

Good News
Department of Labor and Employment
Bureau of Working Conditions
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Working Towards an Inclusive Workplaces

The Philippine Financial & Inter-Industry Pride (PFIP) and the Women Inter-Industry Network (WIN) jointly organized the Philippine Workplace Inclusion Forum on April 30, 2021, with the theme "Inclusion and the New Normal." The forum brought together a range of stakeholders to discuss the country's current state of diversity and inclusion. The forum's objective was to examine and discuss what it means to be an inclusive organization in the Philippines during this period of transition. The forum brought to life the company's commitment to corporate responsibility and inclusion by partnering with employees and clients and providing a forum for thought leadership on critical issues affecting the industry and society in general.

Inclusion occurs when businesses promote the representation and participation of diverse groups of people in their policies and programs, such as people of various genders, races and ethnicities, abilities and disabilities, religions, cultures, ages, and sexual orientations, as well as people with a range of backgrounds, experiences, skills and expertise.

During the forum, Dr. Marco Antonio Valeros, representing the Department of Labor and Employment – Bureau of Working Conditions, shared that Philippine laws already include provisions for an enabling environment that promotes fundamental principles and rights at work that support inclusiveness in all places. The 1987 Philippine Constitution, Labor Code of the Philippines, Republic Act No. 11313 (known as the "Safe Spaces Act"), Republic Act 9710 Magna Carta of Women, and Republic Act No. 7277 Magna Carta for Disabled Persons all aim to ensure the equality, security, and safety of every individual in both private and public spaces.

In order to ensure the holistic well-being of these diverse groups, the DOLE requires establishments to fully implement RA 11058, (known as the OSH Law). In addition, DOLE protects and advances these rights through timely policy issuances and enforcement activities, particularly during a pandemic. Businesses are realizing the value of investing in a diverse work environment.

The aforementioned laws are aimed at eliminating discrimination and increasing participation. While biases and aggressions have been ingrained in our culture for a long time, we are now moving toward acceptance of diversity. The DOLE conducts inspections of establishments to ensure this. Workplace inspections are part of its work. Aside from labor inspection, the DOLE also provides technical assistance in the form of learning sessions.

Dr. Valeros concluded his remarks by stating that "a central dimension of building back better is the need for a people-centered recovery that focuses on workers' well-being, improvement of inclusiveness and reduction of inequality." The future of inclusion is in creating opportunities for these marginalized groups of people and continuously investing in and improving a program that has evolved into a movement and a growth strategy for establishments.