The Philippines launched today a nationwide campaign against child labour. The Batang Malaya: Child labour free Philippines is the country’s response for renewed action towards the global deadline of ending the worst forms of child labour by 2016.

The 2011 Survey on Children: Child labour in the Philippines of the National Statistics Office (NSO) revealed that of the 29 million Filipino children, aged 5-17 years old, there were roughly about 5.5 million working children, of which almost 3 million were in hazardous child labour. Hazardous child labour is defined as being likely to harm children’s health, safety or morals by its nature or circumstances. Children may be directly exposed to obvious work hazards such as sharp tools or poisonous chemicals. Other hazards for child labourers may be less apparent, such as the risk of abuse or problems resulting from long hours of work. Hazardous work is considered as one of the worst forms of child labour.

Hazardous child labour was higher among boys, with 66.8 per cent as compared to girls with 33.2 per cent. Central Luzon (10.6 per cent), Bicol (10.2 per cent), Western Visayas (8.5 per cent), Northern Mindanao (8.2 per cent) and Central Visayas (7.3 per cent) were the regions with the highest incidence of hazardous child labour.

“We have to get to the root of child labour which is linked with poverty and lack of decent and productive work. While we strive to keep children in school and away from child labour, we need to ensure decent and productive work for parents and basic social protection for families,” said Director Lawrence Jeff Johnson of the International Labour Organization (ILO) Country Office for the Philippines.

The ILO and the US Department of Labor also supported the past 1995 and 2001 Survey on Children. In 2001, there were 4 million working children, of which 2.4 were in hazardous child labour while in 1995, there were 3.6 million working children, of which 2.2 were in hazardous child labour.

Although more comprehensive, the survey still cannot estimate children trafficked for work, forced and bonded child labour, commercial sexual exploitation of children and use of children for illicit activities and armed conflict.

“What is crucial now is to tackle and to monitor progress in reducing child labour on a regular basis. One of the recommendations is to conduct the survey every 5 years. It is not just the role of the government, employers’ and workers’ organizations, but also local communities since child labour often happen in unregulated sectors,” said Director Johnson.

Globally, there were 215 million children trapped in child labour, 115 million of them were in the worst forms of child labour in 2010. There has been progress in efforts to reduce child labour worldwide.

(Continued on page 2)
Technical vocational skills training for disadvantaged youth in Masbate

By Roche Angon, MDG Fund Joint Programme on Alternatives to Migration: Decent Jobs for Filipino Youth Project Coordinator

The Technical Skills and Development Authority (TESDA) confirmed the 2nd batch of 250 disadvantaged youth as graduates of labour market-responsive technical vocational skills training in Masbate on 4 May 2012. To date, a total of 500 disadvantaged youth completed the 13 training courses offered by TESDA its accredited 11 technical vocational institutions in the province.

The ILO in partnership with TESDA and Provincial Local Government of Masbate implemented the labour market-responsive technical vocational training in Masbate. This was made possible through the support of Spanish funded Millennium Development Goal Fund (MDG F) Joint Programme on Alternatives to Migration: Decent Work for Filipino Youth. ILO also commissioned a study “Assessment of Technical Vocational Skills and Education of Disadvantaged Youth in Masbate, Antique, Maguindanao and Agusan del Sur” which served as basis to design a labour market-responsive technical vocational skills training program.

Training graduates completed their on-the-job training with private sector partners who forged partnership with TESDA and technical vocational institutions to provide on-the-job training to the youth. Under the Joint Programme, the mandatory on-the-job training is one of the value-added features of technical vocational skills training over the regular training programs of TESDA.

Other value-added features are mandatory profiling of training graduates, mandatory three-day gender sensitivity training, partnership agreements entered into by public and private sector partners to accommodate on-the-job training of youth, provision of training support fund while undergoing training, and subsistence allowance for the on-the-job training.

Child labour (Continued from page 1)

But as the world gets closer to the deadline of ending the worst forms of child labour by 2016, the global pace of reduction is also slowing down.

Through the campaign, the National Child Labor Committee, chaired by the Department of Labor and Employment is calling for the following urgent actions:

- Institutionalize the Survey on Children.
- Strengthen and rationalize the operations of the National Child Labor Committee by giving it a legal mandate, budget and a dedicated secretariat.
- Improve enforcement of RA 9231.
- Expand the reach and strengthen the capacity of the labour inspectorate to monitor child labour even in unregulated sectors.
- Mainstream child labour in local development plans and integrate as conditionality in programmes to reduce poverty including conditional cash transfers.

Must reads

Tackling child labour: From commitment to action

This paper considers the progress that ILO member States are making in the application of ILO Conventions and Recommendations related to ending the worst forms of child labour. [http://www.ilo.org/ipec](http://www.ilo.org/ipec)

Calendar

6 July 2012

Promoting decent work for migrant health professionals

Manila

July 2012

Entrepreneurship development for the youth presentation

Antique (3 July)

Maguindanao (10 July)

Agusan del Sur (17 July)

Masbate (24 July)