



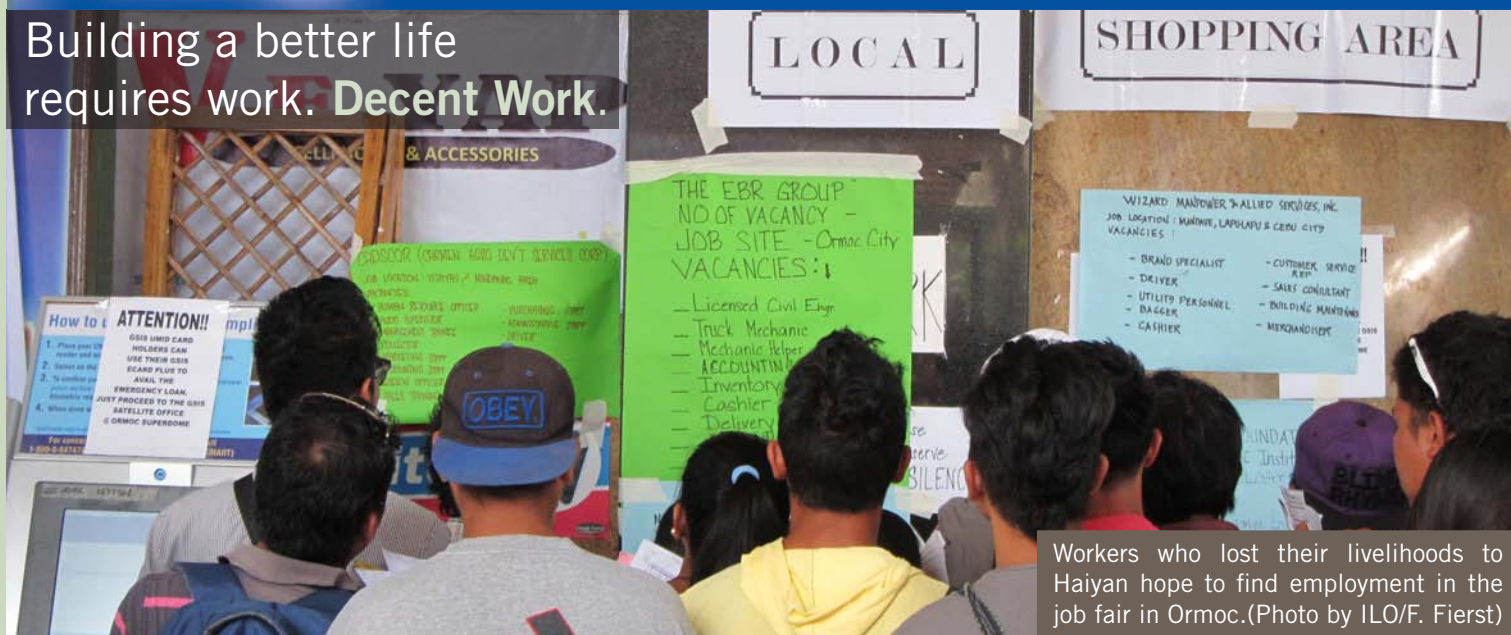
# Decent Work for All



International Labour Organization

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



Workers who lost their livelihoods to Haiyan hope to find employment in the job fair in Ormoc. (Photo by ILO/F. Fierst)

## Haiyan survivors see hope in long-term employment

By Karen Lapitan, Communication and Public Information Assistant

Armed with her resumé and hoping for a new start, Jenecis Soliva patiently stands in the queue waiting for her turn to submit her employment documents.

Soliva is among the 5.9 million workers that were severely affected by Typhoon Haiyan (also known locally as Yolanda).

“I am determined to get back on my feet as soon as possible, since I need to feed a family of nine,” she explained.

Today, Soliva is in Ormoc City, one of the places affected by the super typhoon. She is attending a job fair organized by the Philippine Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) and the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) together with local employers and recruitment agencies.

“My family owns agricultural land in San Jose, Ormoc City, but the entire land was wiped out by the typhoon. We’ve relied on relief goods for a month, now I really need to find a job, with a stable and reliable income,” she explained.

Out of the more than 1700 people who attended the two-day job fair in Ormoc City, 171 were hired on the spot. Another 970 were considered as qualified, but their applications need to be processed further.

“Due to the clamour of the people in

the region, we will hold another job fair in Tacloban in the first week of January 2014,” said DOLE Secretary Rosalinda Baldoz, who was present at the Ormoc City job fair.

“There has been a lot of focus on rebuilding livelihoods for farmers and fishers. However, half of the workers affected by the typhoon were working in the service sector,” said ILO team leader Frances Fierst, who was supporting DOLE’s job fair.

About 3 million affected workers were working in the service sector when the typhoon struck. Over one third of them, or roughly 1.9 million workers, were in agriculture, and around 16 per cent in the industry sector.

“This job fair is a great way for the government to reach out and assist this specific group of affected workers,” added Fierst.

In addition to local employment opportunities, POEA provided useful information about the challenges of working abroad, including tips on avoiding illegal recruiters and traffickers.

True, the disaster has brought death and destruction to the Philippines, but the reconstruction phase is an opportunity to

build back better and ensure that people are not left vulnerable or exploited.

Meanwhile, local businesses like the Coca-Cola plant in Tacloban are doing everything in their power to resume operations. Following the typhoon, the plant immediately began distributing filtered water from its tanks and giving away products to nearby communities.

“For many of our partners, their business with us is a source of livelihood. We want to help them resume operations so that they can continue to provide for their families and recover from this tragedy,” said Juan Dominguez, Human Resources and Corporate Affairs Director of Coca-Cola Bottlers Philippines, Inc. “Through our efforts in this area, we hope to be able to once again spur economic activity in the affected areas.”

“Initiatives such as the job fair and efforts of local businesses to rebuild local employment and to restore livelihoods complement the emergency employment programmes that the ILO, together with the government, is helping to implement,” said Lawrence Jeff Johnson, Director of the ILO Country Office for the Philippines.

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## ILO and private sector join hands to protect typhoon-affected workers

A month after Typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda) struck the Philippines, the International Labour Organization (ILO) continues to work with partners including those in the private sector in ensuring the safety of workers under the Emergency Employment Programme in disaster-stricken communities.

The ILO has previously reported that 5.9 million workers were affected by Typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda), 2.6 million of which were in vulnerable employment or living near the poverty line even before the disaster struck.

The Philippine government, with the support of the ILO, has rolled out emergency employment in areas most affected by the super typhoon.

Workers under the emergency employment programme are equipped with personal protective equipment such as masks, hats, gloves, boots and long sleeved shirts. These workers are employed for at least 15 days. They are ensured of minimum wages and social security benefits as required by national laws and standards.

The Consuelo Zobel Alger Foundation, has worked alongside the ILO and has so far donated Php1.5 million to provide the personal protective equipment of the workers. The amount was already used to purchase almost 3,000 sets to ensure safety and health of workers in Negros Occidental, Northern Cebu, Palawan, Tacloban and Bohol.

Each set includes mask, hat, a pair of gloves and boots and long sleeved shirts.

“It is Consuelo Foundation’s privilege to partner with ILO in providing much-needed emergency employment for thousands of families in the Haiyan-affected areas in the Philippines. As it will take time to rebuild the affected provinces and to get the people back to their former sources of livelihood, the children need our help,” Atty. Carmela Andal-Castro, Managing Director of the Consuelo Zobel Alger Foundation, said.

She added that the Consuelo Foundation will be embarking on a long-term disaster response project to assist affected families in rebuilding their lives.

Ace Hardware and SM Cares have also thrown their support in providing personal protective equipment and tools to the workers.

“Putting money in their pocket to support their families is one thing. However, as these workers start clearing and rebuilding their communities, we need to ensure that they are given personal

protective equipment,” said Lawrence Jeff Johnson of the ILO Country Office for the Philippines.

“In this disaster, there has been significant loss of lives and livelihoods. We don’t want these workers to fall victims again of work-related illnesses or accidents. Clearly, it is not just the role of government given the massive damage after the super typhoon. The contributions of Consuelo Foundation, Ace Hardware and SM Cares are vital in ensuring safety and health of typhoon affected workers,” concluded Johnson.



DOLE Secretary Rosalinda Baldoz and ILO Regional Director Yoshiteru Uramoto talk to a welder who lost his livelihood to Haiyan. (Photo by ILO/M. Rimando)

## Haiyan survivors see hope

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Over 20,000 workers who lost their livelihoods are taking part in these programmes, rebuilding their communities while working in decent and safe conditions.

“Ensuring decent work for one person can support an entire family and boost the local economy. This means we would have changed the lives of 100,000 people by the end this year,” added Johnson.

The ILO’s approach goes beyond an immediate short-term emergency employment. The programme will transition to medium-term labour-based community work, skills training and enterprise development.

### Must reads

#### Global Employment Trends 2014: Risk of a jobless recovery?

4 February 2014

The report provides the latest global and regional estimates of employment and unemployment, employment by sector, vulnerable employment, labour productivity, informal employment and working poverty, while also analysing country-level issues and trends in the labour market. <http://www.ilo.org/get>

6 February 2014

### Calendar

**National advocacy, campaign and media workshop on promoting exclusive breastfeeding in the workplace (EBFW)**  
Manila

**Dissemination workshop on comparative study on competency and equivalency standards between Philippines and Finland, Denmark and Norway**  
Manila



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