



Decent Work for All

Monthly news update • December 2010 • www.ilo.org/manila



International
Labour
Organization

Building a better nation requires work. **Decent Work.**



A call for decent work for domestic workers

By Ana Liza Valencia, MDG-F Children, Food Security and Nutrition Project Coordinator

“I received the call a few weeks after moving to Manila.” Flore Cabatigan, who had transferred from Trade Union Congress of the Philippines’ (TUCP) office in Davao, recounted her first encounter with forced labour of domestic workers when a former plant union steward telephoned her in desperation. Juan’s daughter had been out of contact for months, and had just found a way to text him. I went to Laguna to find the address that Juan gave me. His daughter was there, but could not come out. She had not been outside for over a year as her employer kept her locked inside the house. Her job? Her charge was six dogs, huge dogs. She had not spoken to anyone for months. I returned the following day with barangay officials and the police.

Juan’s daughter returned to Davao a few days later, much older, much thinner, with deflated dreams and no money. Her employer had not paid her, and she found it hard not to cry. Fortunately she was young and healthy and could start anew. But not all domestic workers are so lucky. Some remain in households for years, subject to treatment that destroy their self-esteem,

and destroy their souls. Domestic work is one of the worst forms of child labour for minors as it is invisible, hidden from the eyes of society.

Flore feels strongly that Unions like TUCP must work on behalf of domestic workers. “Domestic workers are the daughters and wives of our members; many are also Union members in their own right, if not working in the sector today, often having been domestic workers themselves, and knowing its dangers. 4.2 million women and children work as domestic workers in this country. They contribute so much, easing the workload of their employers and allowing many to work outside of the house. It is unconscionable that we do not protect them in a formal way”.

In June this year ILO constituents worked on a national platform for a discussion on an international instrument for domestic workers. They will contribute once again in June 2011 when the International Labour Conference holds a second discussion, this time to adopt a convention and recommendation to protect this sector. Department of Labor

In June 2009, a dozen countries in Asia-Pacific said ‘yes’ in principle to an international labour standard for domestic workers. (Photos by G. Carreon and M. Rimando/ILO)



and Employment Undersecretary Hans Caccad, who will chair the conference committee, is optimistic about attention given to domestic workers.

Fatima Cabanag, of Alliance of Progressive Labor, also expresses hope. “The Philippines has many domestic workers, not only in this country, but also abroad. An ILO instrument will strengthen our advocacy to protect these workers, particularly as we push for a national bill for Kasambahay workers in households. Indeed our legislators must pass the bill to show our own commitment to care for our workers. A Kasambahay Bill will help us to encourage host countries that take in Filipinas to treat them well. An ILO convention is indispensable.”

Aiming for greater economic productivity:

ILO skills training programme for Maguiting weavers

By Rodolfo Coronel, Bondoc-LED Field Coordinator

The ILO, through the Bondoc-Local Economic Development (LED) Project, partnered with Cora Cares Foundation, Inc. (CCFI) in training members of the Maguiting Weavers Association. CCFI is a well-known producer of stylish and quality handbags.

Members of the Maguiting Weavers Association include wives and daughters of poor farmers and fisherfolks in Maguiting, San Narciso, Quezon. The training aimed at improving productivity of weavers by enhancing their skills to produce and sell stylish, quality handbags and accessories primarily made of raffia from buli palm, which grows abundantly in the locality. The initiative is part of the objectives of Bondoc-LED Projects to expand livelihood assets and increase productivity of communities, especially vulnerable groups in four municipalities covered by the project.

Aside from practical hands-on training on designing, pattern-making, costing and producing bags, CCFI also provided opportunities for trainees to meet suppliers of raw materials and visit market outlets of handbags. They also had the chance to go to a local fair to help broaden their perspective on the bag industry. CCFI also expressed interest on assisting the Maguiting Weavers Association in marketing their products.

Child labour in small-scale mining

By Jesus Macasil, Jr., ILO-IPEC Senior Programme Officer

Child labour was tackled in a session of the Global Forum on artisanal and small-scale mining. The forum, organized by the United Nations Environment Programme was held in Manila on 7-9 December 2010. The identified challenges and opportunities in small-scale mining. It also discussed the use of mercury in small-scale mining. UNEP is preparing a legally binding global instrument on mercury and plans to pass it prior to the 27th session of its Governing Council in 2013.

The ILO Country Office for the Philippines, through its Towards a Child-Labour Free Philippines programme, was invited as main presenter in the child labour panel session. ILO-International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) is currently implementing a project against child labour, supported by the United States Department of Labor and covers four priority provinces, namely: Quezon, Masbate, Northern Samar and Bukidnon. Child labour in small-scale mining is present in three of these provinces based on the project's initial scoping activities.

ILO-IPEC considered the forum as an opportunity to promote the agenda of eliminating child labour particularly in small-scale mining. It also served as venue to build partnerships and explore possible collaboration with forum participants.

What does decent work mean to you?

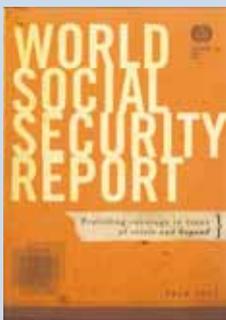
- “For me decent work means having equal treatment of all employees or labourers of a company. It also means having a way of imposing what is right in the workplace.”
- Gonzalo R. Escaño, Jr., Student
- “Decent work means earning money through hardwork and labor.” - Rica Lu, Banker
- “Any work that is moral and lawful. Salary-wise sufficient to support the family and for retirement.” - Peter Dee, Merchant
- “Decent work means putting into practice work ethics. Exercising the highest standard of professionalism in all faces of works”- Josephine Arugay, Assistant Vice President for Human Resources
- “A good paying job, safe work environment, opportunity to improve oneself, has rights to freely organize.”- Juanito Manuel, Jr., Administrative and Finance Manager

Illustrator: Gill Button



Must reads

World Social Security Report 2010



The report monitors social security coverage across the world, and examines the role of social security in times of crisis. It maps social security coverage globally and by region or other country grouping, presenting methods and approaches to assessing social security coverage. It also identifies gaps in measurable statistical knowledge on not only social security coverage but its costs and impacts.

1-3 December 2010

6-17 December 2010

13-14 December 2010

Calendar

Anti-Child Labour Communities of Practice Visioning Workshop (Manila)

Start and Improve Your Business Training (Quezon)

Seminar Workshop on the Freedom of Association, Civil Liberties, Labour Laws and the Issue of Impunity (Davao)

DECENT WORK

A better world starts here.

ASIAN
DECENT WORK
DECADE 2006
2015

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

ILO Country Office for the Philippines

19th Floor, Yuchengco Tower RCBC Plaza 6819 Ayala Avenue
1200 Makati City, Philippines • Tel: +63 2 580 9900 • Fax: +63 2 856 7597
Email: manila@ilo.org • Website: www.ilo.org/manila