



Decent Work for All

Monthly news update • February 2013 • www.ilo.org/manila



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Rebuilding a better future in the wake of typhoon Bopha (Pablo)

By Minette Rimando, Senior Communication and Public Information Assistant

Maritess Diansay, 39, lost just about everything to Typhoon Bopha that ravaged the southern Philippines island of Mindanao late last year, but not the hope that her three children will someday finish school and get decent jobs.

The massive storm, known in the Philippines as Typhoon Pablo, hit land in the Davao Oriental province on 4 December 2012, ploughing a path of death and destruction.

Diansay lives in the town of Baganga, a coastal municipality of some 50,000 where coconut-growing is the economic mainstay. At first, many neighbours sought refuge at her home, but they all had to flee as the wind ripped off the roof and tore down walls.

"Our house was destroyed. Our sources of income were gone: the coconut trees were uprooted, some of our piglets died," she recalls, choking with emotion.

In all, coconut growers lost an estimated US\$ 150 million, while about 50 million boxes of bananas, worth US\$ 4 each, were lost to the tropical cyclone. For many farmers, that meant a total loss of income.

In total, more than a million workers were affected.

"We found out that most of the affected workers are unskilled labourers. Many of them are farmers or unpaid family workers and are vulnerable given their level of skills, low earnings and limited protection and security," says Lawrence Jeff Johnson, Director of the International Labour Organization (ILO) Country Office for the Philippines.

The ILO immediately mobilized its own resources, and received support from partners to implement emergency employment creation and livelihood development programmes, including cash-for-work and road rehabilitation projects, as well as support to indigenous communities.

"Urgent action is needed to rebuild communities and livelihoods. Workers in vulnerable forms of employment, farmers and indigenous peoples are even more at risk than most to such disasters, and are often forced to accept any kind of work just to survive," ILO Director-General Guy Ryder said during a recent visit to the Philippines.

After Typhoon Bopha, workers hired as part of the emergency employment clear debris along the main road in Baganga. (Photo by ILO/M. Rimando)

The Australian government's foreign aid agency AusAID and the UN Central Emergency Response Fund are funding the programmes implemented by the ILO together with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and government authorities.

But more help is needed. Almost two months after Bopha unleashed its fury on the southern Philippines, recovery efforts have been hampered as torrential rains and flooding continue to hit Mindanao island.

New debris collected, rice fields were flooded and landslides have cut off some roads and damaged bridges.

Maritess is not giving up hope. She now works in one of the reconstruction programmes. "We used to wait for delivery of relief goods or to borrow money to support our needs. Now I am happy to have the chance to earn for my family," she says.

And about the home she lost, she adds: "It's just a house, as my husband and I always say. I still have not given up on my dreams, especially for my three children to finish school and to find a decent job someday."

Training sessions for police officers on workers' rights and for government officials on international labour standards

By John Michael Honney, Chief Technical Adviser

Promoting the Effective Recognition and Implementation of the Fundamental Rights of Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining in the Philippines

A key element of the US Department of State and the ILO project on promoting freedom of association and collective bargaining in the Philippines, is training relevant officials from various governmental institutions on international labour standards.

In partnership with the Philippine National Police (PNP) and the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), the first of several planned training sessions was jointly delivered on workers' rights to PNP officers on 15 to 16 January. The training is also linked to a set of guidelines drawn up between the social partners concerning the handling of workplace disputes and is also a component of the PNP's own commitments towards adopting a more proactive human rights approach to their policing.

Further training sessions will now roll-out across the Philippines and tie in with planned training for the Armed Forces of the Philippines as well.

To promote homegrown trainers on international labour standards, an extensive program on training officials from DOLE and the Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA) took place on 21 to 25 January in Tagaytay. The event itself was preceded with a month long exchange between our consultant, the trainers, DOLE, PEZA and the ILO to ensure the modules, which will form the basis of future training sessions, are set in the Philippine context.

The modules and preparation of the trainers is being finalized after which, a number of training sessions on international labour standards will be delivered to the social partners.

National child labor committee adopts good practices criteria to end child labour

By Jodelen Mitra, Programme Officer for Monitoring and Evaluation

ILO International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC)

The National Child Labor Committee (NCLC) unanimously voted to adopt good practices criteria in programmes to eliminate and prevent child labour as presented by the ILO-International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour.

Mr Jess Macasil, Senior Programme Officer discussed the primary good practices criteria which include effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, responsive/ethical soundness and sustainability while secondary criteria which are not mandatory are replicability, involvement of partnership, innovativeness and creativity and political commitment.

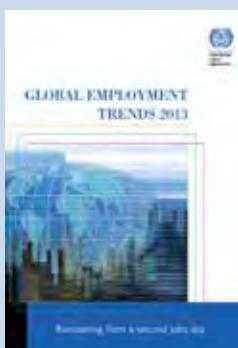
The Knowledge Management Sub-Committee of NCLC, represented by its Chair, Mr Julius Cainglet of the Federation of Free Workers, strongly supported this standardization practice. It will be the basis of the sub-committee in reviewing and approving good practices shared to the Child Labor Knowledge Sharing System.

Macasil further stressed that having standard set of criteria will also influence programme implementers to improve their practices by learning from the experiences of what approaches work best.

IPEC Project Manager Giovanni Soledad also shared that, "The ongoing work for child labour elimination in the country can learn a lot from successful models that have been developed by the different Philippine Programme against Child Labor (PPACL) partners. With the NCLC's adoption of this process for identifying and documenting good practices, these models and stories can finally be accessed and replicated by anti-child labour advocates thereby strengthening our overall work as a movement".

The presentation of the good practices criteria was part of the NCLC meeting held on 18 January 2013. The meeting was facilitated by the Assistant Secretary Elizabeth Recio of the Department of Labor and Employment, with former NCLC Chair and now retired Undersecretary Lourdes Transmonte.

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7-8 February 2013

Calendar

A Forum on peace in the context of indigenous peoples participation and consultation/advancing the promotion of the ILO Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention 169
Quezon City

10-16 February 2013

Technical mission towards effective application of the revised Seafarers' Identity Documents Convention 185
in the Philippines
Manila

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



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