



STATEMENTS 2011

Opening Address at the Training on Basic Employment Services

By Mr Lawrence Jeff Johnson
Director, ILO Country Office for the Philippines
(delivered by Ms Akiko Sakamoto, Skills Development Policy and System Specialist)

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Manila Philippines

- Director Sy of the Department of Labor and Employment together with officials of the DOLE Bureau of Local Employment, DOLE Regional & Provincial Offices, and the Public Employment Service Office,
- Partners of the Joint Programme on Youth, Employment and Migration
- My colleague, Donna Koeltz, Senior Skills and Employability Specialist of ILO Geneva
- Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, *magandang umaga sa inyong lahat* (Good morning to all of you)!

I would like to welcome and thank you all for joining this training on basic employment services.

As you know, we celebrated the International Youth Day in August this year. On that occasion, the UN Joint Programme on Youth, Employment and Migration through DOLE, presented a strategy paper on meeting youth employment challenges to President Aquino. The Government of Spain supports the joint programme through the Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund.

With the goal of smooth transition to decent and productive work, the strategy paper provided a number of recommendations to enable young people to overcome barriers in making this transition. These include the need for Labour Market Information to enable job seekers to have access to jobs, training and internship opportunities. This is a critical function of the local employment service offices in particular PESO, which the ILO strongly supports.

Of the 18.2 million Filipinos, aged 15-24, there are 1.5 million unemployed youth striving to find employment opportunities after investing in their skills and education that may not be in demand at home or abroad, and 2.3 million vulnerably employed youth who are often unable to invest in their education which forces them into forms of vulnerable employment.

These young people in vulnerable employment are left with little choice but to accept or create whatever work they can find, just so they and their loved ones can survive another day. As the country's future, it is crucial for us to support the Filipino youth through opportunities for decent and productive work.

As we know, the Philippines has put premium on addressing youth employment as a key issue in the Philippine Labor and Employment Plan. The Joint Programme also contributes to the Philippine Development Plan 2011-2016 to achieve sustainable inclusive growth through decent and productive work for the Filipino youth. In this context, the Joint Programme aims to support the initiatives of the Philippine Government and to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

In response, the Joint Programme is providing employment support through a set of interventions which combine career guidance which are gender-sensitive, improved referral and tracking system, technical vocational skills training, inclusive education and life skills, safe migration, and public-private partnerships.

More specifically on employment services, the Joint Programme partnered with the Bureau of Local Employment. Together we aim to increase access of young people to decent and productive work through enhanced employment services.

The key results delivered and achieved for enhancing employment service so far include:

- development of PESO Institutionalization Kit that will be used as key reference by DOLE and local government units
- integration of PESO and One-Stop Resource Center for a more integrated and systematic delivery of employment services to the youth, and
- assessment of local employment services using ILO tools and evaluative factors.

The joint programme thus recognizes the critical role of PESO to ensure provision of employment services and to promote alternative local employment opportunities. However, operation of PESO confronts several challenges in relation to service delivery including local capacity, resource and facility.

We have conducted an assessment of local employment services. One of the key findings was to provide additional training for PESO staff, particularly on labour market information and analysis, career, vocational and employment counselling, referral and placement, and PhilJobNet

As will be further explained by a colleague, this five-day training on Basic Employment Services is part of the joint programme's support to PESO in enhancing local employment services in Masbate, Antique, Maguindanao and Agusan del Sur.

It is envisioned that this training, which you will be experiencing in the next five days, will also be incorporated as part of the regular training courses of the Bureau of Local Employment for PESO through the DOLE regional offices.

I would like to conclude by thanking the Bureau of Local Employment for their strong partnership and commitment to help the Filipino youth.

I wish you all the best for this five-day training.

Thank you and Mabuhay!