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# DOLE eyes RH programs to get more women employed

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To enable more women to get employed and participate in the labor force, the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) is pushing the implementation of reproductive health programs for the informal sector.

In a report, the DOLE's Institute for Labor Studies (ILS) proposed the inclusion of reproductive health services and gender training in livelihood programs to serve as an

initial step to reach women in the informal sector.

ILS cited results of studies indicating that the poorest women have more than twice as many children than women in wealthy households.

ILS noted that women's labor market participation is being restrained by domestic and care responsibilities such as child care.

"There is a wide disparity between the participation of men and women in the labor

market. Based on the Labor Force Survey, one of the top reasons for dropping out of the labor market is the assumption of household or family duties," the ILS pointed out.

Women, ILS said, are likely to have greater responsibility and time commitment for domestic and unpaid work thereby hampering their participation in the paid labor market.

Results of the LFS in October 2017 showed that 93.2 percent out of the 11.3 million

people who were not in the labor force due to household duties were women. The majority were aged 25 to 34.

For many years, ILS said the share of women in employment remained low at less than 40 percent. Women workers are largely concentrated in the service sector.

ILS said women are also more likely to engage in vulnerable employment defined as self-employment and unpaid family work, characterized by low pay and lack of

access to social protection.

Due to childbearing and rearing, ILS said companies are discouraged from hiring women workers.

"Addressing low female labor force participation would involve implementing gender-sensitive intervention that enable workers to integrate family and work responsibilities," the ILS explained.

"Existing public health care providers, such as the barangay health workers,

may be tapped in order to avoid overlapping of functions and service delivery," the ILS said.

Aside from reproductive health services, ILS said, there must also be provision for quality, affordable and convenient child care services to address the constraints to women's ability to work.

ILS also expressed support for increasing paid parental leave to address employment discrimination against women.

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AND EMPLOYMENT (DOLE)

*(Handwritten notes in blue ink, including a date: 11/27/17)*