



STATEMENTS 2010

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Welcome Remarks for the Anti-Child Labour Communities of Practice
Visioning Workshop

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Director Chit Cilindro of the Department of Labor and Employment Bureau of
Workers with Special Concerns

Representatives of the Regional Offices of DOLE and members of the
National Child Labor Committee

ILO colleagues - Johan Arvling from the regional office handling Knowledge
Management and the IPEC Manila team

Ladies and gentlemen, magandang umaga sa inyong lahat!

It is a great honour to welcome you to this Visioning Workshop for the
Communities of Practice on Eliminating Child Labour.

The ILO together with you our partners, stand for a world where no girls or
boys are forced to work at the cost of dropping out of school, risking their
health or even their lives.

The global economic crisis however posed a great challenge. Early this year,
the ILO warned that the crisis could “further brake” progress toward the goal
of eliminating the worst forms of child labour by 2016. New and large-scale
efforts are needed for a re-energized campaign against child labour.

As efforts to reduce child labour are slowing down, the ILO observed another
worrying trend. Workers mostly from poor families are willing to take whatever
work is available to survive rather than becoming unemployed. This resulted
to an increase in the number of vulnerable employment, in which workers are
less likely to have formal work arrangements, decent working conditions and
employment benefits. The Philippines has a high incidence of vulnerable
employment and working poor at 42 per cent and 21 per cent.

Workers and their families bear the pressure of increased poverty and
hardship as an impact of the crisis. Several studies revealed that poor

households tend to cut back spending on health and pull children from school as education became less affordable. A 2000 ILO-IPEC report on the Asian Financial Crisis observed a drop in enrolment rates and a rise in child labour among children ages 10-14 in the Philippines.

When families are poor, children are too often forced to work. It is important to address vulnerable employment and working poverty. Doing this provides greater capacity for families to ensure access of their children to basic education and reduce incidence of child labour.

In response to the crisis, the Global Jobs Pact was adopted at the International Labour Conference in 2009. The Pact has a strong focus on supporting vulnerable groups, and ensuring that progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals is not disrupted as a result of the crisis. The Pact also urges action to continue the prevention and elimination of child labour.

The Pact calls for a coordinated global policy options to support job creation and help people into work, invest in social protection systems, strengthen respect for international labour standards, and promote social dialogue. Such policies can mitigate the impact of the crisis on families living in poverty and keep children out of child labour.

The Philippines placed creating employment opportunities, achieving inclusive growth and reducing poverty central to its national development objective which is linked to the Global Jobs Pact.

Efforts to restore the global economy must include necessary political decisions to put every child in school and end child labour. It is crucial to scale up action and move into a higher gear.

Today is an important event in the Philippine movement against child labour as this marks the creation of Communities of Practice which will take the battle to a new arena – digital technology and the Internet.

IPEC's present Project, supported by the US Department of Labor is designed to help the Philippine Programme against Child Labour achieve its goals. In the past years, there were many initiatives to put an end to child labour in the country.

The ILO recognizes all efforts which include legislations, researches, campaigns and programmes. Through all these, we have accumulated a tremendous amount of knowledge but a gap remains in putting a system to manage integration and building a culture of knowledge sharing. Upscaling the elimination of child labour requires knowing what works and having the will and the means to act on it.

This is the very reason why we are here today. The Child Labour Knowledge Management Information System aims to address gaps in knowledge management.

Together, we will all listen and learn through partnerships and opportunities for knowledge sharing provided by evolving communities of practice.

We envision the IPEC Communities of Practice and the Child Labour Knowledge Management Information System, to become the centre of knowledge and expertise on action against child labour in the Philippines, to which governments, employers and workers, international actors and others can turn for policy advice and capacity building.

The global economic crisis has the potential to roll back progress made towards ending child labour. As a Community and members of the National Child Labour Committee, let us not allow this to happen.

I honour your commitment to make the vision of eliminating the worst forms of child labour a reality for millions of working children in the country. Significantly, we have to scale up action for children to have a better future – a future free from child labour.

Thank you and Mabuhay!