

The BPO industry is estimated to have contributed 5.4% of the country's GDP in 2011, and government executives expect this to reach 8.6% by 2016. ICTO Executive Director Louis Casambre said, "We are expecting BPO not only to contribute significantly to the GDP in the next five years, its most significant impact would be on employment. ICTO is on the frontline of DOST's BPO initiatives, our programs are not limited to that of industry but also improving the quality of our graduates and improve their chances of landing jobs not only in the BPO sector but in other industries as well."

He said that ICTO intends to provide strong support for BPAP-ICTO partnership initiatives such as the Global Competitiveness Assessment Tool (GCAT), recruitment marketing, workforce core skills development, and roadmapping.

Industry leaders are equally optimistic about the general outlook for the IT-BPO industry and have expressed appreciation for the support that they are getting from the government through DOST-ICTO.

BPAP Chairman Alfredo Ayala said that DOST-ICTO has been "very supportive of our industry and we are confident that these new initiatives will help us to achieve our objectives. We believe that we can generate \$25 billion in export revenue, 1.3 million in direct jobs and over 3 million indirect jobs by 2016, but only if industry can further step up its partnership with government. The initiatives announced by DOST-ICTO today are a major step in that direction."

The Government assured the public, particularly call center and IT-BPO workers, that the Government and the IT-BPO industry maintain their optimism about the prospects of the Industry.

Meanwhile, DOST Secretary Mario Montejo assured that DOST remains bullish about the prospects for IT-BPO. "We believe in the talent and resilience of the Filipino. They have proven themselves time and time again, weathering the Asian economic crisis and recent global economic downturn," he said. "They didn't just survive, they thrived, as can be proven in the consistent growth of the industry."

Secretary Montejo said after after ICTO presented its ICT Industry Development programs at the DOST Strategic Planning Workshop in Bataan last December, his senior DOST leaders and heads of DOST's Regional Offices spontaneously volunteered to coordinate their existing programs to strengthen ICTO's programs.

He said that DOST's S&T Scholarship Program, its Technology Business Incubator Program, Filipinnovation, entrepreneurship training and support to MSMEs will help ensure countryside development through ICT and S&T, and provide the manpower the IT-BPO Industry requires.