

ILO and POEA launch nationwide anti-illegal recruitment campaign in the Philippines

The Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA), with the support of the International Labour Organization (ILO), mobilizes local government units, youth leaders, civil society and relevant stakeholders in Mindanao to strengthen the government's campaign against illegal recruitment and trafficking in person, specifically minor and under-aged female domestic workers.

POEA convened local stakeholders in the Municipality of Glan of Sarangani Province to roll out its national campaign called "Roundup of Stakeholders against Illegal Recruitment and Trafficking in Minors/Under-aged Migrant Female Domestic Workers." This consultative process is aligned with the ILO Fair project's primary objective of engaging relevant stakeholders to protect key sectors, particularly young women, who are most vulnerable to fraudulent and exploitative recruitment practices. Empowering migrant workers starts at the community level where individuals and families can access reliable information on available government programmes that can benefit them as they explore migration options.

"Local communities play a key role in preventing illegal recruitment and reducing vulnerability. Migrant domestic workers often face low wages, poor working conditions and long working hours. Domestic workers have rights as workers, including rights to decent work, human dignity and fair recruitment," said Khalid Hassan, Director of the ILO Country Office for the Philippines.

The assembly of local stakeholders has been designed to inform local community leaders about the incidence of illegal recruitment of minor and under-aged domestic workers, particularly about the dangers of deploying under-aged domestic workers abroad. It also aims to enhance community awareness about existing welfare and employment services and to involve local communities in monitoring illegal recruitment and human trafficking activities to support relevant programmes of the government.

The roundup also involves members and officers of the Sangguniang Kabataan(local youth council) to emphasize the inclusion of gender, migration and development in their respective Comprehensive Barangay Youth Development Plan.

For this pilot roundup in the Sarangani Province, POEA invited representatives from the Department of Labor and Employment, Department of Social Welfare and Development, Department of Education, Sangguniang Kabataan, Barangay Chairpersons, Philippine National Police, Public Employment Service Office, Public Information Office, Municipal Health Office, faith-based organizations, people's organizations and the branch managers of licensed recruitment agencies in the area.

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