

Philippine Tripartite Constituents Support Decent Work for Domestic Workers: Unanimous Call for an International Convention to Set Standards

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The Philippine government, workers groups and employers groups have collaborated together with non-government organizations, faith-based institutions, local and overseas domestic workers groups as they embark on the Philippine Campaign on Decent Work for Domestic Workers.

Domestic work is one of the most important areas of employment for millions of Filipino women and young girls within and outside the country. 45 percent of Filipino women migrant workers are in domestic service¹ and about 9 percent of women in the Philippines are employed under such work².

The Philippine campaign is envisioned to serve as primary vehicle to generate massive public support in the advocacy to extend decent to domestic workers. A technical working group was convened to lead and coordinate social mobilization, campaigns, and knowledge-based advocacy. The campaign has two (2) major objectives: to come up with a unified Philippine position on the international labour instrument for domestic workers during the ILC 2010 and the immediate passage of a national law for the sector.

Since its formation in March 2009, the TWG embarked on a series of consultations and campaign activities such as celebration of a National Day for Domestic Workers held last 3 May 2009, Domestic Workers Right-to-Vote Campaign in line with the upcoming national elections, and linking the issue during the World Day Against Child Labour celebration in 15 June 2009. The TWG also conducted series of multisectoral, sectoral, island-wide and national consultations to thoroughly study the 1st Law and Practice Report and Questionnaire prepared by ILO headquarters.

The final position and response to the first questionnaire by the government and the workers was presented during the 2nd National Domestic Workers Summit held on 20-21 August 2009, at Occupational Safety and Health Center, Quezon City, Philippines.

The Philippine workers groups and employers groups agreed to support the adoption of an ILO Convention, supplemented by a Recommendation while the government endorses the adoption of a Convention.

¹ Lazo, Lucita "A Gender Perspective in Labour Market Governance," Working Paper 17, International Labour Organization Subregional Office for South-East Asia and the Pacific. Manila, Philippines. 2008

² Flor, Maria and Mieke Meurs, "Global Trends in Women's Access to "Decent Work"" Dialogue on Globalization Occasional Papers. Geneva 2009.