



International
Labour
Organization



UK Government

Skills for Prosperity Programme in the Philippines

December / 2020

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▶ At a glance



Duration

November 2019 –
March 2023



Donor

The United Kingdom
Government



Geographical coverage

The Philippines

▶ The location of Visayas



▶ Background

Increasing urbanisation, a growing middle class and a large and young population position the Philippines as a country with strong potential for higher economic growth, global competitiveness and poverty reduction. The benefits of this growth, however, have yet to fully trickle down to its workforce. Unemployment, persistent inequality of access to education and skills training, and skills shortages still hamper the country's progress.

Meanwhile, this growth trend occurs at a time when technological development, climate change, demographic shifts and the COVID-19 pandemic are transforming the world of work and creating immense opportunities for upgrading industries and workforce skills in the country.

With an average of two million enrollees each year, the technical and vocational education and training (TVET) system has the potential to help the country reduce skills gaps and shortages and ultimately improve labour market outcomes. However, the mismatch between TVET graduates' skills and industry requirements remains a challenge. Meanwhile, the ever-evolving technological advancements call for new occupations, qualifications and sets of skills.

The Skills for Prosperity Programme in the Philippines (SfP-Philippines), implemented by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and funded by the United Kingdom government, works with key government agencies, employers' organisations, trade unions and other stakeholders to further enhance skills development and the TVET system. Through this support, youth, women and other marginalised groups will become more employable and earn higher incomes.

▶ Objectives

As part of the ILO Skills for Prosperity in South-East Asia Programme (SfP-SEA), the Philippines programme aims to enhance national capacity to increase inclusive, mutually beneficial economic development resulting from greater, more equitable employability and productivity by enabling policies and practices that ensure equal access and sustained quality, relevance and cost-effectiveness of TVET. The Project is structured around four pillars:

► Skills for Prosperity Programme in the Philippines

- **Enhanced equity:** The programme facilitates the partners' effort to broaden access to skills development and the TVET system among marginalised groups – prioritising youth and women – by incorporating gender and social inclusion as a key element in all activities, and by providing technical advice for the adoption of necessary changes in national, regional and sectoral policies, strategies, regulations and institutional arrangements.

The programme also develops and applies training approaches and pilots other skills development models that specifically meet the needs of marginalised groups in the Visayas Region, where development challenges still linger despite its brisk economic growth.

- **Improved quality of skills development and TVET system:** As a response to increasing industry demand for higher level skills, the programme assists the partners to upgrade competency standards for TVET and then incorporate the standards in TVET curricula and competency assessment and certification. Additionally, it aims to enhance TVET competency assessment and certification through wider use of digital technologies.
- **Enhanced industry relevance:** The programme contributes to the strengthening of the labour market information system, particularly in data collection and analysis of job market demand for skilled labour. Moreover, it promotes adoption of lifelong learning principles and a learner-centred approach in TVET along with Recognition of Prior Learning-- a process that gives formal qualifications for skills a worker acquired through informal or on-the-job learning.
- **Improved cost-effectiveness of TVET financing:** The programme reviews the country's practices regarding the engagement of industry and other stakeholders in TVET financing, and then assists the partners in the development and implementation of a pilot joint public-private financing and delivery mechanism, aiming for greater private sector participation in TVET financing and delivery. Ultimately, this initiative will bring about greater affordability and effectiveness of the TVET system.

► Focus areas

The programme focuses on three of the country's economic sectors recognised for their job creation potential:

Agriculture

The programme gives priority to the sector's food production, which offers potential for inclusive growth in rural areas. While the sector's share of employment is as high as 27%, many jobs tend to be seasonal, low-paying

and informal. By providing skills development support, the programme aims to contribute to the improvement of the sector's productivity and competitiveness through greater mechanisation, technology use, innovation and linkages with industries and services.

Construction

Growth of this sector has benefited from the government's infrastructure programme and the rising demand for housing. Its progress would have a multiplier effect on other sectors such as agriculture, tourism, transport and logistics, and thereby boost opportunities for job creation and increase demand for more highly-skilled workers. The programme places particular focus on skills development for green construction technologies.

Information Technology and Business Process Management (IT-BPM)

IT-BPM has enjoyed rapid growth, absorbing a large portion of the young workforce. As the sector moves from voice-based services to higher-value functions such as knowledge process outsourcing, demand for workers is shifting to medium- and highly-skilled categories, highlighting the need to make the workforce future-ready. With the emergence of e-commerce, the programme focuses on skills for the digital economy, particularly since it opens more employment opportunities for marginalised groups.

► Key project activities

- Reviewing skills development and the TVET system in the Philippines vis-à-vis international best practices in each of the thematic areas addressed by the Project and providing recommendations for improvement.
- Conducting knowledge-sharing and capacity-building activities for the programme's stakeholders to achieve greater sustainability and impact on skills development and TVET system reform.
- Developing practical capabilities of the programme's partners to implement new, upgraded or enhanced mechanisms, standards, and policies for skills development to ensure their better alignment with international best practices, and to apply them in selected priority industries and target geographic areas.
- Documenting and disseminating the programme's results, highlighting lessons learnt and good practices with recommendations for adoption and replication throughout the country.

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