



Strengthening the Impact of Trade on Employment in the Philippines (STRENGTHEN)



AT A GLANCE

→ Partners

Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), Department of Agriculture (DA), Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR), Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA), Department of Science and Technology (DOST), Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), workers' organizations and trade unions, employers' and business groups, joint foreign chambers (JFCs), exporters' federations, and fair trade associations.

→ Donor

European Union

→ Duration

February 2016 to September 2019

→ Target beneficiaries

National government agencies, trade and employment policymaking bodies and offices, workers' organizations, Philippine export-oriented sectors and industries, workers in export-oriented sectors, and small and medium enterprises (SMEs)

→ Geographical focus

National and Sectoral in approach



PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Global objective:

The project aims to strengthen the employment dimension in policies and programmes related to international trade with better analysis, more coherent policy-making, and enhanced programmes that are designed to encourage employment creation and upgrading. This project will support the Philippines in leveraging industries that are competitive in international trade towards providing more opportunities for decent work within the country and raising the number of workers who are productively employed.

Specific objectives:

- To generate and improve knowledge on both the positive and negative impacts of international trade on productive and decent employment in the Philippines.
- To build the capacities of Filipino technical specialists, researchers and development partners from key government agencies, relevant social partners and other concerned stakeholders to not only identify, measure and assess the impact of international trade on employment but also to use the evidence to formulate sound and strategic trade, employment and industrial policies.
- To establish an institutional and multi-sectoral platform for representatives of relevant Philippine ministries and social partners to engage in policy discussions on the effects of international trade on employment and to formulate and recommend more effective, coherent and inclusive policies for this in the Philippines.
- To enhance employment opportunities within the Philippines arising from trade policies through technical support for the development of skills in export activities and the promotion of export-oriented value chains and industries that are job-rich.





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MAIN ACTIVITIES

- Conduct, publication and dissemination of country studies and reports assessing the effects of trade on employment in the Philippines.
- Review of trade and employment programs and policies, export strategies and industrial roadmaps.
- Series of sectoral consultations and social dialogues with government, labour, business, exporters, SMEs, etc.
- Conduct and holding of capacity-building training workshops on assessing employment impacts of trade in the Philippines for technical specialists and staff from government, labor, business, and other stakeholders to improve trade and employment policy-making.
- Establishment of a Policy Working Group (PWG) on trade and employment.
- Application of ILO tools on skills development and value chain improvement: Skills for Trade and Economic Diversification (STED) and Trade and Value Chains in Employment-Rich Activities (TRAVERA).

PROJECT OUTCOMES

- Review of trade and employment policies and programmes which looked into the historical and political economy background of trade, labour and employment policies, measures and strategies implemented over the years.
- Enhanced the capacities of tripartite constituents in assessing the effects of trade on employment through a series of technical workshops, capacity-building activities, and the development analytical tools and materials.
- Supported the process of formulating the Philippine Export Development Plan (PEDP) 2018 to 2022 toward ensuring that the employment implications of export priorities are taken into account.
- Assessed the institutional trade mechanisms as to its focus on the labour and employment agenda.
- Opened social dialogue channels on trade and its employment implications to ensure that trade policies and agreements reflect the needs of tripartite stakeholders.
- Focused on the employment and skills challenges of three non-traditional coconut products as a key export sector recognized for its strong potential for employment creation.

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