and accountable internal structures, capable staff, advocacy, membership management and service strategies.

These issues have been a subject of the training workshop organized by the ILO Subregional Office in Manila in August 2007 in cooperation with International Training Centre in Turin and International Organization of Employers in Sydney, Australia. The workshop gathered senior employer organization and chamber officials from Fiji, Kiribati, PNG, Timor Leste, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.

The workshop was hosted by Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and its regional affiliate NSW Business Chamber. The workshop was conducted by highly qualified practitioners from Australia, New Zealand, experts from ILO and IOE.

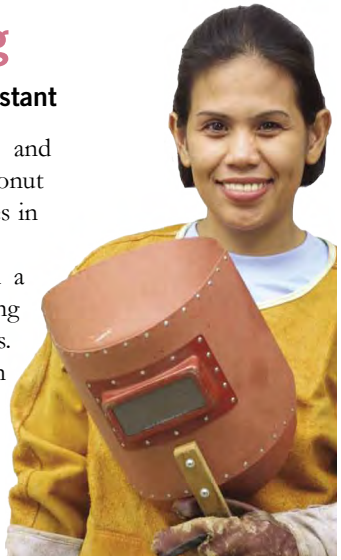
As a rare opportunity for the Pacific employers to get together, the workshop was addressed by the CEO of the ACCI, the CEO of the NSW Business Chamber and the President of the ATUC. Peter Anderson, the Director, Workplace Policy of ACCI and a Member of the ILO Governing Body set out the economic, political and social context in the Pacific sub-region which has major implications on the issues and challenges faced by employers and their organizations.

Participants of the workshop had an opportunity to get acquainted with the operations of NSW Business Chamber which is one of the most representative and successful business service organizations.

During the workshop, participants exchanged experience, ideas and initiatives and developed concrete action points to improve effectiveness of various aspects of their organizations' operations using presented tools and methodologies.

Partnerships to Promote Safety and Health expanding

By Michihiro Ishibashi, Senior Specialist on Workers' Activities and Jess Macasil Jr., Programme Assistant



Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) deals with the protection of workers in all occupations from work-related injuries and diseases; it calls for the promotion and maintenance of the highest degree of physical, mental and social well-being of workers. The ILO has set forth that workers should be protected from sickness, disease and injury arising from their employment.

The reality for millions of workers, however, is different. The ILO estimates that 2.2 million work-related deaths occur annually. Meanwhile, an estimated 160 million people suffer from work-related diseases. The ILO's estimates in economic terms show that about 4 per cent of the world's annual GDP is lost as a consequence of occupational diseases and accidents. The importance of these trends cannot be underestimated in a country like the Philippines. Some 750,000 or about 93 per cent of the total establishments in the country account for the bulk of own-account workers with low skills working under precarious employment conditions. According to the Occupational Safety and Health Center, only some 2.2 million workers out of the total 33 million in the labor force enjoy effective OSH protection and services.

To bolster efforts to improve the situation, the ILO Subregional Office in Manila has been supporting the broadening of alliances in the Philippines with regards the implementation and promotion of OSH programmes. For instance, it has extended the support to Department of Labour and Employment (DOLE) in enhancing its implementation of the Labor Standards Enforcement Framework (LSEF), including OSH standards, especially because of the role this framework gives to employers and workers groups in enforcing labor standards. Partnerships were also established with the Department of Agrarian Reform to bring OSH services within reach among farmers. Called the OSH-WIND program (Work Improvement and Neighborhood Development), farmers were trained to respond to specific problems related to agricultural safety and health. Based on practical measures to improve living and working conditions, the WIND programme has now been scaled up to the whole rice-producing province of Isabela and extended to other crops (banana, coconut and sugarcane) in three more provinces in the Philippines.

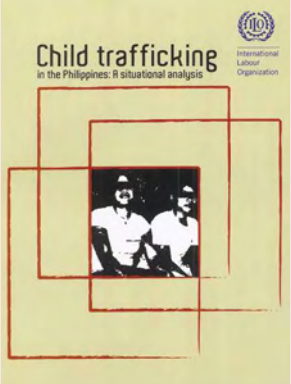
Recently, trade unions have taken a major step forward in further promoting safety and health in the workplaces. Spearheaded by the Trade Union Congress of the Philippines (TUCP) and with the support of ILO's Programme for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV) and Japanese International Labour Foundation (JILAF), a Training of Trainers was conducted for trade union leaders in Mindanao on an approach called Participation-Oriented Safety Improvements by Trade Union Initiatives, or POSITIVE. The POSITIVE method was originally developed by JILAF and the Institute for Science of Labour (ISL) as an action-oriented workplace OSH improvement programme for trade unions, and has been practiced by TUCP within its organization. The joint TOT was the first held in the Philippines, involving a group of national and industrial trade unions, with an aim to further proliferate POSITIVE method and to improve OSH situations at various workplaces in the country.

The four-day training consisted of several sessions aimed at increasing the trade unions' understanding of OSH and the POSITIVE methodology and developing their skills on six technical areas, namely: (1) Material Handling, (2) Machine Safety, (3) Workstation Changes, (4) Physical Environment, (5) Welfare Facilities, and (6) Environmental Protection. Trade union officials who graduated from the programme now comprise the first batch of trainers on POSITIVE. They also provide strong evidence that the expansion of OSH advocates will surely go on. ILO Subregional Office in Manila and JILAF plan to organize the joint TOT in other cities in coming years with cooperation of TUCP.

MUST READS

Child trafficking in the Philippines: A situational analysis

The Philippines is a signatory and/or a Party to a number of international human rights instruments that promote and protect the rights of women and children. Despite efforts of the government to be true to its commitments, child trafficking continues unabated. This publication features child trafficking assessment model, vulnerability index and specific interventions.

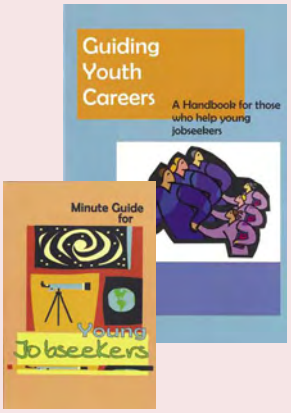


Guiding Youth Careers

This handbook is intended for use by those who help young jobseekers and those who influence the youth in their career and job search.

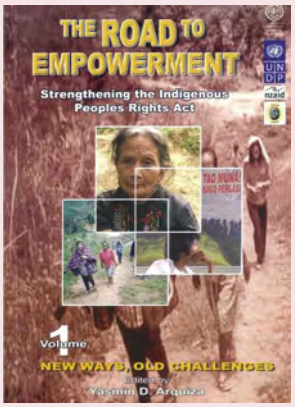
Minute Guide for Young Jobseekers

This Minute Guide is a self-help guide intended to assisst young jobseekers especially new graduates, school leavers, and out-of-school and unemployed youth in their job search.



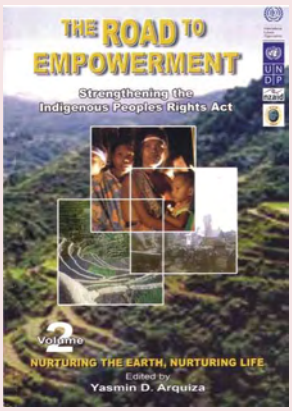
The Road to Empowerment (Vol. 1) New Ways, Old Challenges

This is the first in a two-volume series that looks at various aspects of the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act to support further policy and programme development. The book aims to assist development planners in moving forward with the implementation of the IPRA law and substantively address the problems of the country's indigenous communities.



The Road to Empowerment (Vol. 2) Nurturing the Earth, Nurturing Life

In the second of this two-volume series, the relevance of indigenous knowledge systems and practices in formulating strategies takes center stage. The book feature stories and experiences of indigenous communities in the hope to inspire well-meaning groups and individuals that are working to bring about positive change for indigenous peoples.



For information on the library and publications, please contact Ms. Julita Yap, Library and Documentation Assistant at 580 9900 or e-mail yap@ilomnl.org.ph