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International Labour Office
Manila

Decent Work for All

Quarterly Newsletter of the ILO in the Philippines

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Human trafficking

By Robert Larga
National Project Coordinator

The International Labour Organization recently launched its programme to support trafficked persons in Thailand and the Philippines. The three-year project, funded by the Government of Japan and the UN Trust Fund for Human Security (HSF), contributes to reducing child trafficking and women exploitation in Asia through reintegration in countries of origin.

In South-East Asia, Thailand and the Philippines are among the countries facing serious problems of trafficking in persons. Many women in both countries are promised overseas employment, but end up in vulnerable states including forced labour. Efforts are being made through the law enactment and policy development to protect the rights of trafficked persons.

A recent study on trafficking in persons in Japan underlines the need to extend services to victims beyond points of departure. Less attention is given to return and reintegration as part of the process of migration.

Trafficked persons face a myriad of difficulties. Aside from trauma and the stigma of having been exploited, victims face reintegration problems with their families and communities. They experience rejection by families who had hoped for better living conditions through remittances.

Victims come home empty-handed and are sometimes heavily indebted. Much as they want to work in their own countries, they do not have the skills, qualifications or opportunities to find work. They also fear retaliation from traffickers and recruiters.

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA), the Development Action for Women Network (DAWN), the BATIS Center for Women and other critical partners are spearheading the project in the Philippines.



Angono's young artists showcase their talent (Photo by M. Rimando/ILO).

Job prospects for youth

By Minette Rimando
Public Information Assistant

The world faces a growing youth employment crisis as the number of unemployed, aged 15 to 24, continues to rise.

In the Philippines, the recent Labor Force Survey showed that youth unemployment reached 1.4 million - 48 per cent or almost half of the nation's unemployed.

To address youth employment concerns, the ILO, with funding support from the Canadian Government, launched a major programme to create better and sustainable jobs for young women and men. Activities include the establishment of an informal youth policy network to better coordinate public and private sector initiatives targeting youth; the introduction of entrepreneurship education in secondary and technical school curriculum; and the launch of employment creation pilot programmes in selected cities and municipalities.

Angono, a small town in Rizal, where 8 out of 10 of the unemployed are youth, is the site of one of the projects. Despite being known as the Arts Capital of the Philippines, young women and men, many of whom are talented artists, confront the challenge of finding a job that will match their skills.

"There are many problems apart from having to compete with famous artists. The main problem is financial," said 20-year old Elinor Ulang, who started sketching and painting on cigarette foils. Recently, Ulang was one of the young artists trained in the animation industry, leading to employment in 2D animation. "The training helps young people like me. We can use our talents and share it with others, too," he said.

Aside from the Animation Training Center, the youth employment project also launched other activities: an Artistic Creativity Training Center to provide basic knowledge in design and crafts making, the Obra Art Exhibit and Creative Performances to recognize the artistic potential of young students, Tour Guide Training and Transport-aided Promotion to train youth while promoting tourism through public vehicles painted with images and slogans by young artists, a Souvenir Development Project to create accessories out of recycled materials, and a Culinary Art Project to mold and paint chocolates for trade fairs.

"We are pleased with the youth employment projects. Resources, tools and partnerships can make significant impact on youth employment in this country," said Tom Carroll, Counsellor and Head of Aid of the Embassy of Canada. We hope that this work can catalyze greater opportunities for youth," said Carroll.

Decent Work for All

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**HIV/AIDS
doesn't mean
rejection
at work**

ILO CODE OF PRACTICE ON HIV/AIDS

Key Principles

- no discrimination related to HIV status
- continuation of employment regardless of HIV status
- confidentiality
- a healthy and safe work environment
- gender equality
- voluntary testing and counseling, but no screening for employment or recruitment
- the need for social dialogue, prevention programmes, care and support as the basis for addressing HIV/AIDS in the workplace



**DECEMBER 1
WORLD
AIDS DAY**
www.ilo.org/aids

EDITORIAL

2006 has been an active year for both Philippine tripartite constituents and the ILO office in Manila. The year has seen the ratification of two ILO Conventions on Migrant Workers, a high level tripartite mission to examine the way forward for Philippine ratification of the newly-adopted ILO Maritime Convention and the discussion of a Bill on Domestic Workers in both Congress and the Senate.

The year also saw the outgoing of Labour Secretary Ms. Patricia Sto. Tomas. She actively and competently served the world of work for over five years in the Philippines and internationally. The new Secretary of Labour, Mr. Arturo Brion, has been very active in ILO affairs, attending both the ILO Asian Regional Meeting in Korea in August during his first month of office and the ILO Governing Body in Geneva in November.

Through training programmes and study tours, Philippine ILO constituents continued to generously share their considerable expertise on labour, employment and enterprise issues with others in the region. There is high interest

internationally in the Philippine experience and advances in the management of labour migration.

The ILO Office in Manila has had a busy year designing and implementing the Decent Work Country Programme for the Philippines, implementing donor-funded projects on child labour, youth employment, domestic workers, indigenous peoples, labour intensive infrastructure development and training for rural economic empowerment. It has also provided support to the government, trade unions and employers' organization, sponsored a number of tripartite meetings and launched a labour and employment seminar series. Finally, it participated with constituents in a first ever ILO evaluation of Office-wide support to a country programme promoting decent work.

Linda Wirth
Director

Effective implementation of Maritime Labour Convention

By Katharina Schiebold
Intern, Migration and Trafficking

Philippine stakeholders in the maritime sector and government committed to work toward ratification of the ILO Maritime Labor Convention (MLC). On November 27-29, a tripartite mission visited the Philippines to meet seafarers, shipowners and government representatives. The mission was composed of Yeong-woo leon, Arthur Bowring and Carlos Salinas from shipowners confederations and Brian Orrell, Mark Dickinson and Gregorio Oca from seafarer organizations. Dominick Devlin from Geneva and Temesgen Samuel from ILO Manila accompanied the group. Key Philippine counterparts were visited: manning agencies and domestic shipowners, the President of the Senate, Honorable Manny

Villar, Undersecretary for Labor Honorable Danilo Cruz and Administrator Rosalinda Baldoz the Philippine Overseas Employment Agency (POEA), as well as other government departments, agencies and institutions.

A cooperative spirit was evident. Although difficult issues were tabled, constituents largely agreed that ratification was a priority for the Philippines. With a view to dealing with issues, the mission proposed further exchanges and dialogue. The Philippine government expressed gratitude in accepting the ILO's offer to extend legal advice and technical assistance. Major issues identified included compliance by domestic shippers with the MLC, institutional competencies and harmonization of national legislation.



High-level meeting on the implementation of the Maritime Convention (L-R): Carlos Salinas, Dominick Devlin, Rosalinda Baldoz, Linda Wirth, Stephen Cotton, Arthur Bowring, Yeong-woo leon and Temesgen Samuel. (Photo by M. Fuellas/ILO)

RP accepts challenge to be first Asian country to ratify Convention on Indigenous Peoples

By Ma. Theresa Matibag
National Project Coordinator

Wherever they live, indigenous and tribal peoples are nearly always the most disadvantaged and excluded of groups. The ILO addresses the concern to promote and protect indigenous peoples through the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention No. 169. The convention is the only international instrument that deals exclusively with the rights of indigenous and tribal peoples.



In response to the challenge to be the first Asian country to ratify 169, the Philippines, through the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) and the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), is actively promoting the convention. NCIP gathered government agencies and partners to hammer out a plan to promote the convention.

The plan of action for 169's ratification includes organizing a government task force to advocate and to promote the convention in the Philippines. The task force will plan larger involvement with other government agencies to implement, monitor and report on compliance of the convention upon its ratification.

NCIP is the main government agency that implements Republic Act 8371, the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act (IPRA). IPRA reflects the intent of Convention 169.

Beginning next year, DOLE will also set up an Indigenous Peoples' Desk in regional offices to protect indigenous communities.

Higaonons celebrate the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples at the Shangri-La Plaza Mall through a weeklong exhibit sponsored by the European Commission, the Canadian Embassy and the ILO. (Photo by M. Rimando/ILO)

Health insurance for informal economy workers

By Kenichi Hirose
Senior Social Protection Specialist

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in extending social protection to populations excluded by existing schemes. Means to extend coverage was the focus of a conference on social health insurance for the informal economy (18-20 October) in Manila.

Experts from a range of disciplines including the health sector and social security, microfinance and banking, small and medium enterprises and taxation, examined tools and assistance to achieve the right to social security for all peoples.

Conference papers are available at www.shiconferencemanila.info.

Zero tolerance for violence against children in the workplace

Every year, millions of children who work pay a heavy price of pain and abuse for their labor. A new study by the ILO, prepared as part of a report by the UN Secretary-General on Violence against Children, claims that many of the 200-million child adolescent workers in the world suffer ill-treatment, physical and psychological violence, and verbal or sexual abuse.

In the Philippines, almost all child workers report that they have suffered maltreatment. How can we eliminate child labor and violence at work? A zero tolerance policy may be key in bringing such violence to an end.

The Employers' Confederation of the Philippines (ECOP) recently launched a Child Labor-Free and Child-Friendly Recognition Program. The program encourages companies to stop employing children and honors firms who are child-friendly. Under the program, companies are called to work with government and civil society to advocate for zero tolerance.



To know more about the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour in the Philippines, visit the new website at: www.ilo.org/manila/ipec

Stand up for better and decent jobs

Six years ago, 189 world leaders agreed to end poverty and to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. Over 23 million people stood up to remind the world of this promise on October 15-16, 2006. Where were they counted?

Africa - 3,624,381
Arab Region - 516,949

Asia - 18,195,126
(PHILIPPINES: 2,411,121)
Europe - 894,854
Latin America & the Caribbean - 54,901
North America - 163,066
Oceania - 93,337



A fair chance at a decent and better job is the way out of poverty: ILO Subregional Office Manila staff stand up for decent work. (Photo by R. Salaya/ILO)

Domestic Workers Bill draws strong support, culminating a decade of advocacy

The national clamor for the passage of the Batas Kasambahay or Domestic Workers Bill has grown louder and stronger since 1996. “Abuses of domestic workers remain rampant yet hidden. It is ironic that the nation which supplies more than half of the global demand for overseas domestic workers has failed to provide better protection,” said Senator Jinggoy Estrada, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Labor, Employment and Human Resource Development in his speech to sponsor the bill.

Domestic workers are estimated to number 600,000 to 2.5 million in the Philippines. The Domestic Workers Bill aims to protect the working conditions of these househelpers.

The bill seeks to further improve the definition of household work, increase the minimum wage of domestic workers, enhance social protection coverage, endorse use of formal employment contracts, promote mandatory registration, prevent bonded labor and increase penalties under the Labor Code.

“We have to protect those who are abused, give compensation to those who are deserving and make policies that shape the lives of people for the better,” stated Mr. Estrada as the Senate prepares for the passage of the Bill.



Diamond Star and multi-awarded actress Maricel Soriano (right) receives a token of appreciation from ILO Director Linda Wirth (center) and Visayan Forum President Cecile Oebanda (left) during the advance screening of Inang Yaya, “Mother Nanny”.

The film, Inang Yaya, pays tribute to the positive contributions of domestic workers. It is a moving depiction of the joys and struggles of domestic workers. Visayan Forum recognizes the film’s potential to touch lives as advocates push for the passage of the long-pending Domestic Workers Bill. (Photo by: M. Rimando/ILO)

MUST READS

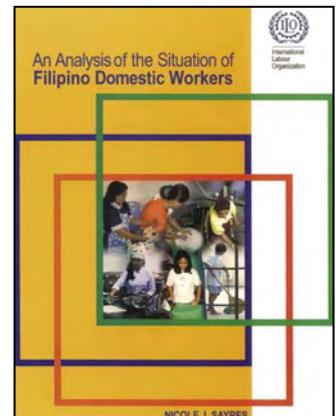
Local Development and Decent Work (LDDW) Resource Kit

Practical and easy-to-use tools for local planners, decision-makers and development practitioners. The resource kit focuses on the creation of decent work and employment opportunities at the local level, the reduction of poverty and the promotion of economic development. The kit is designed to help local governments and communities assess choices, make decisions and implement actions.



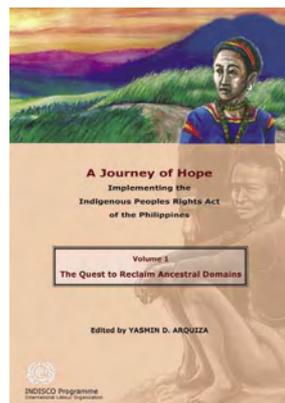
An Analysis of the Situation of Filipino Domestic Workers

The analysis examines the rights and working conditions of Philippine domestic workers employed in the country and abroad. The assessment includes the scope of domestic work, the legislative and regulatory framework, typical working conditions, common labor violations and abuses, and organizations addressing issues of domestic work, forced labor and trafficking.



A Journey of Hope: Implementing the IPRA

A three volume publication on the recognition of ancestral domains and the rights of indigenous communities in the Philippines. The books are published by the ILO in cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) and the New Zealand Agency for International Development (NZAid).



Equality at Work: Philippines Working Paper 12

A follow-up study of the Global Report on “Time for Equality at Work” within the Philippine context. The study is based on the assumption that Equality at Work is related to Decent Work for All. It reviews Philippine laws and practices, highlights achievements and gaps, and puts in sharper focus the lessons learned that can be applied in both private and public sectors.

