

#JobStartToEQUAL promotes gender inclusivity in DOLE leadership



The Bureau of Local Employment, through the JobStart Philippines unit, held #JobStartToEQUAL, a gender and development capacity building activity on inclusive leadership for the personnel of the Bureau and 43 Public Employment Service Offices, on 15 and 17 February 2022 via Zoom. Conducted in collaboration with the Philippine Business Coalition for Women Empowerment, the two-day event featured seven renowned speakers from the private sector and business groups who advocate for gender inclusivity in the workplace.

On the first day, Jose Roland Moya, Director-General of the Employers Confederation of the Philippines; Olive Ybanez, Director for Organizational Development of Teleperformance Philippines; and Paola Antonio-Verayo, Human Resource Business Partner of Meralco; presented the women empowerment initiatives of their respective organizations. The panel discussion highlighted the vulnerability of women's jobs during the pandemic and how this can be addressed by gender inclusive policy and cultural changes.

The second day focused on strengthening women leadership in workplaces. According to speakers Monette Hamlin, Chairperson of WomenBizPH; Aibee Cantos, former President and CEO of Philam Life and founding member of Male Champions of Change Philippines; Judd Balayan, Chief Financial Officer of the Dangerous Drugs Board; and Arthur Luis Florentin, Executive Director of the Civil Service Institute; using a leader's influence to increase gender inclusivity and ensuring diversity in job opportunities will greatly benefit the Philippine economy. Citing women's huge capacity to go beyond limits, resulting from the immense responsibility placed upon them by society, they championed women leadership as accelerators of inclusive economic and social progress.

The presence of women in leadership roles needs to be seen and promoted, especially during this time of ongoing socioeconomic crisis. With this perspective, #JobStartToEQUAL forwards the rights of women to not only take up space, but also make it their own. The activity helped the Department build an even stronger and dedicated workforce that recognizes gender bias and supports its gradual unlearning to build more inclusive and non-discriminatory workplaces.

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