

2009 NWPC Accomplishments

With the onslaught of the global financial crisis in 2009, NWPC actively responded to avert serious economic slowdown manifested by a drastic reduction of aggregate demand for output and labor. To complement the package of economic stimulus by the national government, NWPC came up with a combination of active and passive labor market programs geared towards protecting the most vulnerable workers, preserving jobs and enabling firms to shift to higher cost efficiency strategies through its array of productivity technologies. Due to its strategic approach and innovative programs that strongly engaged its social partners, NWPC exhibited exemplary performance, even surpassing its previous year's accomplishments.

A. On Wages

1. Taking off from the trailblazing Area-Based Consultations in the last quarter of 2008 on the Global Financial Crisis, NWPC effectively managed the wage issues through the conduct **of post-consultation assessment with the social partners**. There was a consensus, particularly between the labor and employer groups, that an increase in the daily minimum wage might lead to more displacement of workers and closure of commercial establishments, specifically in small and medium enterprises.
2. This post-consultation assessment was also instrumental in the issuance of guidelines on flexible work arrangements, an emergency employment measure that help firms survive the brunt of the crisis as well as preserve jobs. The NWPC and its network of regional boards actively advocated the adoption of the said measure. Based on the monitoring reports of the Bureau of Labor and Employment Statistics, job displacements for the month of October reached 625, up by 38 or 6.5 percent from the September report. Total workers recalled/resumed normal work schedule stood at 111,330, up by 1,305 or 1.2% which accounts for more than one-half (52.2%) of the 213,300 affected workers. Meanwhile, the number of workers on flexible work arrangements reached 39,534, down by 1,216 or -3.0% accounts for 38.8% of total affected workers.
3. As a response to the President's call for the **grant of non-wage benefits** to workers to soften the blows of spiraling prices of food and oil, NWPC, as the lead agency of the DOLE Inter-Agency Committee on Non-Wage Benefits For Workers (DOLE-IAC-NWB), continued the holding of Diskwento Caravans in strategic areas. Food and non-food items at discounted prices are sold during Diskwento Caravan to provide the workers access to basic commodities. **For 2009, 73 caravans were mounted nationwide which benefits 50,000 workers and their families.**
4. In the last quarter of 2009, **3 wage petitions** were received from Regions VI, IX and VII. The concerned Boards studied and reviewed the merits of the said petitions while all other Regional Boards continued assessing and monitoring the economic environment in their respective regions by looking into vital economic indicators and coordinating with various government agencies for major developments.

B. On Productivity Improvement

5. To soften the heavy blows brought about by the evolving financial crisis, NWPC strongly advocated for the adoption of productivity improvement measures to enable businesses to manage the costs and shift to higher cost efficiency strategies.
6. In February 2009, NWPC launched the **Service Quality Program for Key Employment Generators** designed to improve workforce productivity and competitiveness identified in the 2006 National Manpower Summit and the 2007 National Human Resource Conference. The SQ-KEGs Program is a management service quality system that aims to enhance the knowledge and skills of the workforce by providing “error-free” service to clients. For its initial program offering, the program zeroed in the hotel and restaurant industry.
7. To ensure a holistic approach, NWPC forged a partnership agreement with the Department of Tourism (DOT), Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), and Hotel and Restaurant Association of the Philippines (HRAP). In the spirit of partnership, NWPC offered two-day training on “error-free” service while TESDA conducted skills training, assessment and certification of skills in tradeable areas (e.g., front desk operations, housekeeping, bartending, commercial cooking, etc.). On the other hand, the DOT and HRAP assisted in forging linkages with the local tourism councils, monitored and evaluated the results of the Program, and provided referrals as potential clients. **From March to November 2009, the Program benefitted 204 standards hotels and restaurants and some 1,353 workforce of the industry.**
8. In July 2009, the NWPC received the **Presidential Citation for Best Practices in MSME Promotion and Development for ISTIV (Industrious, Systematic, Time-conscious, Innovative, Value for Work) Productivity Improvement Program**. No less than President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo recognized the contribution of ISTIV, a flagship program of the Commission in the development and advancement of the micro, small and medium enterprises.
9. As of December 2009, the NWPC provided ISTIV technologies/5S training/productivity orientation to 5,536 firms, benefiting 24,355 participants. Productivity improvement trainings are intended to install positive work values among the workforce; cost cutting/saving measures; plant layouts and process improvement; capacity building and other resources to improve productivity levels for competitiveness
10. After a successful launching of Productivity Olympics last year, NWPC awarded 10 MSMEs as national winners for this year’s Productivity Olympics. The winners exhibited outstanding performance on people development and business excellence. Productivity Olympics aims to intensify awareness on the importance of productivity improvement in global competitiveness, stimulate competitive spirit among local enterprises on productivity and showcase good practices on people development and business excellence.

11. The NWPC conducted 12 Learning Sessions on Wages and Productivity, benefiting **301** participants. Meanwhile, Operasyon PAWIS (*Operasyon Pagpapatupad ng Wasto at Itinalagang Sahod*) reached approximately a total of **129,314** clients through various mass media, labor education seminars/symposia, dissemination of IEC materials and email/phone-in-walk-in-queries.
12. Alongside the conduct of trainings, NWPC also drafted **evaluation reports on Service Quality and Succeeding in Business Programs** which incorporates areas for improvements in terms of content/substance, delivery, and flow/structure of the module.
13. In its attempt to expand the pool of its productivity trainers and to reach more MSMEs clients, the NWPC came up with the draft **Guidelines on Establishing the Accreditation of Productivity Trainers**. As a kick-off activity, the NWPC met with BWC to discuss the important components (i.e., processes involved, fees, screening/evaluation of applicants, targeted participants, monitoring) of the guidelines. Early this year, the NWPC piloted a **Trainers' Training on ISTIV Bayanihan** participated by PESO Managers, DOLE Provincial and District Officers and some Board Members.
14. To step up the advocacy efforts of the Commission on its array of productivity programs and to kick-off the launching of the 2009 Productivity Olympics and Service Quality for KEGs, **a series of press briefings were mounted**. The briefings are intended to raise corporate visibility, awareness and better appreciation of NWPC's programs and services.

C. On NWPC's continuing relevance in the context of changing socio-economic conditions

15. In October 2009, the NWPC organized the **National Policy Forum on Wages and Productivity**. The Forum jumpstarted a thorough review of minimum wage policies and its existing mechanism of determining regional minimum wages, and generated inputs in formulating strategies designed to strengthen the productivity improvement programs and initiatives of the NWPC and its RTWPBs. The Forum was organized in collaboration with the International Labour Organization (ILO), and Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES).
16. The NWPC worked closely with experts from the academe and ILO in the preparation of **independent research papers such as on the global trends and issues on minimum wage fixing; use and relevance of the criteria for minimum wage determination; outcomes of minimum wage setting and the politics and economics of minimum wage setting**. In the area of productivity, studies focused on the global trends in productivity promotion and gainsharing practices as well as the country's own policy and program reforms towards improving productivity and competitiveness.
17. Prior to the National Forum, the Commission conducted **a series of pre-forum consultations** with the labor and employer groups, academe and statistical

community, and concerned government agencies to examine the preliminary results of the study as well as to solicit inputs from the various groups.

18. As an offshoot of the Forum, the ILO pledged to renew its commitment of **reviving its country program on wages**. This year alone, the ILO solicited the assistance of NWPC in conducting **a study on hourly wages** which will be completed next year.
19. In the area of productivity, the ILO committed to provide **technical assistance to upgrade NWPC's productivity technologies**. The groundwork for this commitment commenced in July 2009 when the NWPC collaborated with ILO in exploring and pilot testing a new productivity training module known as **Succeeding in Business** which is essentially a simplified version of the Factory Improvement Program (FIP), Start Your Business (SYB) and Improve Your Business (IYB). The pilot testing involved the participation of Regional Boards III, IV-A and NCR and some ISTIV company-beneficiaries. During the Final Meeting on SIB held November 2009, the Commission outlined the proposed next steps to be taken to complete the development of the said module.
20. In responding to the challenge of meeting the demand and supply manpower requirements of the labor market, the Department of Labor and Employment came up with the **"Jobs Fit Program."** Taking off from its experience as lead convener of the 2007 National Human Resource Conference, the NWPC **managed and coordinated the regional consultations of the Visayas regions as well as prepared a comprehensive report on the outcomes** of the consultations focusing on the availability and demand challenges/requirements and prospects for the period 2010-2020.
21. Meanwhile, in line with the planned **Conversations with CEOs**, the NWPC met with Mr. John Philip S. Orbeta—Managing Director and Group Head of Corporate Resources and Atty. Eliezer C. Tanlapco—Employee Relations and Services Director of the Ayala Corporation. During the meeting, they discussed the critical labor supply issues faced by Ayala industries given their diversified investments in BPOs, real estate development, and construction. As an offshoot of the meeting, a high-level dialogue between Sec. Roque and Mr. Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala II is set on February next year to discuss the medium to long-term investment directors and constraints in the business environment.
22. To ensure that the Commission are attuned to the economic, social and political issues/concerns and developments, **resource persons from NSO, DOF, DOE, DTI, NEDA, NSCB, UP, and UAP** are invited to make presentations on labor market indicators, prices, economic indicators, investments, oil prices, among others.
23. The NWPC also **represented the DOLE in various high-policy dialogues** such as the Export Development Council, Price Monitoring Council, inter-agency committees on labor, income and productivity, poverty statistics, and price index, and industry association meetings/conferences and as Portfolio Manager for productivity and efficiency under the SMED Plan.

24. **The NWPC provided substantive inputs in the drafting of house/senate bills.** These include: SB 842 (Maritime Code of the Philippines); SB 844 (Maritime Administration Act of 2007); SB 1378 (Maritime Industry Development Act of 2007), RA 8424 (Tax Reform Act of 1997); SB 2036 (An Act Increasing the Penalties for Non-Compliance of the Prescribed Increases and Adjustments in the Wage Rates of Workers Amending for the Purpose of RA6727) and HB 5929 (An Act to Establish an Independent Economic Planning Agency as Provided for Under Art. 12 Sec. 9 of 1987 Constitution).

D. Management Support Services

25. In line with its continuous efforts to enhance the capacities of its officers and staff, the Commission conducted the following: two batches of the **Orientation Seminars on Wage and Productivity Policies and Programs** for its new sets of Board Secretaries, officers, staff and Board Members; sending 168 officers/personnel to various local and foreign trainings; and teambuilding exercise to foster camaraderie and teamwork at the workplace.
26. As part of its commitment to CSC of streamlining its frontline services, the NWPC completed and launched its **Agency Citizen's Charter**.

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