



Towards a Child-Labour Free Philippines: Supporting the Philippine Programme against Child Labour Building on Past Gains and Addressing Challenges

The Challenge



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In an ideal society, children spend time studying as they prepare to become productive members of their community.

In the real setting however, many children are trapped in economic activities as they are forced to help their parents survive and meet daily living costs. This situation speaks very well of the condition of many children in the Philippines. The number of children forced to work remains alarming in the Philippines, especially in rural areas.

Some working children have no choice but to skip classes, while some totally withdraw from school. While this could also be due to the inaccessibility of schools in their areas, the problem highlights the lack of job opportunities of parents pushing many young hands to get engaged in economic activities. Poverty can be considered the culprit on the prevalence of child labour. No parents would like to see their children working. If parents have access to decent and productive work, they will be able to support their children and send them to school. Education is the path to a better life as it opens opportunities for children trapped in child labour.

The Response

The Philippine Government showed its commitment to eliminate the worst forms of child labour by ratifying the International Labour Organization (ILO) Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182) and acting quickly to launch a Time-Bound Programme. This commitment is expressed in the goal of Philippine Program against Child Labor (PPACL) to reduce worst forms of child labour by 75 per cent by 2015. The ILO, through the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC), supports this goal towards decent work and improved living conditions.

The ILO-IPEC commits to help in reducing the cases of child labour. This ILO Programme assumes responsibility of giving direct services to 9,350 children involved in child labour in the Philippines. These direct services will lead to the withdrawal of 5,500 from worst forms of child labour, and prevention of 3,350 who are at risk. Meanwhile, some 500 working children aged 15-17 will be reached by interventions that protect their safety and welfare.

Operations are being conducted in four demonstration provinces, namely: Northern Samar, Quezon, Bukidnon, and Masbate. All are rural areas identified by the stakeholders based on the existing child labour conditions.

Key Statistics

- There are 29 million children aged 5 to 17 years old.
- Of this number, 5.49 million or 19 per cent are working.
- 3.21 million of these working children are engaged in child labour.
- 2.99 million of these child labourers are exposed to biological, chemical, and physical hazards.
- Of these children in hazardous child labour, 67 per cent are boys and 33 per cent are girls.
- Of those in hazardous child labour, 62 per cent are in agriculture, 30 per cent in agriculture and 8 per cent in industry.

Source: Preliminary Results, 2011 Survey on Children, National Statistics

Objectives

Development objective:

- To contribute to the PPACL's goal of reducing the worst forms of child labour by 75 per cent by 2015 by preventing, protecting, and reintegrating child workers.

Immediate objectives:

- Information on child labour will feed into national and local child labour policy and programme design, implementation, and evaluation.
- The national and local child labour committees and social partners have clearer mandates and responsibilities and improved capacities for policy development, enforcement, and child labour monitoring.
- Models to withdraw working children and prevent children at-risk from working are developed, piloted, and documented.
- The child labour agenda is made an integral part of national development frameworks and local development programming; with local governments supported in coordinating resource allocations for child labour action.

Relevant ILO Conventions and Recommendations

- Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138)
- Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182)
- Worst Forms of Child Labour Recommendation, 1999 (No. 190)

Achievements

- The Child Labour Knowledge Sharing System (CLKSS), an internet-based knowledge sharing portal, was rolled out and has 629 registered users and an average of 1,040 visitors per month as of September 2012.
- Delivery of educational, health, and psychosocial services to 9,350 children is on-going and as of September 2012 6,533 have been withdrawn and prevented from child labour.
- The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) and the National Child Labor Committee (NCLC) supported in organizational development activities, the launch of the Batang Malaya campaign and the coming up of a National Convergence Action Plan to Eliminate Child Labour by 2016.
- Ten cities and municipalities have passed local development plans with anti-child labour targets with provisions for budget allocation. The Province of Northern Samar has passed provincial ordinance allocating Php1,000,000 a year for child labour elimination activities.



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Components

Donor: United States Department of Labor (USDOL)

Acronym: IPEC

Start Date: September 2009

End Date: September 2013

Budget: US\$ 4.75 million

Partners: NCLC, Provincial Child Labor Committees in project sites, DOLE and other Government Agencies, Trade Unions, and Employers' Federations

Project Sites: Provinces of Quezon, Masbate, Northern Samar, and Bukidnon

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