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Bridging Research, Policy, and Practice

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE INSTITUTE FOR LABOR STUDIES

ILS Celebrates Women's Month DOLE rallies support for a violence and harassment- free workplace

NEWS | Page 2

IN THIS ISSUE

**ILS OIC EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR TAKES
OATH AS FULL-
FLEDGED ILS CHIEF**

NEWS |
Page 3

**EFFICIENT CHILDCARE
SYSTEM NEEDED IN
PH TO SUPPORT
WORKING WOMEN**

ILS SPOTLIGHT |
Page 4

**TOWARD A HUMAN-
CENTERED AGRICULTURE
MODERNIZATION:
CASES FROM THE
PHILIPPINES**

RESEARCH DIGEST |
Page 5

**EXPLORING INNOVATIVE
APPROACHES TO ADDRESS
LABOR EXPLOITATION IN THE
FISHERY SUPPLY CHAIN:
THE CASE OF THE TUNA
INDUSTRY IN THE PHILIPPINES**

RESEARCH DIGEST |
Page 6

DOLE rallies support for a violence and harassment-free workplace



Institute for Labor Studies Gender and Development Committee with DOLE Undersecretary Benedicto R. Bitonio, Jr. (Center), ILS Executive Director Jeanette T. Damo, Deputy Executive Director Atty. Mary Grace L. Riguer Teodosio with speakers during the forum on Convention 190 held on March 21, 2024 at Bayleaf, Intramuros, Manila.

MANILA - In line with the celebration of the National Women's Month, the Department of Labor and Employment, through its attached agency the Institute for Labor Studies (ILS), organized a forum on Convention 190 on Eliminating Violence and Harassment in the World of Work following the country's ratification to raise awareness and common understanding of its principles. The forum serves as a platform for tripartite discussion on concrete policies and programs, various approaches and avenues to promote and engage the support of stakeholders in the implementation of the said Convention.

In his welcome remarks, DOLE Undersecretary Benedicto Ernesto R. Bitonio, Jr. underscores the role of government as duty bearers and its tripartite partners in advocating for and realizing the principles of the Convention. He also identified the different avenues and platforms to promote the Convention which includes incorporating it as an elective course in the curriculum of higher education and technical vocational education, developing a distinct policy and establish reporting system in the workplace, and integrating it on DOLE programs and services.

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"The ratification of the Convention should not end there. There are many things that we need to do, including adjustments in our legislations that the tripartite partnership work on..."

DOLE UNDERSECRETARY BENEDICTO ERNESTO R. BITONIO, JR.

"The ratification of the Convention should not end there. There are many things that we need to do, including adjustments in our legislations that the tripartite partnership work on. The second is the enhancement of institutions to put into effect the concept, which may require adjustments in national laws and implementing mechanisms. The third is the buy-in from employers, particularly employers, which the Convention identifies as primarily responsible to ensure that their workplaces, whether physical or virtual, are indeed free from violence and harassment," Undersecretary Bitonio, Jr. emphasized.

The forum featured presentations of resource speakers on various initiatives being undertaken by different organizations in support of the Convention. Ma. Rebecca Rafaela R. Baylous from the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW), spoke about the impact of C190 on women's empowerment in the workplace; Dir. Jerrick Gerard C. Go of the Commission on Human Rights (CHR), discussed the convention's rights-based framework; Brent Kenneth L. Calvo from the Bureau of Workers with Special Concerns (BWSC) presented the DOLE's initiatives; Ms. Nenette Fernando of the Employers Confederation of the Philippines (ECOP), addressed the role of employers in upholding the principles of C190 as well as employee engagement initiatives; and Ms. Fidelina Geraldez of the United Domestic Workers of the Philippines (UNITED) shared the experience of domestic workers as victims and the importance of soliciting the support of the local government to protect their rights.

The recorded forum can be accessed through the ILS Official Facebook page at https://bit.ly/ILS_C190PHLRatification.

ILS OIC-Executive Director formally takes oath as full-fledged ILS Chief

MANILA - Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) Secretary Bienvenido E. Laguesma administers the oath of office to Jeanette T. Damo, CESO III as Executive Director III of the Institute for Labor Studies (ILS) at the DOLE Main Building Office of Secretary, Intramuros, Manila on 23 January 2024.

The oath-taking was witnessed by Senior Officers of the Department. Prior to her appointment, Executive Director Damo was the Officer-in-Charge of the Institute since 17 October 2022. She started her career at the ILS as Research Assistant in 1989 before being promoted to Chief Labor and Employment in 2003. She transferred to the National Wages Productivity Commission in 2008 as Director II and was promoted to Deputy Executive Director IV in 2014.

In 2016, Executive Director Damo was conferred with the rank of Career Executive Service Officer (CESO) III after passing and completing the rigorous process of examinations.

Executive Director Damo vowed to continue the legacy of the Institute in implementing its mandate by consistently delivering high-quality and relevant policy researches and studies on labor and employment throughout the years. "ILS served as my training ground during the early years of my career in the government. I started as a Research Assistant at ILS in 1989, and transferred to NWPC in 2008 to explore new learning grounds. Nearly fourteen (14) years later, I was directed to head ILS as its OIC and early this year, I took my oath as a "regular" Executive Director of the Institute.

With that, I could say, I have come full circle as a public servant," she said. Executive Director Jeanette T. Damo was among the awardees during the 50th founding anniversary of the Career Executive Service Board and the 2023 CES Lifelong Learning for Leadership Congress (CESCON 2023) on November 28, 2023, at the Manila Hotel, Ermita Manila.

She was also part of the Philippine delegation representing the country in the 28th Session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 28) hosted by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change from 30 November to 12 December 2023 in Expo City, Dubai, United Arab Emirates in which one of the few wins is the Just Transition Work Program where decent work is recognized as one of the core elements.



ILS ED TAKES OATH | Department of Labor and Employment Secretary Bienvenido E. Laguesma administers the oath of office of Institute for Labor Studies Executive Director Jeanette T. Damo at the Office of the Secretary, DOLE Main Building, Intramuros, Manila.



Efficient Childcare System Needed in PH to Support

Working Women

Balancing work and family responsibilities remains a significant challenge for many women in the country

National Women’s Month is both a celebration and a reminder of our continued call to balance the playing field between women and men. Among the facets of this advocacy is investing in women’s economic empowerment - the capacity to make and carry out decisions for oneself, access to equal opportunities and resources, as well as women’s participation in the labor force.

The Philippines ranked 19th out of 146 countries in the world in terms of closing gender gaps in the Global Gender Gap Report in 2022 (World Economic Forum). The country is one of the leading countries in Asia recognized for advancing equal rights and empowerment of women. However, anecdotes suggest that women remain underrepresented in the labor force, and still spend most of their time doing household chores and attending to childcare needs. International Labour Organization (ILO) data showed that the Philippines is still lagging and remains one of the lowest in Southeast Asia in labor force participation for female working-age population ages 15 to 64 in 2022.

Efficient and accessible childcare services are crucial to support women, expand employment opportunities in the formal sector, and contribute to socioeconomic development. In the same manner, access to childcare services is expected to aid women in the reduction of unpaid care work, and at the same time promote child development.

Responsive childcare system as a transformative solution

Using the International Labor Organization’s (ILO) 5R Framework for Decent Care Work, a study conducted by an ILS Researcher explored current gaps in the following areas of the enabling environment relevant to the provision of childcare services in the country: 1) policies and frameworks; 2) governance; and 3) public support, toward achieving a high road to care work with gender equality.

Findings suggest that balancing work and family responsibilities remains a significant challenge for many women in the Philippines, and access to childcare facilities could improve women’s access to economic opportunities. The government plays a critical role in developing and implementing policies effectively and ensuring the availability and distribution of resources for childcare services. While the Philippines has existing policies and programs to aid parents in providing childcare, the study identified certain limitations, especially on enforcement capacity and scope, that need improvement to establish a holistic and transformative childcare system. Similarly, it is crucial to address governance gaps by strengthening the government’s capacity to implement policies and allocate resources for Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) and Gender and Development (GAD) programs. Furthermore, it is essential to ensure public support for utilizing childcare services, not only for women but for men as well. Creating a more egalitarian culture to support women’s right to balance work and family obligations should be a priority for policymakers and program administrators.

Among the study’s recommendations are strengthening the existing policies aimed at providing childcare assistance as well as its implementation, supporting the passage of Magna Carta of Daycare Workers to ensure the human resource needs of state-funded child development centers, benchmarking good practices in the provision of childcare services both in the public and private sectors, conducting further studies on Filipino parents’ preference for availing childcare services outside the household, and strengthening regional cooperation and international commitment towards a sustainable and resilient care economy.

Taken from the research study:

On Women’s Economic Participation and Childcare Needs in the Philippines: An Analysis of the Enabling Environment

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 Supervised by: Prof. Kim Joeun
 (A Supervised Research Project submitted as a graduation requirement under the Master of Development Policy Program of KDI School of Public Policy and Management)

Stock photo from Canva

TOWARDS A HUMAN-CENTERED AGRICULTURE MODERNIZATION:

Cases from the Philippines

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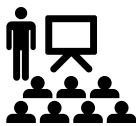



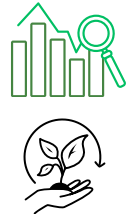


Diether B. Navarosa

Lara P. Fameronag, NWPC

Overview

Agriculture modernization is “the process of transforming the agriculture sector into one that is dynamic, technologically advanced, and competitive, yet concerned with human resource development, guided by the sound principles of social justice” (Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization Act of 1997).¹ In this regard, an integrated approach to managing human capital productivity may help achieve the goal of having a modernized and competitive agriculture sector for the Philippines.

Key Findings

- 1**  Aging Filipino farmers persists as youth involvement continue to decline.
- 2**  Community-based training and monitoring is perceived as limited.
- 3**  Gender issues such as biases on women's involvement in training programs, and lack of care facilities are hindering women in rural areas from pursuing skills development and productive work in agriculture.
- 4**  The agriculture sector has distinct human productivity needs, considering the current inequalities in education and training, limited infrastructure in rural areas, and vulnerability to the effects of climate change.
- 5**  Agriculture cooperatives with good management practices tend to adopt innovative approaches and modern techniques in farming and the production.
- 6**  Insufficient knowledge about gainsharing is one of the reasons why it does not receive the attention it deserves among MSMEs, including those in the agriculture sector.
- 7**  **19.2 % or 205 of 1,070** establishments under the Agriculture, Fishery and Fishing Sectors implement Productivity Improvement Programs (PIP).
- 8**  Modernization and technology adoption may have unintended consequence to women engaged in agriculture work as there is an inadequate support mechanism in rural areas that can lead to changes in power dynamics that may result in gender-based violence.

Recommendations

- Give incentives to target groups who will engage in the agriculture sector to boost its productivity.
- Facilitate welfare-to-work transition for displaced workers due to technology adoption and climate change.
- Promote productivity values with tailored interventions based on unique needs.
- Enhance the government agencies' mandate to promote productivity improvement.
- Collect and utilize sex-disaggregated data for evidence-based policymaking and gender mainstreaming.
- Maximize partnerships with the private sector, NGOs, think tanks, employer federations, labor groups, industry councils, media, and SUCs, especially on knowledge transfer, community engagement, monitoring and evaluation of programs, research, and development.
- The National Wages and Productivity Commission is recommended to develop an agriculture sector module on productivity improvement on the areas of operations management, growth and target management, personal management, system/process improvement and gain-sharing.

You may scan the QR code to download the full paper.



EXPLORING INNOVATIVE APPROCHES TO ADDRESS LABOR EXPLOITATION IN THE FISHERY SUPPLY CHAIN:

The Case of the Tuna Industry in the Philippines

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Overview

The fishing industry is one of the country's main economic drivers, with tuna as one of the Philippines' top fisheries exports. Following a case study approach, the researchers investigated the supply chain of the tuna industry in General Santos City as the center of production, processing, export, and marketing by looking into the labor issues experienced by workers and documenting approaches to address such.

Policy Issue

While the tuna industry plays a crucial role in the country's economy, it is not without labor issues.

Some anecdotal concerns include underpayment or non-payment of wages, excessive working hours, lack of social protection, and poor health and safety standards.

Objectives

1. Review the existing policies and mechanisms to prevent and combat labor exploitation in the tuna supply chain at the local, national, and international levels;
2. Determine innovative practices or strategies to address labor exploitation in the tuna supply chain;
3. Discuss policy opportunities among stakeholders to strengthen measures and promote responsible labor practices in the tuna supply chain.

Key Findings

Innovative approaches based on the **United Nations' "Protect, Respect, and Remedy"** Framework pillars:¹

PROTECT

- ILO Work on Fishing Convention, 2007 (No. 188) and Work in Fishing Recommendation, 2007 (No. 199)
- National Tuna Management Plan
- Comprehensive National Fishery Industry Development 2006 to 2025
- Department Order 156 S. 2016
- Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998
- Occupational Safety and Health Standards
- Strengthening the safety standards of Philippine Registered Fishing Vessels
- Research and Development and convergence of government programs for documentation of fishers
- Training of fisherfolk
- Combatting illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing practices
- Presence of Industry Tripartite Council (ITC) Fishing and Allied Services for consultative meetings

RESPECT



- Market-driven Compliance through Social Accountability Audits



- Corporate Commitment to Goodwill as Co-regulator of Standards



- Use of Technology in Preventing Cases of Trafficking in Tuna Fishing Vessels (e.g. Vessel Monitoring System)



- Corporate Social Responsibility and Family Welfare Initiatives

REMEDY



Programs for proper identification and documentation of workers

Counseling and rescue for victims of trafficking with the local government unit and partners



Training to workers extended by civil society organizations

Financial literacy, alternative livelihood, and access to credit



Support system for women in the tuna fishing sector

Recommendations

- Strengthen inter-agency efforts of National Government Agencies and Local Government Units in addressing human trafficking, Illegal Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing practices, and upholding regulations and protocols towards improving the working conditions in the tuna industry;
- Conduct capacity-building and training on international convention and laws covering the fishing industry, specifically on general labor standards and occupational health and safety;
- Strengthen DOLE services and programs offered to workers in the industries (e.g. labor inspection, Tulong Pangkabuhayan sa ating Disadvantaged/Displaced Workers (TUPAD), DOLE Integrated Livelihood Program (DILP), especially during off-fishing seasons.
- Establish and provide continuous support to partnerships and establish recognition mechanisms to partner stakeholders.

¹ Ethical Trading Initiative Norway. (2013). A Guide to Human Rights Due Diligence in Global Supply Chains. Retrieved from: https://www.ajsosteniblebcn.cat/human-rights-due-diligence-in-global-supply-chains_28919.pdf



The logo features the letters 'iLS' in a stylized font where the 'i' is purple, the 'L' is blue, and the 'S' is blue. To the right of this is the word 'GAZETTE' in a large, bold, black sans-serif font.

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