

Process Documentation:

**Regional Consultation on Interventions to Promote
Exclusive Breastfeeding in the Formal Workplace**

**Organized by the Sub-Technical Working Group on
Exclusive Breastfeeding in the Workplace
24 September 2010
Lantaka Hotel by the Sea, Zamboanga City**

With support from the International Labour Organization (ILO)

1 BACKGROUND and OBJECTIVES¹

The Joint Programme (JP) on Ensuring Food Security and Nutrition for Children 0–24 Months Old is a three-year programme launched in November 2009 to contribute to the Philippines' efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), particularly on eradicating extreme poverty and hunger (MDG1) by addressing malnutrition among 0-5 children and reducing child mortality rate through improved breastfeeding and complementary feeding practices.

Under the Joint Programme, the *International Labour Organization (ILO)*, in partnership with the *Department of Labor and Employment-Bureau of Workers with Special Concerns (DOLE-BWSC)*, *National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC)*, *Trade Union Congress of the Philippines (TUCP)* and other workers groups, and *Employers Confederation of the Philippines (ECOP)*, have come together and formed a Sub-Technical Working Group (Sub-TWG) that will engage national stakeholders including government agencies, employers' organizations, workers' organizations and other social partners to promote rights of breastfeeding mothers and workers with family responsibilities in formal and informal workplaces. The programme will be implemented in three cities, namely Naga City, Iloilo City and Zamboanga City. For the informal sector, ILO's efforts will be focused on developing models of workplace interventions and demonstrate them in the three JP cities.

1.1 Objectives:

The one-day **Consultation on Interventions to Promote Exclusive Breastfeeding in the Formal Workplace** in Zamboanga City is the second in a series of city-wide consultations under the MDG-F JP.

Organized and led by the Sub-TWG on Exclusive Breastfeeding in the workplace and with support from the ILO, the consultation aims to:

- a) Raise awareness and knowledge of Family Welfare focal persons and other stakeholders in the workplaces on EBF and its relation to RA 10028 and the MDGs;
- b) Assess the implementation of the Family Welfare Programme (FWP) and identify emerging initiatives and good practices on EBF promotion among companies; and
- c) Engage local tripartite partners and other key stakeholders to generate recommendations and develop strategies in strengthening the FWP through EBF promotion in the workplace.

¹ Background and Objectives were culled-out from the Terms of Reference on Regional Consultation on Interventions to Promote Exclusive Breastfeeding in the Formal Workplace

PROGRAMME

Time	Activity/Session	Resource person(s)
8:00-9:00	Arrival of participants and registration	
9:00-9:30	Opening Programme/Preliminaries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening remarks • Introduction of participants • Expectations check • Orientation of the programme flow 	Mr Yahya A. Centi <i>Assistant Regional Director</i> <i>DOLE Region IX</i>
Thematic Session I: International and national framework on EBF promotion		
9:30-10:00	Workshop 1: Mapping of perceptions and practices on EBF	Ms Rhodora Buenaventura <i>Manager, CSR Department, ECOP</i>
10:00-10:30	RA 10028 Otherwise known as the “Expanded Breastfeeding Promotion Act of 2009” and other related laws	Mr Robert Cudal <i>Senior Labor and Employment Officer</i> <i>DOLE-BWSC</i>
10:30-10:45	Coffee break	
10:45-11:15	Millennium Development Goals and the MDG-F Joint Programme on Ensuring Food Security and Nutrition for Children 0-24 months	Ms Ana Liza U. Valencia <i>Project Coordinator,</i> <i>MDG-F CFSN, ILO</i>
11:15-12:00	Open forum	
12:00-1:00	Lunch break	
1:00-1:30	Decent work through promotion of exclusive breastfeeding in the workplace	Ms Ana Liza U. Valencia
Thematic Session II: Good practices and existing workplace mechanisms to promote exclusive breastfeeding		
1:30-2:00	Family welfare programme (FWP) and other tripartite mechanisms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FWP overview 	Mr Robert Cudal
2:00-2:30	Other tripartite mechanisms on EBF promotion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employers’ Confederation of the Philippines (ECOP) 	Ms Dang Buenaventura
2:30-3:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trade Union Congress of the Philippines and other workers groups 	Ms Florencia Cabatingan Vice Chair for Basic Sector National Anti-Poverty Commission
3:00-3:30	Open forum	
3:30-3:45	Coffee break	
Thematic Session III: Strengthening EBF promotion in the workplace: Ways of moving forward		
3:45-5:00	Workshop/Groupwork <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Identify existing programmes and mechanisms in the workplace • Gaps and Challenges vis-à-vis FWP • Recommendations and next steps vis-à-vis MDG-F Joint Programme CFSN 	
5:00-5:30	Closing ceremonies	Ms Jazmin Cinco , FWP Coordinator

1.2 Profile of participants:

The city-based consultation was attended by 36 participants representing the *DOLE-Region IX, Employer's Confederation of the Philippines-Zambasulta, Family Welfare Committees, business establishments, and members of the Sub-TWG on EBF in the workplaces.*

Of the 36 participants, 22 individuals represented 15 establishments. Composition of participants and establishments are shown below:

- 19-female
- 3-male

Designation/Position

- 11- Human Resource Personnel
- 8-Clinicians
- 3-Workers Representatives

Nature/Type of establishments:

- 8- Food and Beverage
- 3- Services
- 2- Health Services
- 2- Construction

2 CONTENT

2.1 Introduction

The Regional Consultation commenced with a message from **Mr Yahya A. Centi**, *Assistant Regional Director of the DOLE-Region IX*. In his message, ARD Centi enjoined participants to actively contribute to the consultation organized by the Sub-TWG on EBFW.

He said that at present, women dominate the labour sector and their contributions are considered vital to economic, health, and social development. Thus, it is essential to promote polices and services in the workplaces, including breastfeeding, to further increase productivity, competitiveness and employability.

In response to the JP, workers and government officials were encouraged to link and work together to forward the MDGs. ARD Centi said that development should not only be based on economic growth but the ability to develop and nurture future leaders for nation building. This could be addressed by encouraging and promoting EBF in the workplaces because he believes that "breastfed is best fed."

After ARD Centi's Opening Remarks, **Ms Jazmin Cinco**, *DOLE-Region IX's Family Welfare Programmeme Focal Person*, introduced the participating establishments.

Meanwhile, **Ms Annavic Cordova**, DOLE Region IX's LEO II, continued on by facilitating the Expectations Check Activity.

After the short activity, Ms Cordova summarized participants' output and presented the programme objectives, process and flow. The following summary points are shown below:

Participants expectations	Participants expectations vis-à-vis programme objectives
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To be aware of Laws, Legislations and policies supporting the implementation of exclusive breastfeeding in the workplace 2. What is RA 10028 or the Expanded Breastfeeding Act of 2009 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. To gain knowledge on workplace-mandatory provisions of the Law b. What are the existing regulatory initiatives/implementing guidelines of the law? c. What are the roles of participating agencies in the implementation of RA 10028 (government, companies and workers) 3. What is Exclusive Breastfeeding (Importance and Advantages in the workplace)? 4. What are the strategies to promote breastfeeding in the workplace? 5. How to sustain breastfeeding policies in the workplace? 	<p>Objective 1: Raise awareness and knowledge of Family Welfare focal persons and other stakeholders in the workplaces on EBF and its relation to RA 10028 and the MDGs;</p> <p>--The consultation shall provide the National and International Framework on EBF Promotion, including RA 10028. Hence, questions on content and implementation procedures will be addressed during the session.</p> <p>--A basic overview of breastfeeding will be presented via sessions on RA 10028 and tripartite mechanisms on EBF promotion.</p> <p>Objective 2: Assess the implementation of the FWP and identify emerging initiatives and good practices on EBF promotion among companies; and</p> <p>--Resource persons will share practical measures and concrete experiences related to workplace promotion of exclusive breastfeeding. The discussion/s hope to serve as guideline for participants in identifying applicable interventions and strategies on EBF in their respective setting.</p> <p>Objective 3: Engage local tripartite partners and other key stakeholders to generate recommendations and develop strategies in strengthening the FWP through EBF promotion in the workplace.</p> <p>--A consultation workshop is specifically designed for participants to map-out and identify existing interventions, strategies and practices on EBF and</p>

	<p>other maternity protection mechanisms in the workplace. The workshop hopes to elicit participants' recommendations and plans on how to implement and integrate EBF in their workplaces, particularly using/identifying FWP as platform of advocacy</p> <p>--The workshop also hopes to elicit participants' recommendations and plans on how to implement and integrate EBF in their workplaces.</p>
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Expectations based on process	Programme objectives and overview
1. Competent Resource Persons/Speakers	--The Sub-TWG on EBFW made sure that Resource Persons from the ILO, NNC, ECOP, TUCP, DOLE and FFWP are knowledgeable, credible and skilled in their areas of discussion.
2. Interactive process utilizing powerpoint presentations, open forum and sharing of best practices	--The consultation has three basic processes: lecture/discussion, open forum and activity. The programme shall also provide a venue for establishments to share good practices and interventions on EBF in the workplace.

2.2 Thematic Session I: International and national framework on EBF promotion

For the first part of the consultation, resource persons provided input on international and national framework on EBF promotion. These presentations were essential in providing perspective to practices, interventions and strategies related to promotion of exclusive breastfeeding and other maternity protection measures in the workplaces.

a. **Workshop 1: Mapping of perceptions and practices on EBF**

Ms Rhodora Buenaventura, Manager for Corporate Social Responsibility, ECOP

Ms Rhodora Buenaventura facilitated the group workshop on *"Mapping of Perceptions and Practices on EBF."*

Several statements on breastfeeding were presented and participants were to choose if they agree or disagree. Results of the activity show participants' low awareness on breastfeeding as reflected in their responses. To address prevailing myths and misconceptions, facts and data on breastfeeding and appropriate infant and young child feeding were provided.

The facilitator emphasized the need to dispel myths and misconceptions in order to create an enabling environment for breastfeeding. She said that participants can help contribute by

relaying information to their co-workers especially to nursing employees and to facilitate the process of continuing breastfeeding even at work.

b. ***RA 10028 otherwise known as the “Expanded Breastfeeding Promotion Act of 2009” and other related laws***

Mr Robert Cudal, Senior Labor and Employment Officer, DOLE-BWSC

Mr Robert Cudal provided an overview of RA 10028. He reiterated ARD Centi’s message that DOLE is not only involved with addressing employment/labour issues but also personal concerns affecting the workforce and these include balancing work-life responsibilities. He shared that the agency has the capacity to influence and enforce policies and programmes and is instrumental in harnessing productivity, employability and development of workers.

In relation to RA 10028, DOLE is an active member of the technical working group crafting the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR). As mentioned, the consultation shall help them gather insights and recommendations related to the law and hopefully, results and inputs will be integrated in the final discussion of the IRR.

Other points discussed were:

- The amended law recognizes the following roles of the state:
 - a.) protect working women by providing an enabling environment where they can combine family obligations with work responsibilities. In particular, establishments should be able to provide necessary facilities and opportunities that will enhance their welfare and realize their full potential.
 - b.) promote and encourage breastfeeding and provide the specific measures that could present opportunities for mothers to continue expressing their milk and/or breastfeeding their infant or young child.

Applicability of the Law to the workplace

- Specific to the workplace, all establishments whether public or private are mandated to:
 - ✓ Establish lactation stations-mandatory with exemptions.
 - ✓ Nursing employees should be granted lactation periods in addition to regular time-off. Lactation breaks are mandatory and should be not less than 40 minutes with pay.
 - ✓ Establishments must conduct advocacy work, information dissemination and reproduction of IEC materials among its constituents.
- The lead implementing agency is the Department of Health (DOH). DOLE and other government and non-government agencies concerned shall issue guidelines related to

their function and setting. In terms of tasking, the following agencies shall assume the following:

- ✓ DOH- issue requirements and guidelines in setting-up of lactation stations. It is also the lead agency tasked to evaluate lactation facilities established by hospitals and issue certification related to application for tax exemption.
- ✓ DOLE-tasks to come-up with operational guidelines for exemptions in relation to establishment of lactation facilities in the workplaces.
- ✓ BIR -issue administrative requirements on application for tax incentives.
- ✓ DepEd and ChEd will take lead in integrating E/BF in curricula.

In conclusion, Mr Cudal shared that the law is one of the means to achieve the MDGs. Through promotion of exclusive breastfeeding in the workplaces, everyone has a role and contribution in realizing the goals of reducing poverty and improving the lives and health of workers especially their children.

c. ***Millennium Development Goals and the MDG-F Joint Programme on Ensuring Food Security and Nutrition for Children 0-24 months***

M. Ana Liza Valencia, *Project Coordinator, MDG-F 2030, ILO Country Office for the Philippines*

Ms Ana Liza Valencia presented an overview of the MDG-F JP. Her discussion lay-down the bases for the Programme and how the Philippines, as represented by various agencies (international, national, local, non-government, etc.) will work towards addressing the MDGs.

She further explained that the Spanish government provided funding to the Philippines to help respond to the MDG targets. Under the *JP*, key stakeholders and partners shall work together towards eradicating extreme poverty and hunger and reducing malnutrition and infant mortality by promotion of desirable *Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF)* practices, specifically *exclusive breastfeeding in the first six months of life and complementary feeding with continued breastfeeding by the six month*.

For ILO, it aims to increase exclusive breastfeeding rate by 20 per cent annually by providing support to mothers in the workplaces to continue breastfeeding. The organization also hopes to provide technical support to its tripartite constituents in promoting and implementing laws in relation to the programme, i.e. RA 10028.

Ms Valencia emphasized that employers, workers and their families stand to benefit from the promotion of exclusive breastfeeding because it would enrich their professional and personal lives. She said that the impact to the business sector would be favorable because nursing mothers get to balance work and family responsibilities leading to increased productivity and competitiveness. Also, children would be healthier and well-rounded

individuals with the potential of contributing to the development of the region and nation as a whole.

d. ***Decent work through the promotion of exclusive breastfeeding in the workplace***

Ms Ana Liza Valencia, *Project Coordinator, MDG-F 2030, ILO Country Office for the Philippines*

After the presentation on MDG-F, Ms Valencia continued on by providing a presentation on the link/interrelation of decent work and promoting exclusive breastfeeding in the workplaces to the MDGs and this JP.

Salient points of the discussion include:

- ILO is a specialized UN agency focusing on the labour market, labour rights and conditions in the formal and informal economy. At the core of its mandate is promotion of decent work, social justice and labour rights. It has a unique tripartite structure composed of workers groups represented by the Trade Union Congress of the Philippines, Federation of Free Workers and Alliance of Progressive Labor; employers groups represented by ECOP and local chambers of commerce, and the Philippine government through the DDOLE.
- According to her, at the core of ILO's mandate is the promotion of decent work for all. She explained that decent work does not necessarily equate to high salary because even with a minimum-paying job one can still keep his/her dignity provided that work is framed under these basic principles:
 - Productive work that provides decent and fair income and recognizes human rights.
 - Availability of work. Concomitant with this principle is the acknowledgment that individuals have various responsibilities in life, hence, should not be discriminated based on their productive and reproductive roles. They should be given the opportunity to keep their work and advance their careers regardless of their multiple roles and responsibilities.
 - Opportunities for personal fulfillment including personal and professional development. It was explained that employers should be able to provide opportunities to workers to fulfill personal and professional endeavors including meeting personal needs, realizing work-life balance, among others.
 - Protection against uncertainties. Workers should be given the right to organize themselves and engage employers and government in social dialogue to further their welfare and protection.
 - Security in the workplace and protection against uncertainties such as exploitative conditions, labor violations, and gender-based violence.
- ILO works towards: (a) formulating international labour standards such as setting minimum standards on salaries, work hours, etc.; (b) providing technical assistance to

member states in terms of policy formulation and implementation; (c) promoting development of independent employers' and workers' organizations because the interest of representing their concerns should be based on developing their capacities for negotiations; and (d) promoting social dialogue among tripartite constituents as a crucial key in achieving industrial peace

- Ms Valencia explained that member states are obligated to develop and implement national policies, programmes and services anchored on ILO's eight core labour standards.
- There are specific conventions or binding instruments which support promotion of EBF in the workplaces. In particular, the **Convention No. 183 Maternity Protection Convention of 2000** recognizes the rights of pregnant and nursing women to employment and that appropriate measures should be taken to ensure that workplaces do not pose health risks to both mother and child. ILO Recommendation No. 95 (non-binding instruments) also helps support member countries in formulating legislation and policies for breastfeeding working mothers. Specifically, the government should provide information to women to encourage them to access maternity protection services.

ILO and the MDGs

For the last part of her presentation, Ms Valencia explained the link between ILO and the MDGs through promotion of exclusive breastfeeding in the workplace. She presented a brief yet concise explanation of the involvement of ILO in the JP and how the formal sector can be instrumental in achieving the goals set.

- Under the JP, ILO is committed to responding to Outcome 1 which is increasing EBF rate in JP areas by 20 per cent annually through supporting working mothers promote and continue exclusive breastfeeding in the workplaces.
 - By providing technical assistance and capacity building to tripartite constituents and programme stakeholders it is hoped that implementation of FWP in relation to RA 10028 and other maternity protection policies will be strengthened.
- Target outputs identified by the programme under the ILO component are:
 - Exclusive breastfeeding (EBF) is included as a key component of the national FWP.
 - Strengthened FWP piloted in three JP cities.
 - Models of informal sector workplace interventions for EBF designed and demonstrated in three JP cities.
- Implementing partners identified under the ILO component are: (a) DOLE-Bureau of Workers with Special Concerns (DOLE-BWSC); (b) DOLE Regional Offices V, VI and IX; (c) National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC); (d) Employment Confederation of the

Philippines (ECOP) and local Chambers of Commerce; (e) Trade Union Congress of the Philippines (TUCP); (f) Federation of Free Workers (FFW); and (e) Alliance of Progressive Labor (APL)

To conclude, Ms Valencia reiterated that ownership and recognition of exclusive breastfeeding is important, beneficial and valuable to companies, workers and their families.

She also said that ILO hopes to address needs of nursing mothers by assisting companies in institutionalizing policies, mechanisms and interventions on EBF by providing capacity-building based on the needs identified by participants.

2.3. Thematic Session II: Good practices and existing workplace mechanisms to promote exclusive breastfeeding

The second part of the consultation highlighted existing interventions and mechanisms on EBF promotion and other maternity protection measures implemented by the tripartite constituents. The presentations served as a vehicle for participating establishments to assess their existing FWP and how the concrete interventions provided may be applied to their particular setting.

a. Family Welfare Programme (FWP) and other tripartite mechanisms **Mr Robert Cudal, Senior Labor and Employment Officer, DOLE-BWSC**

The first presenter for the afternoon, Mr Cudal provided an overview of the FWP in relation to the MDG-F and promotion of exclusive breastfeeding in the workplaces.

The following discussion points are shown below:

- Traditionally, DOLE been concerned with matters pertaining to employment and labour relations. However, over the years, it has progressed to provide more than jobs by supporting workers through provision of appropriate, holistic and comprehensive programmes and services to achieve decent work.
- Historically, FWP started upon the implementation of PD 148 (“Women and Child Law”) which contained provisions on family planning. As explained by Mr Cudal, DOLE’s involvement in the population programme was based on the fact that women of reproductive age comprise 40% of the labor force. Therefore, it was essential for women to be well protected in order to cope with their reproductive and productive roles.
- From its original thrust of *promoting family planning*, the programme shifted its focus to providing *family welfare services* to workers. The department, having recognized that family concerns are often brought to the workplaces, established services that would

provide opportunities for workers to address family obligations and work responsibilities leading to a work-life balance.

Based on the experiences of FWP member establishments, promotion of breastfeeding practices is subsumed under the Reproductive Health and Nutrition dimension. In fact, prior to MDGs and enforcement of RA 10028, some companies have already existing interventions and practices on breastfeeding in the workplace, particularly presence of in-plant milk expression rooms” or lactation stations.

- Mr Cudal clarified that while DOLE does not require companies to complete all ten dimensions, programmes and interventions should at least be moving towards achieving crucial components such as Reproductive Health/Responsible Parenthood, Gender Equality, Medical Health Care, Nutrition and Income Generation.
- DOLE through the FWP believes that breastfeeding helps grow a healthy, competitive and productive labour force because of the positive effects it brings to the workplaces (i.e. high productivity, morale and loyalty, promotes wellness of family, etc.)
- Mr Cudal provided helpful information in setting-up mechanisms and interventions on EBF in the workplaces. As an example, he said that Family Welfare Committees can come up with concrete polices on breastfeeding in the workplace, e.g. administrative policies, inclusion of EBF programmes in the CBA; provide capacity building and advocacy campaign for management and workforce and identify needs of workers through needs-based approach.

b. Other tripartite mechanisms on EBF promotion: Employers’ Confederation of the Philippines (ECOP)

Ms. Rhodora Buenaventura, Manager-Corporate Social Responsibility, ECOP

To give voice to the business sector, Ms Buenaventura shared the sector’s initiatives and concrete experiences relevant to the FWP. At the core of her presentation is the value of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) as a catalyst to institutionalize programmes on maternity protection including breastfeeding in the workplaces.

According to Ms Buenaventura, there is a growing trend among companies subscribing to CSR. This is due to the idea that the business sector has the capacity and resources to contribute towards achieving sustainable development and nation building.

FWP is often utilized by ECOP as an entry point in implementing programmes and services on family welfare, including promotion of exclusive breastfeeding. The organization believes that family welfare is a business concern because workers, especially women, often bring family issues in the workplaces and these affect their performance, productivity, and family life.

- Studies conducted by ECOP show that establishments with family welfare services have documented increased productivity and quality output from workers. It also promoted company loyalty because workers were provided with opportunities for professional and personal growth.
 - ECOP's work is to develop and strengthen measures of the business sector in implementing family welfare programme. As for strategies, a needs-based approach is often utilized to emphasize the values of shared accountability and collective ownership. As a result, initiatives are geared towards facilitating consultation among programme beneficiaries resulting to shared identification of needs and collective planning.
- Reiterating the discussion given by DOLE, Ms Buenaventura cited experiences of partner establishments in installing workplace RH programmes as an example of tripartite mechanism on EBF promotion. Included in the RH programme are services for nursing workers such as lactation facilities, provision of lactation breaks and orientation on breastfeeding management. She emphasized that with or without national laws, there are companies eager to implement programmes for their employees. Most often, these companies are considered models and champions on maternity, childcare and worker protection.

Ms Buenaventura shared the most challenging aspect of ECOP's work is identifying and building advocates in the workplaces. Even as ECOP continues to recognize champions in companies, there is still a lot of work to do with regards to acceptance of CSR. That is why it is crucial to develop peer advocates and champions because they would help replicate initiatives on family welfare and help contribute in achieving MDGs.

c. Other workers group initiative on EBF promotion

Ms Florencia Cabatingan, Vice Chair for Basic Sector, NAPC

Representing the workers' group is Ms Florencia Cabatingan. In her discussion, she highlighted emerging good practices on EBF promotion by the *Trade Union Congress of the Philippines* (TUCP) that may be replicated in the region.

She also encouraged participants to utilize social dialogue as a tool for empowering workers. She explained that social dialogue holds a crucial key in: (a) bargaining with companies for workers' protection and benefits; (b) representing workers' concerns in legislative and policy-making bodies such NAPC, SSS, PhilHealth, Women sector, etc.; and (c) providing programmes and services to help workers meet their needs.

Other salient points discussed are shown below:

- Prior to RA 10028, TUCP was among the first to implement the concept of breastfeeding in the workplaces. Ms Cabatingan cited their experiences in negotiating with Meritlux and Indophil to provide nursing employees with EBF programme.
- Some of the processes TUCP has undergone in relation to setting-up of lactation stations in the workplaces were:
 - Conduct of a baseline survey to identify issues and needs of workers. Data revealed that workers' salaries are often spent on buying artificial milk, leaving very little to meet other basic needs. Also, employees who often absent themselves from work because their children get sick would ask for "bale" or salary advance from their employers. This resulted to low productivity and indebtedness on the part of workers.
 - TUCP saw the need to maximize workers' wages and go beyond the usual salary increase demand because in reality not all companies have the capacity to meet workers requests. Hence, negotiations with the Management focused on providing long-term and sustainable benefits for nursing employees, i.e. give support to continue breastfeeding in the workplace. By means of a Memorandum of Understanding (between Management and employees), lactation facilities/services were made available to nursing workers.
 - EBF programmes and policies were included in collective bargaining agreements. Arrangements were made with the Human Resource Department for the use of lactation corners. Hours and duration of use were defined to: (a) document the frequency of use of the facility; and (b) to track lactation breaks of nursing women
 - To help sustain advocacy on breastfeeding, education sessions and capacity-building were provided to workers and even employees.
 - A benchmark study was conducted highlighting the benefits of the programme. Data show that both employers and workers benefited from the programme because workers seldom absent themselves from work because their babies have become healthier and they were able to maximize their salaries. As a result, productivity and work morale increased and company loyalty was boosted.

In her presentation, Ms Cabatingan shared that establishments with limited resources can tie up with community-based organizations or *barangay health workers* in identifying public facilities that can be converted into lactation stations. According to her a good networking process could really help in addressing limitations of establishments and anti-poverty and nutrition programmes.

In conclusion, she recommended that the negotiations with Management should not only be limited to breastfeeding but should encompass FWP as well. She said that workers cannot solve problem with just one action because breastfeeding cuts across other issues such as reproductive and maternal healthcare.

d. Presentation on the results of company profile sheet

Ms Valencia presented data gathered from the company profile sheets submitted by six participating establishments. The following information were culled-out:

Total number of workforce	Number of male workers	Number of female workers	Number of women workers of reproductive age
1425	670 or 47 per cent	755 or 53 per cent	272 or 36 per cent

- A substantial number of women workers of reproductive age are part of the workforce. Hence, there is a valid concern to set-up EBF programme and facilities in these establishments given the number of women workers that can benefit from the programme.
- There are existing programmes and services on gender, health and maternal care which are possible venues to integrate EBF programmes and services.
- There are accessible health facilities, healthcare personnel and peer counselors in the establishments. These are resources which can be tapped to improve and/or develop EBF programmes.
- In terms of EBF perception, two companies expressed support for EBF programme.

In summary, there are existing mechanisms and support that can be utilized in developing programmes on exclusive breastfeeding. Ms Valencia said that the challenge is to bring innovations and modifications to help companies and workers attain decent work and increase productivity.

2.4 Thematic Session III: Strengthening EBF promotion in the workplace: Ways of moving forward

For the final session, a consultation workshop/group discussion was facilitated by Ms Buenaventura to engage local tripartite partners and other key stakeholders in identifying existing programmes and mechanisms, gaps and challenges vis-à-vis FWP. A planning session was also integrated to generate recommendations and subsequent steps in relation to MDG-F JP on CFSN.

Programme	Milestones	Facilitating factors	Hindering factors	Recommendations to integrate EBF in the existing programme
Under FWP: --Reproductive Health/ Responsible Parenthood --Nutrition --Medical Health Care --Lactation Management --Livelihood	--Seminar on gender equality --More than 80 per cent of workforce has received EBF education (RA10028) --Rooming in and EBF policy --Nutrition and health bulletin to educate public on the importance of EBF --Breastfeeding station on site --Family Planning counseling, MCH education and RH programmes --Nutrition month celebrations --Publication of quarterly newsletter which include tips and articles on health	--Presence on in-plant healthcare personnel (Doctors and Nurses) -- Number of female employees within reproductive age --Strict implementation of the Law --Availability of facilities such as coolers, refrigerators, and clinic --Personal commitment of worker (HR, worker rep) to promote and support EBF in the workplace --Availability of IEC materials	--Availability of workers --Management Support in terms of financial support --availability of funds and resources --Stereotype employees --Lack of knowledge and skills of healthcare personnel on the issue --how to include EBF in the counseling to women workers of reproductive age and lactating mothers --Behavior change in relation to promotion of EBF in the workplace -- Implementation of lactation breaks/periods	CAPACITY BUILDING --Awareness, education and re-education campaign on EBF can be incorporated in the medical symposia -- Education on the role of men on EBF -- Capacity building for programme implementers --Trainor’s training and echo-training at the enterprise-level --Continuing education on EBF POLICY AND COMMUNICATION ADVOCACY --Conduct more IEC and BCC activities on EBF --Include EBF in MCH counseling --EBF related articles as regular column (company newsletter) --Recognitions and citations for companies with commendable EBF programme --Organize peer education/support groups (line leaders in the company) --Advocacy meeting with the management on EBF programme --To include benefits of EBF in the health and wellness advocacy --Space in the clinic can be used as lactation corner --Develop guidelines on the proper use of lactation facilities and organize IEC activities --Information campaign for employers on EBF programme

Results of workshop revealed that there is a great need to advocate and raise awareness of EBF in the workplaces. It was shared that while there are existing IEC materials on breastfeeding, substance and content are not tailored-fit for the workplace. Hence, the Sub-TWG on EBFW plans to design a communication and advocacy plan that would take into consideration the issues, concerns and needs of the sector.

Ms Valencia said that ILO together with the Sub-TWG shall be providing technical support and assistance to the formal sector through capacity-building and training. The JP also hopes to build network and partnership among local government units, formal and informal sectors and other key partners in promoting EBF and IYCF in the region, starting with the workplaces.

The inputs provided by the participants will be presented during the National Consultation and shall be the bases in designing the Project Implementation Work Plan for the second year.

3 CONCLUSION

3.1 Closing remarks

Ms Jazmin Cinco formally closed the whole-day consultation by expressing gratitude on behalf of ILO-Country Office for the Philippines (CO-Manila) and the UN agencies participating to this JP. In her closing remarks, she acknowledged the active participation of participants towards strengthening and improving existing services under the FWP.

She said that while there is a growing concern among establishments in implementing the law, the challenge is how to maximize existing resources and innovate strategies that would further the welfare of workers.

Ms Cinco reiterated the recommendations put forth by the speakers in terms of advocating EBF in the workplaces. She said that the purpose of the JP and RA 10028 is to develop a sense of caring between and among colleagues. She further explained that workers' orientation should veer away from compliance instead should stress on the developmental aspect of the law.

Open Forum

After the sessions RA 10028, MDGs and MDG-F 2030 and Decent Work through promotion of EBF in the workplace, the plenary was opened for question and answer.

Questions	Responses from resource persons		
	Mr Cudal	Ms Valencia	Ms Cabatingan
1. In relation to establishment of lactation stations, should companies build a separate building/facility where nursing mothers bring their children to breastfeed?	<p>Not necessarily. At the minimum, establishments should at least meet the following standard requirements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Provide a private, clean, sanitary and well-ventilated room or area in the workplace; b. Lavatory for hand washing; c. Refrigeration or appropriate cooling facilities for storing expressed breast milk; d. Electrical outlets; and e. Tables and comfortable seats <p>In addition, companies may assign personnel/staff to oversee implementation and monitoring of the law.</p>		
2. Can companies utilize clinics as lactation corners? Also, can we utilize common refrigerator in storing breast milk?		<p>It is ideal to have a separate refrigerator to avoid contamination of breast milk. By practice, it is best to store expressed breast milk in a clean and contaminant-free cooling facility.</p> <p>However, given the constraints of companies, common refrigerators can be utilized provided that nursing employees are properly informed on how to properly handle, label and store</p>	

		expressed breast milk. Colleagues should also be informed that these cooling equipments are being used to store breast milk.	
3. Will the government provide funding or will establishments shoulder costs of setting-up lactation facilities?	<p>The companies will shoulder all cost. However, having recognized the limitations in capacities and resources of establishments, the law also provides for exemptions.</p> <p>These exemptions are included in the IRR but we are still awaiting its release. In the meantime, management and workers can discuss cost-effective measures/strategies in relation to establishment of lactation stations. As an example, lactation corners can be allotted in the workplace to enable mothers to express breast milk.</p>		<p>The law has three mandatory provisions applicable to all establishments (public or private) and these are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Setting-up of lactation station. Establishments can apply for a two-year exemption subject to renewal based on the existing conditions in the workplace, such as: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) all-male workforce; and b) if companies are small and does not warrant setting-up lactation stations; <p>The guidelines/criteria for exemptions shall be provided by DOLE through a Department Order.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2) Provision of lactation breaks for all nursing mothers. A total of 40 minutes should be given to mothers on top of the regular time-off. This provision has no exemption; 3) Advocacy, Training and Education campaign to nursing mothers who will utilize the lactation facilities. The companies can assign personnel to conduct advocacy activities or tie-up with NGOs, other organizations, DOH and DOLE.
4. In the absence of lactation stations, how can companies monitor use of 40-minute			It is recognized that 92 per cent of business establishments in the Philippines is composed of micro-entrepreneurs and we are anticipating a large number of

<p>lactation breaks by nursing mothers?</p>			<p>companies seeking exemptions. However, exemptions will not be easily granted without review of company profile.</p> <p>We are looking into developing partnerships with the informal sector and local government units (Iloilo, Zamboanga and Naga Cities) in relation to setting-up community lactation stations. Furthermore, establishments without lactation stations can have access to these facilities. Thus, it is imperative for nursing mothers to have lactation periods in order for them to be able to travel to and from community-based facilities. The lactation breaks can be divided according to the need of the workers and companies.</p> <p>It is also necessary to map-out or conduct baseline survey on the number of women workers in the companies because this would determine the need to set-up lactation area.</p>
<p>5. How can we comply with the Law if our company employs a small number of women workers, i.e. 20 (of reproductive age) out of 600. Also, the company is situated in a far-flung area and we may not have access to community-based lactation facilities.</p>		<p>However small the number of women workers, they have a right to access facilities and express breast milk.</p> <p>Part of the consultation is presenting actual interventions and practices by other companies in relation to this concern. Participating establishments may assess applicability of practices presented or identify cost-effective measures in order to address the needs of working mothers.</p>	<p>We look at it as not only as a way of servicing women employees but even wives of male workers. This can be seen beyond the perspective of employer-employee relations but how the public can have access to these facilities.</p>

<p>6. When is the effectivity or implementation of the Law?</p>	<p>The law is already enforceable. Specific rules and regulations on implementation, exemptions, etc. are contained in the yet to be released IRR. In the meantime, establishments are encouraged to meet and comply with minimum requirements set by the Law.</p> <p>It was also explained that DOLE has already submitted the draft operational guidelines for exemptions to the DOH.</p>	<p>The Joint Programme is until 2012 November. Capacity-building shall start next year. At the end of JP, at the minimum, we could have at least one company set-up a lactation facility and equip establishments in institutionalizing policies and mechanisms on EBF in compliance with the law.</p>	
<p>7. What are the safeguards of companies for employees not to exploit or abuse the programme? (e.g. lactation stations as day care centres or if mothers want to bring children at work)</p>	<p>Advocacy and education can also be part of the family welfare programme. Through the human resources, workers may be counselled or re-educated on the importance of breastfeeding and to equip them with skills necessary in maintenance of said facilities.</p>	<p>The lactation station does not necessarily mean it's a day care centre. It is ideal if we could bring children to workplaces but the primary concern is the opportunity/chance given to mothers to express their milk. Establishments can provide cooling facilities for storing breast milk. Workers also have the responsibility in maintaining these facilities.</p> <p>Throughout the programme, the Sub-TWG can provide assistance in terms of capacity-building and production of IEC materials that would educate management and employers on the use, maintenance and monitoring of lactation facilities.</p> <p>Other support can also be provided depending on specific needs of the sector.</p>	

8. What if mothers opt not to breastfeed in the workplace?

There is a need to bridge the divide between the public and private realm. The practice of breastfeeding is seen as a private concern because it is linked to women's reproductive/maternal roles. However, a mother's responsibility to care and nurture her child especially breastfeeding, does not stop when she returns to work. Unfortunately, many women discontinue breastfeeding because of the following reasons: (a) mother's perception she has insufficient breast milk; (b) mothers returning to work; and (c) unsupportive workplace, family and community.

Most often, we tend to overlook the impact and benefits of breastfeeding amongst mothers, children, employers, families and communities because of this perception. The law hopes to bridge this divide by providing an enabling environment where nursing employees can address her maternal responsibilities even while employed.

So, while it is the mother's choice to practice breastfeeding in the workplace, companies should be able to provide information, education and re-education among its workers on EBF, so that nursing employees can make informed decisions.

