

# Filipino

An official publication of the  
Commission on Filipinos Overseas  
distributed worldwide

# Ties

## Inside:

- ➔ Anti-trafficking
- ➔ Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino
- ➔ Migration and development
- ➔ Philippine nursing conference
- ➔ Presidentiables on migration

website: [www.cfo.gov.ph](http://www.cfo.gov.ph)  
November 2009 - March 2010  
Vol. XV No. 2  
ISSN 1665-1664

## Filipinos celebrate the Month of Overseas Filipinos

Every year in December, overseas Filipinos take center-stage as the nation and the world celebrate their heroism and contribution to their homeland and host countries. This year, the Inter-Agency Committee on the Celebration of the Month of Overseas Filipinos started conducting meetings in August, and conceptualized a program of activities for December. The IAC is composed of government agencies and non-government organizations, all stakeholders on migration in the Philippines. It is chaired by the Philippine Migrants Rights Watch and co-chaired by the Commission on Filipinos Overseas. While there are regular permanent members, the IAC has invited other groups to join in the preparation of activities. Over the past three years, the Philippine Health Insurance Corp., the National Commission on Culture and the Arts and the Office of the Vice President have joined the IAC meetings for inputs from their agencies.

### 18 December Awards

The 18 December Awards was launched in 2008 during the post-Global Forum on Migration and Development seminar held at the National

Commission for Culture and the Arts. The awards system honors the efforts of Filipinos, whether abroad or at home, who have championed the rights of migrants. Because of the complex processes involved in the migration of Filipinos, not all dreams



*Consociational Politics. Dr. Jorge Tigno of the UP Department of Political Science explains that consociational politics is making overseas Filipinos as partners in governance.*

for a better future were successful. The assistance of Filipinos then have greatly eased the burden of both victims and the government because it means that immediate relief may be provided in cases where the latter could not provide assistance right away. Also, in areas considered "hardship posts" where more problems abound because of the large number of Filipinos, assistance is much welcomed by the Post. Many organizations and individuals have provided the much-needed support such as legal, social and psychological assistance, capacity-building, and provision of food, clothing and shelter.

Hence, for the first time, the 18 December Awards, was conferred on five individuals and organizations after careful screening of 18 nominations submitted to PMRW and CFO. Of the five, three are individuals.

*continued on page 2*

## The 18 December Awardees



Rev. Fr. Agustin Advincula is based in Beirut, Lebanon, considered a hardship Post in the diplomatic circles because of the plight of numerous Filipinos there. He was instrumental in the mass evacuation of about 10,000 Filipino migrants in cooperation with the Philippine Embassy during the Israel-Lebanon conflict in 2006. Aside from his regular duties as priest, he continuously provides assistance to Filipinos in distress. From 2001 to 2007, he secured medical insurance for several overseas Filipino workers. He regularly visits Filipinos who are in Lebanese immigration detention, bringing them food and other necessities. Fr. Advincula also provides medical and educational assistance. His humanitarian work has given the OFWs new hope and reassurance, easing their anxieties and frustrations in a country far away from home.

Mr. Romeo Cachola is a vital cog in the Filipino community in Hawaii, USA. For years, he has been a staunch advocate of migrants' rights, especially those of Filipino World War II veterans. His family, together with some volunteers, also sponsors the annual Kalihi Community Health Fair. This provides health services, including tests for blood pressure and kidney diseases, among others, for immigrants in Kalihi and nearby communities. He also joins medical missions



*continued on page 2*

## Program Special

*The 18 December Awardees (from page 1)*

and has provided scholarship grants to deserving students in the Philippines.

**Ms. Benedicta Offen** has made women's rights her primary cause. Her work at the Commission for Filipino Migrant Workers enabled



her to assist women needing help by writing their case histories and referring them to appropriate agencies. She also organized skills training for women, and accompanied them to courts to speak on their behalf. As a crisis intervention worker, she became an intermediary between employees and employers despite the danger involved when

employers become hostile. She also visited women in detention centers to provide them food, clothes and deliver messages from the family members. She successfully campaigned and lobbied for the rights of unauthorized workers' legalization as bona fide residents in the United Kingdom.



The Afro Asian Migrant Center serves as a haven not only for Filipinos but also for Sri Lankans, Ethiopians, Sudanese and other nationals in Lebanon. It works closely with other religious groups for various charities all over the country. It gives spiritual support to families, and brings the

Eucharist to migrants even in far-flung areas of Lebanon. The Center also offers migrants health education courses, and French and Arabic language lessons.



Maintaining ecumenical seafarers' centers around Britain ports, the Apostleship of the Sea was founded in 1922 in Glasgow, Scotland. Based in the United Kingdom, it has provided Filipino seafarers spiritual and pastoral assistance. It defends their rights and provides counselling while on shore and often speaks up for those who are isolated, exploited and denied of their human rights.

*Month of Overseas Filipinos (from page 1)*

The awarding ceremony was held at the Imperial Palace Suites on Tomas Morato in Quezon City in the morning of December 18.

### Overseas Filipinos Beyond Remittances

The main event for the celebration of the Month of Overseas Filipinos and International Migrants' Day was the forum on the topic "Overseas Filipinos Beyond Remittances." The theme was conceptualized owing to the fact that remittances have always been discussed in many conferences, fora, studies and researches. While overseas Filipinos have kept the Philippine economy afloat because of the money they send to the country and their families, they have other contributions in Philippine society and their communities. The IAC wanted to highlight these during the forum, and veer away from the usual discussions pertaining to the financial side of migration in the Philippines. While remittances remain to be of utmost importance, there is also a need to explore different areas where overseas Filipinos play crucial roles, which must be given more in-depth studies. The same goes for migrant philanthropy which has been thoroughly delved into by many scholars, academics, formal agencies and other research bodies.

The forum was held at the Occupational Safety and Health Center Auditorium in Agham Road, Quezon City in the afternoon of the 18<sup>th</sup>. Around 200 guests graced the occasion, including government employees, civil society groups, lay persons and the religious, and students with special interests in migration. There was also an exhibit held by member-agencies of the IAC to

showcase their publications and information materials.

Four major topics were discussed and presented by distinguished speakers in their own fields:

1. Overseas Filipinos as Partners in Governance by Dr. Jorge Tigno of the University of the Philippines Department of Political Science,
2. Overseas Filipinos and Science and Technology Synergy by Dr. Federico Macaranas of the Asian Institute of Management Policy Center,
3. Overseas Filipinos as Cultural Diplomats by Dr. Filomeno Aguilar, Jr. of the Ateneo de Manila University, and
4. Overseas Filipinos as Lay Missionaries by Bishop Precioso Cantillas of the Archdiocese of Maasin, Leyte and the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines-Episcopal Commission for Migrants and Itinerant People.

Each speaker described the role that overseas Filipinos played in take part in these fields. They cited examples of well-known personalities who have exemplified expertise in these areas who could be role models for overseas Filipinos. Each provided suggestions how these roles can be managed owing to little research and to gain the attention they deserve.

A raffle by Globe Telecom provided cellular phones to five lucky participants.

### Other activities

Other activities were implemented in relation to the Month of Overseas Filipinos and International Migrants Day celebration.

A press conference was held on 01 December 2009 at the CFO Board Room, participated in by the media which included the Philippine Star and GMA News. Ms. Carmelita Nuqui of the Philippine Migrants Rights Watch, and Executive Director Jose Maria Palabrica and Deputy Executive Director Minda Valencia of the Commission on Filipinos Overseas gave brief statements on the programs for the MOF, and activities that respective agencies are undertaking, and answered questions of the journalists. Other members of the IAC were also present during the said event.

A calendar of activities was printed and distributed. The publication listed all the activities in line with the celebration of the Month of Overseas Filipinos. Included were briefs of the events, venues and contact numbers of implementing agencies.

Tarpaulins on the program were also put up in the offices of government and non-government organizations serving overseas Filipinos. With the assistance of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority, these were put up in the *Pahayagan ng Bayan* structures on Roxas Boulevard for more public visibility.

### Other projects included:

1. International Organization for Migration Website on the Global Financial Crisis and Its Impact on the Philippines
2. 2010 Calendar / Poster Invoking Values on Savings, Investment and Wise Spending
3. Campaign Posters on the Convention on Migrant Workers Concluding Observation on the Philippines assistance, capacity-building, and provision of food, clothing and shelter.

# Program Special

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Philippine Nursing Competitiveness Conference

### Second confab held to discuss competitiveness of Filipino nurses

*"A flock of geese flying in "V" is always a sight to behold. But have you ever wondered why they fly that way? Scientists have recently discovered that as each bird flaps its wings, it creates an uplift for the bird immediately following. By flying in such formation, the whole flock adds at least 71% greater flying range than if each bird flew on its own. Just like the nursing sector, if all the Filipino nurses unite and share a common direction, they could get to where they are going quicker and easier, because they are traveling on the trust of one another and lifting each other up along the way."*

- Professor Erlinda Palaganas of UP Baguio during her synthesis of the proceedings of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Philippine Nursing Competitiveness Conference

On 4-5 December 2009, the Presidential Task Force on NCLEX headed by the Commission on Filipinos Overseas in partnership with the Institute of Health Policy and Development Studies-National Institutes for Health, hosted a conference at Diamond Hotel-Manila for more than 100 participants and stakeholders from the Philippine nursing profession. Themed "**Global Competitiveness in Nursing for National Development**," the conference aimed at preserving the standard of the nursing profession. It was a follow-up to the 1<sup>st</sup> Nursing Competitiveness Conference held in September 2008.

A total of one hundred seventy six (176) participants representing various sectors of the nursing profession attended the two-day conference. Among the resource speakers were Commissioner Ruth Padilla, Dr. Carmencita Abaquin and Mr. Marco Sto. Tomas of the Professional Regulation Commission; Dr. Kenneth Ronquillo of the Department of Health; Dr. Carmelita Divinagracia of the Association of Deans of Philippine Colleges of Nursing; Dr. Teresita Barcelo of the Philippine Nurses Association; Dr. Maria Linda Buhat of the Association of Nursing Service Administrators of the Philippines; Ms. Jean Reyala of the National League of Philippine Government Nurses; Dr. Betty Merritt of the Board of Nursing-PRC; Dr. Fely Marilyn Lorenzo, Ms. Vanessa Manila and Ms. Jennifer Frances dela Rosa of the University of the Philippines; Dr. Annabelle Borromeo of *Ang Nars* Partylist Movement; Atty. Rodrigo Quimbo of the Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools Information Office; Administrator Jennifer

Manalili and Dir. Liberty Casco of the POEA; Sr. Remy Angela Junio of the St. Paul University Philippines; Sandy Montaña of CHEERS; and Dir. Jolly de la Torre of the Department of Labor and Employment.

On the first day, updates on the accomplishments and challenges in the implementation of the previous year's work plans were presented to the participants. The second day involved the participants in plenary sessions and workshops. The plenary sessions provided the participants with knowledge on the current issues being faced and initiatives being undertaken in Philippine nursing. The workshops enabled the participants to write their insights—affirming, challenging or expanding on the issues and initiatives presented, both individually and as a group.

The issues and initiatives that were written and discussed were compiled, summarized and distilled to produce the key issues and initiatives under five main topics.

**1. Regulation of Filipino Nurses** which includes issues and initiatives in the licensure exams, regulation of nursing schools and review centers, education standards, ethical and legal concerns, and the Nursing Management Information System, among others.

**2. Employment of Filipino Nurses** which includes issues and initiatives on nurses' unemployment, exploitative employment, low salary grade, and other possible employment opportunities for nurses, among others.

**3. Education, Training, and Development of Filipino Nurses** which includes issues and initiatives in competency development and technology transfer, and the reintegration program for "nurse returnees", among others.

**4. Nursing Practice, Leadership, and Governance** which includes issues and initiatives on nurses' rights, safe and competitive nursing practice, the development of organizational leadership in



Dr. Kenneth Ronquillo of the Department of Health discusses the importance of managing human resources for health during the nursing conference as Hon. Marco Sto. Tomas of the PRC-BON looks on.

nursing, nurse empowerment, and the Nursing Roadmap, among others.

**5. Nurse Migration Management and Ethical Recruitment** which includes issues and initiatives on the Human Resources for Health Master Plan; Nursing Information System; Ethical Recruitment Framework and "brain circulation" in nursing.

Dr. Dante A. Ang, Secretary of the CFO, keynoted the conference (see related page for his speech). He reiterated his commitment to the nursing sector as evidenced by CFO's hosting of the second conference. Secretary Ang gave a rundown on what was accomplished during the first conference, mainly the identification of the major issues affecting the nursing sector. These issues were summarized into four themes: 1. Regulation and employment, 2. Nurse migration, 3. Qualification issues, and 4. Promotion of competitiveness. He reiterated that the issue of competitiveness hinges on a solid educational foundation in the tertiary level, an asset that review centers and tutorials cannot replace.

It may be recalled that the 1<sup>st</sup> 2008 Philippine Nursing Competitiveness Conference was held to provide an opportunity for the Task Force NCLEX and the stakeholders in nursing to attain a consensus on the understanding of issues and the identification of effective strategies to address the competitiveness of Philippine nursing. Issues related to nursing practice, regulation, and employment; nurse migration and ethical

*continued on page 4*

Second Confab (from page 3)

recruitment; qualification of Filipino nurses; and competency development and technology transfer were then discussed.

On the other hand, the 2<sup>nd</sup> 2009 Philippine Nursing Competitiveness Conference was to ensure the continuation of the goals and plans set during the previous year, and to further understand the issues affecting Philippine nursing competitiveness, and to identify and address feasible strategies. The conference retained the previous year's theme, "Global Competitiveness in Nursing for National Development". The generation of policy directions and strategies from the stakeholders in nursing were envisioned to contribute to national development by ensuring global competitiveness in nursing. This goal is in accordance with the vision set by the Board of Nursing of the Philippines: *By 2030, Philippine Nursing shall be a top provider of world class, EXCELLENT CARING, significantly contributing to the well-being of Filipinos and people of the world.*

On 5 March 2010, a post-conference workshop at the CFO translated the strategies generated into a work plan for integration into the initiatives currently being undertaken to address the issues and problems in Philippine nursing competitiveness such as the Strategic Plan of the Nursing Sector Roadmap by PRC-BON, the Human Resources for Health Master Plan by DOH, and the Plans for Nursing Development by the DOLE.

Like the geese flying in V formation, the nursing sector can rise to greater heights and cover a wider range if it addresses the issues and challenges facing the profession. Only through teamwork and cooperation can strengthen Philippine nursing.



A press conference was held to highlight the issues currently faced by the Philippine nursing industry during the first day of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Philippine Nursing Competitiveness Conference. Among the issues that were raised include the stiff competition posed by nurses of other countries, the waning down of international demand for foreign nurses and the quality of Philippine nursing education. From left, Dr. Fely Marilyn Lorenzo of IHPDS-NIH, Hon. Carmencita Abaquin of PRC-BON, Hon. Marco Sto. Tomas of PRC-BON, Dr. Kenneth Ronquillo of DOH and Dr. Betty Merritt of PRC-BON.

## The Need for Competitiveness

KEYNOTE MESSAGE OF DR. DANTE A. ANG  
during the 2<sup>ND</sup> PHILIPPINE NURSING COMPETITIVENESS CONFERENCE  
held at Diamond Hotel Manila on 4 December 2009



It is a pleasure seeing you all today, and I can see a lot of familiar faces. They say that love is sweeter the second time around, but I must say that it is sweetest when you are in the company of nurses during this Second Philippine Nursing Competitiveness Conference.

On that note, I extend my warmest welcome to all of you.

Allow me to express my heartfelt gratitude to our ever dedicated partners with whom we have been collaborating with since we launched our NCLEX campaign a few years back: the Institute of Health Policy and Development Studies-National Institutes for Health, the Professional Regulation Commission, the Association of Deans of Philippine Colleges of Nursing and the Philippine Nurses Association, the DOJ, DTI, DOLE, etc.

I also greet our distinguished resource speakers, nursing associations, guests and participants a very pleasant morning.

It has been more than a year since we held our first nursing competitiveness conference, an event that can be considered a modest achievement. A lot of people were saying that it is very hard to organize all the nursing stakeholders, more so to put them together under one roof. Well, I am very proud that we were able to do it anyway. We have the distinction of being the first to organize all the stakeholders in the first-ever conference for the nursing profession, specifically in the area of competitiveness.

Our involvement with the nursing profession started with the Presidential Task Force on NCLEX, which we were asked to head. We have carried out our primary goal of persuading US authorities to establish an NCLEX testing site in the Philippines. We could have stopped there, but we did not. Realizing that we could do more, we have taken the challenge of shaping and influencing the policy environment necessary to enhance and maintain our nurses' global competitiveness. Hence, we organized the 1st Philippine Nursing Competitiveness Conference in 2008.

That conference provided an opportunity for the Task Force NCLEX and the other players in the nursing profession and industry to attain a consensus on issues such as nursing practice regulation and employment, nurse migration and ethical recruitment, qualification of Filipino nurses, competency development and technology transfer, and the identification of effective strategies to address the competitiveness of Philippine nursing.

*continued on page 5*

## Program Special

*The Need for Competitiveness (from page 4)*

What did we accomplish in that conference? Perhaps, the most important was that we were able to identify the major issues affecting the nursing profession. We have summarized those issues into four themes, each having sub-issues of its own. First is the regulation and employment, second is the issue of nurse migration, third pertains to qualification issues, and fourth is how to promote nurse competitiveness through competency development and technology transfer.

How do you make nursing profession competitive? We must go back to their tertiary schooling. If you want them to be competitive, then start early by focusing intervention on their education. And here lies the multi-faceted issues of quality nursing schools and education. While there is an exponential rise of nursing schools in the country, there is a decreasing proportion of nursing graduates who pass the licensure exams. The reason is obvious. There is something criminal in the way these poorly performing schools keep on taking in enrollees, and continue offering nursing courses knowing fully well that they fail the standards of a quality nursing education.

Pity the parents who sweat and toil to send their children to these schools on the promise of a good education and a better future. And pity on these children who are being robbed of their future because of incompetent teaching and substandard education.

Nursing education is the foundation of competitiveness. A solid and quality education can never be replaced by countless remedial reviews and tutorial seminars. A college education can never be supplanted or replaced by review centers. Even the quality of many review centers is dubious.

Dismal is our passing rate in the national nursing licensure exam. The numbers taking the exam

**“Our goal of keeping our nurses competitive is a process that starts with a college freshman deciding to take nursing as his/her tertiary course, and later as his/her profession... we need to provide an enabling environment where we can best educate these students and foster a climate where their profession can thrive and flourish.”**

are overwhelming. Just a few days ago, more than 90,000 examinees took the test. Historically, only half are able to pass. Our NCLEX passing rate is also disappointing. These are the natural outcomes of a weak education. This poses some serious implications for the nursing profession.

Addressing this issue means offering multi-pronged solutions to other issues as well, such as low passing rates, mushrooming of review centers, and low competency.

How to do justice for our nurses? First, increase their salaries. The government should set a good example by implementing the new salary grade for state nurses in compliance with the Nursing Act of 2002. I do not subscribe to the standard excuse of lack of funds. The government has been operating on a deficit budget for some time now but that should not be made as a perennial excuse for not improving the salaries of our nurses. New plantilla positions should be opened up by the national government and the local governments. LGUs should play a larger part in salary improvement. They have much to gain by employing more of our nurses. A healthy constituency is a productive constituency. A productive citizenry generates bigger business and income that, in turn, contributes more taxes.

The challenge for us is how to turn our nurse diaspora around for our development efforts here. Our nurses abroad have organized themselves well and have professional chapters, as evidenced by the Philippine Nurses Association of America and its state chapters. We also have nurses associations in Europe. The Middle East is different because organizing is banned in most Islamic states.

We need to tap and engage overseas nursing groups in a creative and sustainable way. We can do more than welcoming one-shot medical missions. We can provide them an avenue to become our partners in developing the nursing profession. I know that a lot of them wanted to help, to do their part. They just do not know how. And this is where we can come in. We need to devise a system where we can have a mutual and continuous program of engagement and dialogue. This could be done through exchange training, grants or technology transfer. This way, we can harness the benefits of migration in a constructive way.

One quick point that I wish to restate. Last year, I made a suggestion to the PNA that perhaps they could write a position paper recommending changes in the way our licensure exams are

**“There is something criminal in the way these poorly performing schools keep on taking in enrollees, and continue offering nursing courses knowing fully well that they fail the standards of a quality nursing education.”**

conducted. Well, we just had a record number of examinees last week, a new high in the history of all test taking professions. Administering a two day test to more than 90,000 examinees simultaneously all over the country is a logistical nightmare. It poses its own problems and challenges. Which brings to mind the painful memory of leakage a few years back which almost cost us the NCLEX testing center here, among other things. My question is, why not deliver the licensure exam online and on a daily basis just like the NCLEX? We should devise a system patterned after the NCLEX. While we are at it, I suggest that it would be best if an independent or private company could administer the exam on behalf of the government. Barring certain legal issues that may arise, I think this option is something worth pondering.

Our goal of keeping our nurses competitive is a process that starts with a college freshman deciding to take nursing as his/her tertiary course, and later as his/her profession. For this reason, we need to provide an enabling environment where we can best educate these students and foster a climate where their profession can thrive and flourish.

The bottom line to all of these is the need to embrace a culture of excellence in nursing education and profession if we are to remain globally competitive and do justice to a very noble profession.

In the past three years of my involvement with the nursing sector, I have come to know and understand your pains, frustrations and aspirations. I am with you in the attainment of your goals. And I shall continue to appreciate and address your pains.

I thank you for being here, and I am always honored to be in your company.

I might as well greet you an advance merry Christmas. Happy Holidays! Maraming salamat po!

## NURSING COMPETITIVENESS INDICES

Updated as of 2 February 2010

### I. STOCK OF PHILIPPINE NURSES

As of February 2010, there are a total of 578,723 Nursing Licensure Examination (NLE) passers in the Philippines. This number is based on the cumulative number of NLE passers per year less the number of retired and deceased nurses (PRC in Lorenzo, dela Rosa, et. al, 2009).

Number of NLE passers by decade periods, Philippines, 1919-2009

Year	No. of NLE Passers	Percentage
1919-1950	7,229	1.18%
1951-2000	315,947	51.58%
2001-2009	289,311	47.24%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>612,487*</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

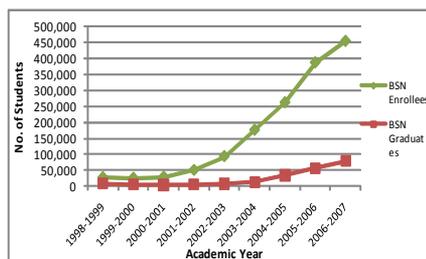
\*Number not considering the retired and deceased RNs.

Data shows an increasing trend over the last eight decades (1919-2000). A significant increase in the number of nurses was noted over 81 years until the advent of the new millennium (52.76%). The change in the number of nurses in the last decade was more substantial than the change noted in the first seven decades (Lorenzo, dela Rosa et. al. 2009).

According to BON-PRC member Hon. Marco Sto Tomas, there seems to be a discrepancy between the number of ever NLE passers which is 578,312 (as of June 2009) and the ever-registered which is 522,917 (as of May 26, 2009).

### II. NURSING EDUCATION

#### A. Number of BSN program enrollees & graduates, Philippines, AY 1998-99 to 2006-07



Note: Enrollees are those enrolled in the BSN program in all year levels, while graduates are those who finished the BSN program after level 4.

While both enrollment and graduation trends have been increasing for the past nine years, the above figure also shows a huge gap between number of enrollees and graduates. Part of this observation is attributed to the disaggregated data on enrollees which includes 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> year level enrollees, while data on graduates only includes finishing students from the 4<sup>th</sup> year level.

Nevertheless, even when number of enrollees is adjusted, the negligible size of students graduating every year is worth noting (Lorenzo, dela Rosa, et. al. 2009).

### III. NURSING REGULATION

#### A. Number of Nursing Schools, Philippines, Academic Year 2003-04 to 2007-08

Also worth noting is the decrease of BSN program enrollees from 452,793 in AY 2006-07 to 418,106 in AY 2007-08 indicating a -7.6% change. (PRC in Lorenzo, dela Rosa, et. al. 2009)

#### B. Centers of Excellence/ Centers of Development awarded by CHED, 1997, 2009

Name of Institution	May 1997	2009
<b>Centers of Excellence</b>		
1. Cebu Normal University	/	/
2. Liceo de Cagayan University	/	/
3. San Pedro College	/	/
4. Siliman University	/	/
5. St. Louis University	/	/
6. St. Paul University Iloilo	/	/
7. St. Paul University Tuguegarao	/	/
8. UERM Memorial Medical Center	/	/
9. University of the Philippines Manila*	/	/
10. University of Sto. Tomas	/	/
<b>Centers of Development</b>		
1. Our Lady of Fatima University - Valenzuela	—	/
2. St. Louis University	—	/

Notes: \* UP Manila College of Nursing is also the W.H.O. Collaborating Center for Primary Health Care in 1997-2004; and currently the W.H.O. Collaborating Center for Leadership in Nursing Development since 2004.

#### C. Trend in the Passing Percentage in NLE, Philippines, 2005-2009

Year	NOE	NOP	% Pass
2005	50,280	25,951	51.61%
2006	80,448	37,030	46.03%
2007	132,637	60,199	45.39%
2008	153,108	67,220	43.90%
2009	172,363	70,144	40.70%

Legend: NOE – Number of Examinees; NOP – Number of Passers

The NLE passing percentage from 2005 to 2009 has steadily decreased from 51.61% to 40.70%. Data also shows an increase in the nurse production rate in the Philippines (Lorenzo, dela Rosa, et. al. 2009).

A total of 94,462 nursing graduates took the NLE on November 29 to 30, 2009 which is an “all-time high” in the history of the NLE according to Hon. Marco Sto. Tomas, PRC Board of Nursing member (Uy, 2009). 37,527 or 39.73% of them passed (PRC-BON, 2010).

### D. Foreign Certification of Philippine Educated Nurses

In 2007, out of the 20,755 Philippine-educated first-time takers of the NCLEX-RN exam, 10,217 or 49.2% passed (National Council of State Boards of Nursing, 2009).

AY	No. of Nursing Schools	% Change
2003-04	301	30.87
2004-05	328	8.97
2005-06	437	33.23
2006-07	439	0.46
2007-08	466	6.15

#### A. Accredited schools with nursing programs, Philippines, 2009

Accrediting Agency	Date of Source	No. of Schools
Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools Colleges and Universities (PAASCU)	As of 5/25/ 2009	29
Association of Christian Schools, Colleges, and Universities- Accrediting Agency, Inc. (ACSCU-ANI)*	As of 9/30/ 2009	14
The Philippine Association of Colleges and Universities Commission on Accreditation (PACCUA)*	As of 9/30/ 2009	21
Accrediting Agency of Chartered Colleges and Universities in the Philippines (AACCU-Phil.)	As of 9/15/ 2009	13
<b>Total</b>		<b>77</b>

Out of the 466 recognized nursing schools in AY 2007-08, only 77 or 17% schools with nursing programs are accredited by the various accrediting agencies (Association of Deans of Philippine Colleges of Nursing, 2009).

#### C. Listing of Schools Based on 4-year NLE Board performance average, Philippines, 2006-June 2009

- School Name
1. University of the Philippines-Manila
2. Saint Louis University
3. West Visayas State University - La Paz
4. Saint Paul University – Iloilo
5. Trinity University of Asia (Trinity College – Quezon City)
6. University of the East Ramon Magsaysay Memorial Medical Center
7. Velez College
8. Cebu Doctors University
9. Philippine Christian University – Mary Johnston College of Nursing
10. Saint Paul University – Dumaguete
11. Cebu Normal University
12. Mindanao State University – Marawi
13. Chinese General Hospital College of Nursing & Liberal Arts
14. University of Santo Tomas
15. Xavier University
16. Saint Paul University – Manila

# Special Feature

17. Notre Dame of Dadiangas College
18. Siliman University
19. Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila
20. De La Salle University – Dasmariñas Health Sciences Campus

## IV. NURSE EMPLOYMENT

### A. Employment Trends

#### 1. Employment in the Philippines

The nurse-population ratio is limited by the absence of data regarding active practitioners in the country. Currently, no single organization is able to fully determine the number of active nurses. The PNA membership is used as a proxy indicator here, since as the accredited professional organization for nurses in the country, the PNA maintains a database of its members from both the government and private sectors. It can be observed that nurse to population ratio is highest in Region I (190 per 100,000) and lowest in Region XII (22 per 100,000). Nurses in the Philippines do not seem to be equitably distributed.

*Nurse to population ratio per region, Philippines, 2007*

Region	PNA Members (2007)	* Population (As of 8/1/2007)	Nurses/100,000 pop'n.
NCR	18,739	11,553,427	162.19
I	8,641	4,545,906	190.08
II	2,238	3,051,487	73.34
III	7,099	9,720,982	73.03
IV	7,135	14,302,901	49.88
V	2,633	5,109,798	51.53
VI	6,829	6,843,643	99.79
VII	4,893	6,398,628	76.47
VIII	1,669	3,912,936	42.65
IX	1,659	3,230,094	51.36
X	3,446	3,952,437	87.19
XI	4,577	4,156,653	110.11
XII	840	3,829,081	21.94

Based on RHU standards Sentro Sigla DOH (2000), the minimum requirement of a community with a population of 5,001 to 10,000 are 1 MD, 1 RN, 1 MW & 1 RSI (Lorenzo, dela Rosa, Yabes, et. al. 2005)

#### b. Nurses deployed under NARS Program

Project Nurses Assigned in Rural Service (Project NARS) was launched in February 2009 as a training cum employment project designed to mobilize unemployed nurses in the 1,000 poorest municipalities in the country to improve the delivery of healthcare services and create a pool of nurses with enhanced clinical and public health competencies.

The project shall employ/train at least 10,000 unemployed nurses for one year (2 batches) with a total budget of P500 million. Nurses are paid a monthly stipend of P8,000.00 for six months tour of duty.

Some private/public organizations, realizing the relevance and contribution of the project to employment and the people's health, have sponsored the employment of additional nurses for Batch 2. The Pharmaceutical and Healthcare Association of the Philippines (PHAPCares) and the GlaxoSmithKline Foundation (GSKF) have sponsored additional 100 nurses each, while the Philhealth sponsored additional 220 nurses (DOLE, 2009).

### 2. Foreign employment

Predicted Demand for Nurses in Selected Foreign Countries

Country	Predicted shortfall / year
USA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>275,000 RN FTE by 2010 (Seago, J., "The Global Nursing Shortage and Nurse Migration")</li> <li>1,000,000 new and replacement nurses needed by 2012</li> <li>808,000 RN FTE by 2020 (Seago, J)</li> <li>400,000 by 2020 (Malley &amp; Annals, "Challenge of Sustaining a Safe and Active Nursing Workforce")</li> </ul>
UK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>53,000 shortfall forecast for 2010                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>England: 108,000 by 2020;</li> <li>Wales: 6,000 by 2010;</li> <li>Scotland: 53,000 by 2010 (Malley &amp; Annals)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Canada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>78,000 by 2011 (Malley &amp; Annals)</li> </ul>
Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>40,000 by 2010 (Malley &amp; Annals)</li> </ul>
New Zealand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DEMAND: 49,000 by 2022 but predict only 40,000 nurses = 9,000 shortfall (Malley &amp; Annals)</li> </ul>
KSA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DEMAND: 100,000 (No data from literature)</li> </ul>

The predicted total shortfalls are as follows: 468,000 (includes 100,000 shortfall in KSA although year is not indicated in source document) by 2010/2011; 517,000 to 925,000 by 2020/2022. The US remains to have the largest projected shortfall, i.e. 275,000 by 2010 and 400,000 to 808,000 by 2020 representing almost 3/5 and 4/5 respectively of international demand respectively (Lorenzo, Silva, Manila, et. al. 2008).

## B. Remuneration of Nurses

### 1. Nurses' Remuneration in the Philippines

a. Salary range of nurses, selected major private hospitals, Philippines, 2009

Position	Lowest - in USD (Php)	Highest - in USD (Php)	Median in USD (Php)
Staff nurse	173 (Php 8,274)	465 (Php 22,200)	318 (Php 15,287)
Nurse-supervisor	244 (Php 11,692)	625 (Php 30,000)	435 (Php 20,856)

b. Average Entry Point Salaries (in USD) of nurses, Philippines, 2004

Type of hospitals	Ave. Entry Point Salary (USD)
Private Hospitals	123
Public Hospitals	230
Specialty Hospitals	201

## 2. Nurses' Remuneration in Foreign Countries

Nurses average monthly remuneration (USD), across countries, 2008

Country	Ave. Monthly Remuneration (USD)
USA	3,200 – 12,800/ month
UK	3,340 – 5,010/month <sup>1</sup>
KSA	1,667- 2,667/ month
Australia	4,558/ month <sup>2</sup>
India	166-256/month <sup>3</sup>
Philippines	169/month <sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Exchange rate used 0.538733 UK Pounds = 1 USD  
<sup>2</sup> Exchange rate used 51 Australian Dollars = 0.86 USD  
<sup>3</sup> Exchange rate used 45 Indian Rupees = 1 USD  
<sup>4</sup> Exchange rate 1 Philippine Peso = 0.02284 USD

## V. NURSE RECRUITMENT/ MIGRATION

### A. Top Destination Countries

As can be observed in the tables that follow, the top three destination countries of temporary nurse migrants are Middle Eastern countries. On the other hand, the two top destination countries for permanent nurse migrants from 2005 to 2007 are the North American countries of US and Canada.

#### 1. Top 5 Destination Countries of Temporary Nurse Migrants, Philippines, 2006-2008

Country	2006	2007	2008
1.  Saudi Arabia	5,640	6,266	7,955
2.  United Arab Emirates	768	614	435
3.  Kuwait	340	304	456
4.  United States	202	186	649
5.  Singapore	73	276	652

#### 2. Top 5 Destination Countries of Permanent Nurse Migrants, Philippines, 2005-2007

Country	2005	2006	2007
1.  USA	5790	1107	771
2.  Canada	102	99	178
3.  Australia	30	27	19
4.  New Zealand	5	11	11
5.  Japan	3	7	8

# Special Feature

## ■ Nurses deployed in Japan

As of 11 May 2009 there were 92 nurses and 188 caregivers who were hired in various institutions under the Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement (JPEPA) (Dalangin-Fernandez, 11 May 2009).

## ■ Fewer nurses taking NCLEX

From January to September 2009, only 11,854 Filipino nurses took the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX), compared to the 15,079 nurses who took the test in the same period in 2008.

Trade Union Congress of the Philippines general and former senator Ernesto Herrera said the recession in the US might have discouraged nurses from applying there. Herrera said, however, Filipinos still account for 4 out of every 10 foreign nurses seeking to enter the US nursing profession (Jaymalin, 2009a).

## ■ New exam for foreign nurses in Saudi Arabia

On 24 November 2009, the POEA reported that the Saudi government is now requiring all foreign nurses, including Filipinos, to pass the Prometric Exam prior to their employment (Jaymalin, 2009b).

## B. Remittances of Nurses

Nurses generally remit more than 50% of their salary. On the average, remittance is approximately USD 1,000-2,000/month. The remittance is higher, USD 1,500-2,000/ month, during events such as sickness in the family, opening of classes and Christmas. Remittance can also be in kind through gift boxes that are sent to family on a monthly basis. Nurses usually cope with the need to send money to family members and to address personal needs by taking double jobs.

Remittances are largely used to subsidize the education of children and relatives, to build/ repair a house, and to pay for medical expenses of an elderly or a sick member of the family. (FGD data in Lorenzo, dela Rosa, et, al, 2009).

## C. Characteristics of Filipino Nurse Migrants

Based on FGD data (Lorenzo, dela Rosa, et, al, 2009), the characteristics of Filipino nurse migrants include the following:

- with 2-3 years work/ clinical experience
- with experience in the following specialty areas: Intensive Care Unit, Operating Room, Hemodialysis, Pediatric nursing, Emergency Room nursing
- Demographic make-up:
  - Age- late 20's to early 30's,
  - Gender - mostly female
- Marital status: usually married

## D. Drivers of International Migration of Nurses

### PUSH FACTORS

1. Perception that health is not a government priority as evidenced by:
  - demoralizing working conditions i.e. inadequate salary, slow rate of promotion, overworked staff, anxiety over malpractice
  - failure to implement the Magna Carta of Public Health Workers
2. Need for political back up to get a job
3. Unstable government/ political situation

### PULL FACTORS

1. Better working conditions, i.e. higher salaries, lower nurse-patient ratios, better benefits, fair compensation at work
2. Availability of immigrant visas (for doctors and nurses)
3. Potential benefits for the nurses' family i.e. opportunities for family security, improvement of family's financial condition and migration as stepping stone for the nurses' family to migrate
4. Independence from family, to get away from a difficult relationship, opportunity to see places and meet new people from other culture
5. Additional knowledge
6. Higher standard of living and quality of life
7. Motivation and support from relatives in the US

### STICK FACTORS

*\*Reasons for staying in source country*

1. Preference to stay with family members
2. Entrepreneurial opportunities that are present locally
3. Destination country of choice is not open for hiring
4. Nurse cannot pass the required foreign nurse licensure exam
5. Nurse has to fulfill the work commitment of three years
6. Other options: nurses want to go to the Middle East because nurses have contracts and they can easily return to the country compared to those offered by the US and the UK which are more permanent.

### STAY FACTORS

*\*Reasons for staying in destination country*

1. Final destination country provides better work compensation and working condition
2. Status of the nursing profession is more recognized.
3. Better chance to get the family to migrate e.g. nurses in Canada and US.

## E. Status of recruitment agencies, Philippines (as of 01 December 2009)

Status	Number	%
* Good Standing	1407	42.21%
* Delisted	1104	33.12%
* Cancelled	463	13.89%
* Forever Banned	167	5.01%
* Inactive	86	2.58%
* Preventive Suspension	25	0.75%
* Denied Renewal	22	0.66%
* Suspended (Document Processing)	20	0.60%
* Suspended	18	0.54%

* Revoked	11	0.33%
* Requested Temporary Suspension of Operation	6	0.18%
* Cash Bond Withdrawn	3	0.09%
* Ceased Operations	1	0.03%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3333</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

The table above is a summary of all recruitment agencies licensed by POEA to recruit Filipino workers for overseas jobs, both land-based and sea-based. It shows that more than half of the total recruitment agencies recruiting Filipino workers are not in good standing. Hence, the probability of being deceived by recruitment agencies seems to be high.

### References:

- Association of Deans of Philippine Colleges of Nursing, I. (2009). Philippine Journal of Nursing Education. [Appendix]. 19(1), 56.
- Dalangin-Fernandez, L. (May 11, 2009). 92 nurses, 188 caregivers hired under JPEPA. *Nursing Matters* Retrieved November 24, 2009, from <http://www.inquirer.net/specialfeatures/nursingmatters/view.php?db=1&article=20090511>
- Jaymalin, M. (2009a, October 23). 'Fewer nurses going to US'. *The Philippine Star*. Retrieved from <http://www.philstar.com/Article.aspx?articleId=516683&publicationSubCategoryId=63>
- Jaymalin, M. (2009b, November 24). Saudi imposes new exam for foreign nurses *The Philippine Star*. Retrieved from <http://www.philstar.com/Article.aspx?articleId=526267&publicationSubCategoryId=65>
- Lorenzo, F. M., Rosa, J. F. D., Ronquillo, K., Paraso, G. R., Loquias, M., Isaac, C., et al. (2009). *Mobility of Health Professionals Philippine Country Report*. Manila: Institute of Health Policy and Development Studies - National Institutes of Health, University of the Philippines. (unpublished).
- Lorenzo et al. (2006). *Migration of Health Workers: Country Case Study Philippines*. Manila: Institute of Health Policy and Development Studies - National Institutes of Health, University of the Philippines.
- Lorenzo, F. M., Rosa, J. F. D., Yabes, J., Medina, G., Tan, A., Alamin, L. J., et al. (2005). *Philippine Human Resources for Health Master Plan 2005-2030*: Submitted to the World Health Organization WPRO thru The Department of Health - Human Resource Development Bureau.
- Lorenzo, F. M. E., Silva, M. E. C., Manila, V., Lagayan, M. M., Amancio, M. J. R. H., & Baking, K. J. P. (2008). *Analysis of Demand and Supply of Selected In-Demand Human Resources for Health*. Manila: Institute of Health Policy and Development Studies. (unpublished).
- National Council of State Boards of Nursing, I. N. (2009). *Part II- 2007 NCLEX (R) Examination Statistics*.
- POEA, P. O. E. A. (2009). Status of Recruitment Agencies as of Dec 1, 2009 10:05:31 AM. Retrieved December 2, 2009, from <http://www.poea.gov.ph/cgi-bin/agList.asp?mode=all>
- Uy, V. (2009). 95,282 nurses to take board exam this Nov. Retrieved November 23, 2009, from <http://www.inquirer.net/specialfeatures/nursingmatters/view.php?db=1&article=20091115-236384>

Compiled by: Institute of Health Policy and Development Studies – National Institutes of Health, University of the Philippines Manila  
 Research Assistants: Ericson Paraguya, Jessica Mae Cruz, Katrina Martin;  
 Consultant: Dr. Fely Marilyn Lorenzo  
 February 2010.

## MIGRANTS VOTE IN: What do political candidates promise for overseas Filipinos?

The massive export of labor was first introduced during the 1970s when the Philippines faced political and economic crises that left Filipinos jobless resulting to high incidences of poverty. It was first envisioned as a stop-gap measure. However, as years passed, Filipinos continue to make migration as an option due to better opportunities abroad compared to what the Philippines can offer. Today, there are already 8.18 million Filipinos in more than 200 countries and territories.

Though migration has provided an alternative way of living to many and brought billions of dollars worth of remittances to the country, large portion of Filipino migrants are still in the brink of danger, leaving thousands of them abused, distressed and exploited. Moreover, migration has also paved way to greater social and moral costs such as breakdown of family ties, spread of diseases and increased rates of dependency.

With the upcoming Presidential elections this May, and the change in the administrative and legislative leadership in July, migrants and their families call for a more comprehensive policy and measures to address the issues and challenges they face.

While some of the contenders for the highest post show concern on the plight of migrant workers, analysts observe that their efforts are just reactionary and event-driven. Overseas Filipinos, their families and migrant groups appeal for greater protection and safety-nets. Following are what the presidential candidates and various partylist groups say about migration, OFWs and seafarers:

**BENIGNO SIMEON "NOYNOY" AQUINO III**  
*Liberal Party*

**Platform:** Envisions a government that treats its people as an export commodity and a means to earn foreign currency to a government that creates jobs at home so that working abroad will be a choice rather than a necessity; and when its citizens do choose to become OFWs, their welfare and protection will still be the government's priority.



Source: <http://www.noynoy.ph/v3/platform.php>

**JUAN CARLOS "JC" DE LOS REYES**  
*Ang Kapatiran Party*



**Platform:** PRINCIPLE #6 – Dignity of Work and Rights of Workers. The economy must serve people, not vice versa. Work is a form of continuing participation in God's act of creation. Work is a way of fulfilling part of our human potential given to us by God. If the dignity of

work is to be protected, then the basic rights of workers, owners and managers must be respected – the right to productive work, to decent and fair wages, to organize and join unions, to economic initiative, and ownership and private property.

Source: <http://ph.politicalarena.com/issues>

Ensure Rapid and Sustained Economic Growth for Sustainable Poverty Reduction and Better Quality of Life for All by:

- a. Reviewing and rationalizing all outstanding public debts and limiting future government borrowing within the growth level of our exports, OFW remittances or GDP.
- b. Creating micro-finance and other credit facilities for small enterprises by harnessing OFW remittances and more exports for economic development.

Source: <http://www.angkapatiranparty.com/Downloads/Passport%20To%20A%20New%20Philippines.pdf>

**MARIA ANA CONSUELO "JAMBY" MADRIGAL**  
*Independent candidate*

**Platform:** Fair, equitable, and nationalist treatment and empowerment of OFWs and migrants and adequate living standards for all Filipinos; seek and achieve fair, equitable and nationalist



treatment of OFW and migrants by:

1. Fighting inadequate pay, discriminating employment requirements, inhumane and abusive work conditions, and racist culture and anti-immigrant scapegoating;
2. Working with progressive migrant organizations for agreements, contracts, and regulation that ensure adequate non-discriminatory pay, humane working conditions, adequate job security and organizing rights; for protecting undocumented migrants, and political refugees against restrictions and persecutions and for ensuring adequate Philippine-based jobs through genuine, pro-Filipino industrialization.
3. Helping migrants return to their Filipino roots and national identity and regain their national dignity.

And, to seek and achieve adequate living standards for all Filipinos through adequate minimum wages and wage hikes, farm gate price support, regularization of work contracts and other social justice measures.

Source: <http://www.jambymadrigal.com/news2009/mamPlatform%202010.pdf>

**RICHARD "DICK" GORDON**  
*Bagumbayan Party*



**Platform:** We must create JOBS for our people, so that they will not need to seek their fortunes abroad, but rather devote their talents directly to their country and their families.

Source: <http://www.dickgordon2010.com/advocacies.php>

**NICANOR "NICKY" PERLAS**  
*Independent candidate*

**Platform:** Protecting the welfare of OFWs. They need efficient government services that facilitate both exit and entry; that offer counseling and pre-departure orientations; that



continued on page 10

# Special Feature

Migrants Vote (from page 9)

ensure protection against illegal and unscrupulous recruitment. We need to fully operationalize a system that protects and ensures their rights while overseas. We also need to help OFWs channel their remittances into investments, savings, entrepreneurship and assets rather than wasteful consumption. Finally, we need to provide counseling and other forms of assistance to help OFW families cope with the challenges that separation brings.

But the long-term solution to this challenge is to create a vibrant economy and an inspiring culture that creates opportunities and real choices here in the country. Many are leaving because they are sick and tired of the way politicians are ruining this country. This is what we are going to change so people will regain their hope and their enthusiasm and their drive to rebuild the country for their children's sake.

Source: <http://nicanor-perlas.com/Nicanor/your-questions-answered.html>

## EDUARDO "BRO. EDDIE" VILLANUEVA Bangon Pilipinas Party



**Platform:** Establish an economic environment where it will no longer be necessary for Filipinos to leave their families behind, with children growing up without their parents, or brothers or sisters, by ensuring that there are sufficient economic opportunities at home. However, this cannot be done overnight. In the meantime, Bangon will set up:

- a. An OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKER SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM (OFWSSS) where OFWs can pay their premiums or remittances through special arrangement with Philippine banks abroad where they work, the fund to be deposited in government treasury shares managed by the OFWSSS;
- b. Special Assistance Desks in main OFW ports of entry/exit as well as in every Philippine embassy;
- c. Family Support Programs for OFW families left in the Philippines, with particular emphasis on training these families in entrepreneurship as a way of doubling OFW remittances;
- d. An OFW Re-Entry and Re-Integration Program to facilitate their set-up of businesses in the Philippines upon return;
- e. A Presidential Office on OFW Action to pay special attention to OFWs; and

f. Treaties for mutual and shared responsibility with other governments in the matter of protection of OFWs.

Source: <http://bangonpilipinasplatform.net/iv-empower-the-people.html>

## MANUEL "MANNY" VILLAR, JR. Nacionalista Party



now, we can not do that immediately.

**Platform:** Dreams to have a country, na ang isang Filipino ay hindi na kailangan umalis ng bansa para magtrabaho. That is our long term objective. That's why we want to provide for jobs. That's why we want to create jobs in the Philippines, but

So the short term plan is to provide safety nets so that every OFW, if he finds himself in trouble, he could be helped out. If he needs a job while abroad, the government will help him find one. If he wants to go home, then he can be sent home.

Manny Villar's long term plan for OFWs, and for most Filipinos is to create jobs. Manny Villar said that when he becomes president he will focus on **Entrepreneurial Development and Competitive government.**

Source: <http://www.thepoc.net/blogwatch-features/3331-manny-villar-a-his-vision-for-ofw.html>

## GILBERTO "GIBO" TEODORO, JR. Lakas-Kampi-CMD Party



of migrant workers, resulting in brain drain.

**Platform:** Stresses the need for a balanced approach, one is that there should be a more active network of support systems to monitor the conditions of each and every Filipino worker abroad have, and second is to provide adequate opportunities in the country, to prevent the influx

Government must help establish a system of mutual assistance in every country where Filipino communities are present, to help them cope with emergency problems such as illness, legal issues and repatriation support.

The protection of our migrant workers actually begins with protecting them at the point of

recruitment. We must install more safeguards so that recruiters can provide more assurances of safety for our OFW's.

Source: <http://barangaygibo.blogspot.com/> (This is an UNOFFICIAL, point specific platform of Sec. Gibo Teodoro, with substantiations by Aaron Benedict De Leon, Youth Spokesperson of Sec. Gibo Teodoro, Vice President for Corporate Communications-Green Team 2010)

## JOSEPH "ERAP" ESTRADA Partido ng Masang Pilipino

**Platform:** Committed to be a voice of support and encouragement for millions of overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) on the heels of the commemoration of International Migrants Day. He lauds the millions of brave and selfless citizens who sacrifice for their families and our nation by working in some of the harshest conditions abroad.

Estrada acknowledges that it was the hard work of OFWs and the remittances they have faithfully sent home over the past decades that gave helped keep the country afloat on many occasions when the economy was at risk of a meltdown.

Source: <http://www.tribune.net.ph/headlines/20091219hed4.html>

## PARTYLIST

### Action Brotherhood for Active Dreamers, Inc. (ABROAD)



**Platform:** The Abroad Party-List envisions to be a conduit for the poor and under-privileged sector of society. It aims to provide jobs locally and internationally. In pursuit of equal opportunities for all, it aims to eradicate poverty by providing ways for skilled workers to work abroad. A party-list dedicated in the service for the Filipino people.

Source: [http://www.abroadpartylist.com.ph/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=138&Itemid=27](http://www.abroadpartylist.com.ph/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=138&Itemid=27)

### Adhikaing Alay ng Marino sa Sambayanan, Inc. (ALON)

**Platform:** Adhikaing Alay ng Marino Sa Sambayanan envisions the country as one of the leading maritime country in the world by unfolding opportunities of economic growth which shall uplift not only the lives of every member of the gigantic maritime industry but every Filipinos as well through an extensive development and

continued on page 11

# Special Feature

Migrants Vote (from page 10)

utilization of the country's strategic maritime location.



ALON is committed to awaken and bring consciousness to every Filipino towards economic affluence through an improved and consolidated wealth of the country's maritime industry well supported in the legislative arena of the Philippine government

Source: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/ALON-PARTYLIST/190537049798?v=info>

Isusulong ng ALON ang mga reporma at pagbabagong pang-lehislatura, lalong-lalo na ang mga bagay na sumasaklaw sa kalakalang pangkaragatan, una na rito ang pagmumulat sa kamalayan ng ating mga kababayang Pilipino na ang ating bansa ay isang bansang maritima bunga ng pagkakapulopulo nito. Pangalawa, dapat nating ipagpatuloy ang paghubog sa ating mga kabataan upang mapanatili natin ang daloy ng kaalaman at kayamanang buhat sa sektoryang pangkaragatan na laon na nating tinatamasa mula pa sa ating mga ninuno hanggang sa kasalukuyan at sa darating pang panahon. Ang pagsalin nito ay magiging kapakipakinabang sa susunod na henerasyon.

Source: [http://www.alonpartylist.org/about\\_us.html](http://www.alonpartylist.org/about_us.html)

Ahon Pinoy (AHON PINOY)



**Platform:** Ahon Pinoy will engage and intensify a campaign to assure OFWs that public funds intended for their welfare is not wasted. Growing desperation and neglect, nothing worthwhile to alleviate the socio-economic plight of the majority of the Filipino people especially the OFWs. They have been living in misery and deep poverty.

Ahon Pinoy is committed to provide that the concerns of the OFWs should be properly attended to.

Ahon Pinoy will also provide service to OFWs and their families for whom the government has no welfare programs that provide meaningful benefits. Maximize the amount of OFWs funds—estimated to have reached P14 billion—held in trust by the government through the OWWA, the OFWs and their families.

Ahon Pinoy will prepare a better plan for more valuable social services and welfare programs to alleviate the condition of the majority of the poor

Filipinos—workers, farmers, urban poor and OFWs.

Source: <http://www.ahonpinoy.net/advocacy.php>

**Akbay Pinoy OFW-National Inc. (APOI)**

**Platform:** APOI's general mission is to protect the rights of OFWs and to collaborate with the government and other similar institutes in order to implement programs and services for OFWs and their families. APOI also seeks to aid in skill development through livelihood projects; as well as nation building to promote social revival.



Source: [http://en.wikipilipinas.org/index.php?title=Akbay\\_Pinoy\\_OFW-National\\_Inc](http://en.wikipilipinas.org/index.php?title=Akbay_Pinoy_OFW-National_Inc)

**Alyansa ng OFW Party (Alyansa ng OFW)**



**Platform:** Alyansa ng OFW are patriots and who have vowed to fight for each OFW in distress, in jail or otherwise.

<http://alyansa-ng-ofw.ning.com/>

**Ang Kapisanan ng mga Seaman (AKSI)**



**Platform:** AKSI is organized to engage in activities for promoting, protecting and improving the social, spiritual and economic well-being of all its members in the maritime sector, the seaman or seafarer.

Source: <http://aksi-org.blogspot.com/>

**Federation of Free Workers (FFW)**

**Platform:** To unite labor into an organization for the effective pursuit and promotion of its material and spiritual well-being;



Through free, responsible and effective collective bargaining and joint decision-making at all levels, to enhance employment and income security, to secure the family living wage and to

broaden workers' participation in economic decisions and undertakings;

To strengthen, protect and extend democratic institutions, civil rights and liberties and to secure the full participation of labor in all political processes of society;

Source: <http://www.ffw.org.ph/FFW%27s%20Orientation.html>

**Pamilyang OFW-SME Network Foundation (OPO)**

**Platform:** OPO envisions to be the most productive center for OFW and SME Families in the Philippines by providing job, livelihood, investment and business opportunities; and be recognized as a role model for public service. Its purpose is to empower the OFW and SME families through information, opportunities and benefits.



Source: <http://www.pamilyangofw.com/services.htm>

**Union of Filipino Seafarers (UFS)**

**Platform:** UFS is a legitimate workers association for purposes of mutual aid and protection to promote the moral, social and economic well-being of its members. 'Foremost in its task to promote the welfare and rights of seafarers is the need to have a strong legal component. Creating a legal assistance unit, UFS was able to provide the necessary representation to thousands of its members and more for other seafarers in dire need of such service.



The UFS has also actively embraced the challenging task of conquering borders and negotiating with ship-owners of every nationality to protect the interest of seafarers, especially those of UFS members. In many instances, the union comes face to face and nearly in direct confrontation, with such giants as the International Transport workers Federation (ITF) and the International Shipping Federation. But in many of these encounters, UFS stood its ground and won his battles.

Source: [http://www.ufs.ph/2009-10/ufs\\_story](http://www.ufs.ph/2009-10/ufs_story)

# Mailbox

## With deepest appreciation

Thanks so much for listening to my concerns. I am leaving Manila for the U.S. on Sunday, Nov. 22, and I do hope that I have all my requirements complete now. So sorry if I overlooked this pre-departure seminar, it was unintentional. As I mentioned, my fiancé has informed the U.S. Consul General in Manila about my experience and we do hope that the Embassy will make the necessary improvements so as to properly advise new immigrant visa applicants on the CFO rules and regulations.

I very much appreciated the Guidance and Counseling Seminar conducted by St. Mary's. They provided us with very useful and relevant information. The seminar speakers were quite competent also, as were the other staff members. It would be nice to share some positive/success stories as well so as to encourage the attendees.

More power to you in your very inspiring work with the CFO. I shall stay in touch. Take care and fond regards.

**Meena J. Sehwan**

Hello

Hi! I'm Josie Bautista from Hawaii. I left the Philippines last May 21. Sumulat po ako dahil I want to say thank you and Merry Christmas to all. Ang buhay dito ay mahirap pero ang ginawa ko pagdating ko ay nagreview ako ng NCLEX dito na pinamumunuan ng mga magagaling na nurses from the Philippines. Four months akong nagreview bago nag exam and finally nakapasa ako at isa na akong registered nurse dito at nagwotwork sa isang hospital. Masaya at mahirap ang buhay dito pero sabi ko sa sarili ko masuwerte ako kasi may maganda akong trabaho na sa ngayon. Kaya salamat and prosperous new year. Thanks!

**Josie Bautista**  
Hawaii

## Helpful seminars

We would like to thank you for your very informative seminar. It was indeed helpful for emigrants like us. In relation to this, we would like to request for the copy of the material you used

during the seminar. We would appreciate any other helpful materials and websites that you can share with us. We wish your good office continuous success in the future. Again, thank you in advance for your kind help as always! :)

Best regards,

**Roge Limbo**

## Request for copies

I am Marlon Ambion and I'm one of your attendees in the PDOS session conducted last December 7, 2009. Just to let you know, we are already here in Auckland, New Zealand and have been busy trying to settle ourselves as well as prepare for finding a job. As a follow-up to that session, I would like to request if you could provide us a copy of the slides you've used in your orientation. We also would like to request for a softcopy of the resume booklet you mentioned as well as the list of 'slangs' most often used here in NZ. We appreciate your response on this.

Thanks,  
**Marlon Ambion**  
New Zealand

## Sharing some thoughts

Thanks for answering back. Okay naman po ako. Pang-one month ko na po dito sa September 8. Naghahanap pa lang po ako ng job. Malapit na po mag-spring. Hehehe. Malamig pa rin, Melbourne's weather is unpredictable, it's like sunny in the morning and then in just few minutes, uulan or windy. You have to be prepared all the time.

I am still training on their accent and practices. Pag kasi pure Aussie, very fast at nagmumumble minsan in speaking. Approachable naman po sila and very polite. You just have to be confident although sa simula talaga nakakatakot, hehe! My first week here is funny, I used to run away or just smile whenever I'm in shopping centre. Yun pala, bumabati lang sila ng "how are you". All you have to do is answer "good". Minsan naman, introduce your self and talagang straight to the point pag may kailangan ka. No racism so far, although they are really serious in everything they do. Unlike dyan sa Pilipinas, we

can always say "joke only". Dito you mean every single word you say. May nagsabi na rin po sa akin na I sound like American in accent, kaya hindi rin nila naiintindihan minsan although both English naman, different in pronunciation lang.

Nabasa ko po sa newspaper dito that immigrants are mostly part of job seekers na. Agencies and other job openings are very particular in the type of visa that you have, they are more on permanent residents. They don't want to sponsor skilled migrants in the future unlike before.

Thanks for all the help. I'll message you from time to time for more updates.  
God bless and more power.

**Kathryn**  
Australia

## Suggestion

I'm Aaron Salazar, an attendee of your NZ/AU seminar. That was a very comprehensive lecture. It's really a must for overseas Filipinos. I was specially warmhearted knowing that Filipinos abroad indeed pay back what is due to our country. And thank you for assuring us that their assistance reaches the poorest of the poor. I'll extend my view, if I may.

In CFO's website, it is suggested (though not mandated) that PDOS be taken at least 2 days prior to departure. As with loads of formal information being relayed to the attendees, especially regarding do's and don't's, I think it is much practical to have the seminar at least a week before. It's because most of us that attended have already prepared some, if not most, of what to bring, etc. And with your due guidance, it has been realized that we should take necessary precautions especially since it's our first time. Thus, if PDOS has been taken long before the departure date, at least, all precautions have been noted during preparation of what to bring.... well, just a suggestion.

May I request for the materials/guidelines that you presented. Again thank and more power.  
Mabuhay po kayo!

**Aaron Salazar**



**FILIPINO TIES**  
Editorial Board

Adviser Dr. Dante A. Ang Editor-in-Chief Jose Maria J. Palabrica Managing Editor Minda Cabilao Valencia Associate Editors Rodrigo V. Garcia, Jr., Golda Myra R. Roma Contributors Ian Vergel B. Aagsalda, Marie del Rosario-Appatad, Erwin Paul S. Cristobal, Christian Harold G. Cruz, Evelyn Duriman, Maria Regina G. Galias, Edwin C. Pajares, Janet B. Ramos, Marissa G. del Rosario, Eumarlo Tolosa, Rino D. Paez, Lance Alexander S. Velasco Lay-out Rodrigo V. Garcia Jr. Photo credits Troy D. Agcanas, Rodrigo V. Garcia, Jr., Rino D. Paez, Eumarlo Tolosa, CFO Project Management Division, various political websites

### Contemporary Dynamics of Marriage Migration in Southeast Asia Brought into Focus

*Cross-cultural marriage has long been a common feature in global migration but is not exhaustively discussed in migration-related forums*

Cross-cultural marriage has long been a common feature in global migration. However, issues surrounding its dynamics, consequences and governing policies are not exhaustively discussed in migration-related forums.

According to a report of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) in 2007, Asian countries experienced a dramatic increase in international marriages. Data from the Commission on Filipinos Overseas also reveal that in 2008, 18,436 Filipinos left the country as spouses or other partners of foreign nationals. While there was a significant drop from the 2007 figure (23,927), the seeming pervasiveness of marriage migration especially among Filipinos continue to encourage both local and international groups to bring the issues into focus.

In partnership with the Women's Studies Association of the Philippines (WSAP) and the Southeast Asian Studies Regional Exchange Program (SEASREP), the CFO co-organized the Forum on Contemporary Dynamics of International Marriage Migration in Southeast Asia. Resource persons from Vietnam, Thailand and Indonesia who are directly involved in researches on marriage migration were invited to share their findings and express their views.

In her presentation, Ms. Zohra Andi Baso of the Forum Pemerhati Masalah Perempuan Sulse Indonesia raised the need to respect and fulfill the rights of the children and women in mixed marriages. She cited that in Indonesia, marrying a foreigner has certain disadvantages because Indonesian women lose their civil rights (i.e., citizenship and land ownership, etc.) if they decide to live outside of the country with their foreign husband. Also, children borne from inter-marriage are not given the right to retain their mother's citizenship and are treated as tourists. The issue of domestic violence among Indonesian women has also become a major concern. She believes that the Indonesian government needed to make the women aware of their rights even before they decide marry foreigners.

Dr. Hong Xoan-Nguyen of the National University in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam presented case studies on Vietnamese-Taiwanese and Vietnamese-Korean marriages. Based on statistics she gathered from the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office (TECO) in Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC), the number of Vietnamese women married to Taiwanese men has declined to about 3,000 cases annually from 2005 to the present. She noted, however, that while Taiwanese-Vietnamese marriages decreased, the number of

Korean-Vietnamese marriages has increased considerably. The decline is attributed to stricter marriage procedures by the TECO and reported cases of domestic violence and human trafficking among Vietnamese spouses.

Nevertheless, marriage migration among Vietnamese women continued because of its perceived positive economic impact on the community. This perception resulted in an increased school dropout among the young Vietnamese women, especially those from poorer families. She urged Vietnamese authorities to provide the local people economic opportunities especially the younger generations to enable them to fully understand the value of education in order to improve their lives. She also supported the establishment of a consulting center that will educate Vietnamese women about issues on international marriage even prior to migration.

In his paper, Dr. Tawat Sutikulsoombat of the Rajabhat University in Thailand, presented the results of the analysis and synthesis of cross-cultural marriage of women in the Udon Thani province. Data from the Association of Woman Leaders for Community Development of Udon Thani province and the Bureau of Census showed great disparity (3,297 vs. 662, respectively) which meant that most of cross-cultural marriages were not registered with proper authorities. The studies conducted also revealed that the reason for cross-cultural marriage was mainly economic. Dr. Sutikulsoombat opined that while the women focused on raising their income, their foreign spouses paid more attention to traditions and cultures and family caring, resulting in more separation or divorce. Dr. Sutikulsoombat proposed that the Thai government educate and prepare women who intend to marry cross culturally, the language, culture, living conditions, laws and legislations of their spouse country and for the foreigners to study the culture and laws of their wife's country.



Panelists from the academe, the government and private organizations served as resource speakers during the forum.

Deputy Executive Director Minda Cabilao Valencia of the CFO and Sr. Bernadette C. Guzman, RGS of the St. Mary Euphrasia Foundation-Center for Overseas Workers (SMEF-COW) presented the Philippine perspective on the international marriage migration. Both emphasized the importance for Filipinos in inter-marriage to undergo the mandatory Guidance and Counseling Program of the CFO. They stated that there are several Filipino fiancées/spouses who are not even aware of the bona fides of their foreign partners. Such lack of information they said may make Filipinos more vulnerable to abuse, like domestic violence. Ms. Valencia also highlighted difficulties encountered by Filipino spouses/partners in the host countries. Communication become a serious obstacle to meaningful relationships if the couple neither comprehend nor speak their partners' language. The feeling of separation or isolation, along with the absence of support groups makes the Filipinos' adjustment more challenging in the host country. They urged the strengthening of existing programs and policies for Filipinos who enter into cross-cultural unions.

The forum was held on 3 December 2009 at the Philippine Normal University with 80 participants representing 16 migrant-serving non-government organizations and institutions, three universities, one foreign embassy and six government agencies. The forum provided a venue to understand and analyze the contemporary dynamics of marriage migration in Southeast Asia including the consequences of inter-marriage to sending countries. As proposed by the participants and stakeholders, a follow-up forum specific to the Philippine situation will be organized by the CFO in March 2010.

### New Donor from Nigeria donated P 225,000 to the CFO's LINKAPIL Program

*Count on your overseas kababayans, bayanihan is still very much alive*

The spirit of sharing and *bayanihan* during yuletide season reached the Commission on Filipinos Overseas as 14 beneficiaries from different places in Metro Manila and nearby provinces were given cash donations from Filipinos overseas on 26 January 2010.

The Philippine Barangay Society in Nigeria (PBSN), a Filipino organization in Lagos, Nigeria, donated Two Hundred Twenty Five Thousand Pesos (P225,000.00) to the CFO's *Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino* (LINKAPIL) or Link for Philippine Development Program. The donation was turned over by the PBSN President Cristito Villaruel and his daughter Abigail Villaruel, CFO Executive Director Jose Maria J. Palabrica and CFO Deputy Executive Director Minda Cabilao Valencia to thirteen (13) families and one (1) religious organization as grant to fund small livelihood projects that will help the beneficiaries meet their daily needs.

The amounts were raised from fund-raising activities by the PBSN from the Filipino community in Nigeria. The amount represents their

contribution to the development efforts in our country. According to Mr. Villaruel, the Filipino community in Nigeria wished that the amount will help the beneficiaries start small livelihood business.

The recipients were chosen on the basis of their economic status through interviews and background investigations. Some of the beneficiaries were affected by typhoon *Ondoy*, in September 2009 and Typhoon *Pepeng* a week after, flooding Metro Manila and the nearby provinces of Bulacan, Rizal, and other low-lying. Others were either jobless or underemployed whose income is not enough to cover their family expenses.

Among those families who benefited from the said donation were the following with their corresponding small-scale livelihood projects:

- Mr. Manuel & Linda Bumanglag - Buy & Sell Smoked and Dried Fish
- Mr. Ricky & Maricel Cartoneros - Sari-Sari Store with Food Station
- Mr. Jonathan & Margie Esguerra - Sari-Sari and Dry Goods Store



*Turnover of cash donation from (L-R) Executive Director Jose Maria Palabrica, Deputy Executive Director Minda Cabilao Valencia, Mr. Christito Villaruel and Fr. Dexter Prudenciano of St. Hannibal Empowerment Ctr.*

Hamburger & French Fries Store

- Mr. Jose & Maru Lou Quilala, Jr. - Sari-Sari Store with *Bigasan*
- Mr. Tranquilino Fernandez - PVC Pipes Trading & RTW/Cosmetics Retailing
- Ms. Elena Awey - Sari-Sari and School Supplies Store
- Ms. Basilia dela Pena - Duck Raising
- Mr. Mayo & Lucita Escasura - Backyard Hog Fattening 7 Raising
- Mr. Rocillito Suniga - Sari-Sari Store
- Mr. Romeo Gonzales - Hog Raising
- St. Hannibal Empowerment Ctr. - Well of Wonders
- Ms. Lilibeth & Jenny-Lyn Rellama - Loading Station & School Supplies Mini-Store
- Mr. Many & Thelma Duyao - Sari-Sari Store
- Mr. Eufascio & Novie Lasagas -

The beneficiary-families received P15,000.00 each to start their small businesses while the St. Hannibal Empowerment Center, represented by Rev. Fr. Dexter Prudenciano, Executive Director, received P30,000.00 for the Well of Wonder Livelihood Program for the less-fortunate residents of Malibay, Pasay City.



*Thirteen (13) beneficiary-families during the turnover of Donation with PBSN President Cristito Villaruel, Executive Director Jose Maria J. Palabrica and Deputy Executive Director Minda Cabilao-Valencia.*

### 642 Filipino Licensed Physicians endorsed by CFO for the Need Training Certificate

Each year, many Filipinos leave the country as participants in the Exchange Visitor Program (EVP) for further training in their areas of specialization in the United States. Their studies are included in the Philippine Skills List of 2002.

From 2008 to 2009, the Commission on Filipinos Overseas issued endorsements to the Philippine Embassy in Washington, D.C. for Need Training Certificate (NTC) covering 1,909 EVP participants, specifically Filipino licensed physicians, to extend

their training in the United States. The issuance of the NTC is on a **one (1) year, per program basis** to facilitate the monitoring of the program.

All NTC requests are reviewed and evaluated by the Bureau of International Health Cooperation (BIHC) in consultation with the Health Human Resources Development Bureau (HHRDB) to determine the relevance and usefulness of the training to the medical profession in the Philippines. Thereafter, the Department of Health issues the NTC.

The endorsements cover 1% specialized in Neurology, 8% Family Practice, 1% Pulmonary Diseases and Critical Care, 2% Plastic Surgery,

0.5% Rheumatology, 1% Anesthesiology, and 28% Internal Medicine, among others. Most doctors in the field of Internal Medicine undergo training in the US to further their skills in their field of expertise.

The EVP participants are required to return to the Philippines after completion of each program or course and to reside in the Philippines for at least two (2) years to apply their expertise and to transfer knowledge and skills. The CFO, as Secretariat of the EVP Committee, however, does not have the mechanism to monitor the participants who have returned after training.

## A New Classroom Building for the People of Padre Garcia, Batangas

*The FTH continues to provide for quality classrooms in the provinces, and much more*

As Feed the Hungry, Inc. of Washington D.C. continued to support the national development through material and financial aid for the education of Filipino children through the Commission on Filipinos Overseas, it has inaugurated a new project for the people of Padre Garcia, Batangas.

The FtH and CFO, together with the school management of Quilo-Quilo North Elementary School (QNES), and the local government of Padre Garcia, inaugurated the new classroom building sponsored by the FtH Golf Tournament of 2007. The new classrooms numbered 64 and 65 were started in January 2009 by the People's Reform Initiative for Social Mobilization, Inc. Due to some technicalities it was put on hold and finally continued by Engr. Myla Adriano, a private contractor, in November 2009. Total cost of the classroom building project was P860,460.00.

Though the completion of the building has taken time, it opened doors for opportunities to acquire a bigger building. According to Mayor Prudencio Gutierrez of Padre Garcia, the FtH donation motivated the local government to initiate the acquisition of another bigger building. It may be recalled that the QNES housed its students in three (3) school venues – the barangay hall, the barangay chapel and the Quilo-Quilo South Elementary School before the school acquired its new facilities.

Coinciding with the classroom inauguration, the CFO and FtH volunteers also conducted a gift-giving activity for 50 senior citizens and 200 children from

various barangays in Padre Garcia. The activity was done in coordination with the Office of Mayor of Padre Garcia, Batangas and the Municipal Social Welfare and Development – Padre Garcia (MSWD).

The children received gift packs containing 2 pcs. of notebook, 1 box (16pcs.) of crayon, 1 pack (3pcs.) of pencil, 1 pack of pad paper, 1 bottle of stick-O, 1 box of chocolates, 1 pack of biscuit, 1 box of cheese, 1pc. of toothbrush, 1 pc. toothpaste, and crackers while the senior citizens received 1 pack of 2kg. rice, 1kg. of sugar, 1 pack of coffee, 1 cup of margarine, 1 pack of pancit canton noodles, 1 pack of macaroni, 5pcs. of canned goods, 1 pack of bread, 1 pack of seasoning, 1 box of cheese and 1 pack of biscuits.



*Clockwise, inauguration of the new classrooms, FTH members during an inspection trip while the classrooms were being built, the FTH also gave bag of goodies to the elderlies, the FTH also pitched in during the construction and FTH members distributing complete set of school supplies to the schoolchildren of Padre Garcia.*

*(right) Awarding of Certificates (L-R): Executive Director Jose Maria Palabrica, Ms. Basilia Dela Peña and Mr. Christian Harold Cruz. (bottom) Mr. Cruz (middle, standing) conducts a bookkeeping workshop for recipients of livelihood grant for the PBSN.*



## CFO conducts Basic Accounting and Entrepreneurship Seminar for beneficiaries of LINKAPIL's Livelihood Program

It is not enough that a project is funded. A project without a sustainability scheme in place fizzles out after the initial capitalization is used up. This has been the experience of the Commission on Filipinos Overseas.

On 26 January 2010, a free seminar-workshop on Basic Accounting and Entrepreneurship was conducted by Mr. Christian Harold G. Cruz, Administrative Officer III of the CFO, who addressed the thirteen (13) beneficiary-families of small-scale livelihood projects under the CFO's *Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino* (LINKAPIL) Program sponsored by the Philippine Barangay Society of Nigeria (PBSN).

The seminar-workshop aimed at helping the beneficiaries of the PBSN donation on the proper way to start up a new business. It also focused on

the factors that should be considered before venturing into a business. Topics on proper lending and borrowing were discussed to guarantee the continuity and sustainability of the enterprise and to prevent losses. Basic accounting lectures were given to help them determine if their investment had earned a profit. Activities were also undertaken to enable participants handle a business the proper way.

Mr. Jose Edison Tondares, Officer-in-Charge of the CFO's Project Management Division and Ms. Evelyn Duriman served as co-facilitators of the seminar-workshop.

A certificate of attendance was also awarded by CFO Executive Director Jose Maria J. Palabrica to the participants of the seminar-workshop.

# Photo Collage

## CFO's VIPs

*A number of foreign dignitaries and overseas Filipinos have visited the CFO to collaborate on projects and other initiatives*



# Anti-trafficking

The Commission on Filipinos Overseas – Task Force Against Human Trafficking conducted its National Advocacy Training for Youth on Anti-Trafficking of Women and Children for Labor and Sexual Exploitation in Tagaytay City last 17-19 February 2010. The training is the last phase of its series of advocacy trainings in the cities of Cebu, Davao, Baguio, Legazpi and Tagaytay. The training provided updates on Republic Act 9208 and related laws, follow-up the implementation of the previous advocacy workplans, provided a venue for youth from different regions to interact and discuss particular concerns on trafficking issues, and to foster participation of the youth in eliminating trafficking activities in their locality.

Some 49 youth leaders from the different regions attended the training. The participants represent the following provinces: Abra, Albay, Antique, Benguet, Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur, Cavite, Cebu, Davao del Sur, Ilocos Sur, Masbate and Zambales. Participants from the National Capital Region came from Makati, Manila and Quezon City. Eight (8) universities participated in the training. The participants were student leaders from Adventist University of the Philippines, Bicol University, Pines City National High School, New Era University, Sta. Isabel University, University of Northeastern Philippines, University of Northern Philippines, and University of Southeastern Philippines.

The other participants were representatives of several non-government organizations such as Davao Teen Center; Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation; Pag-asa Youth Association of the

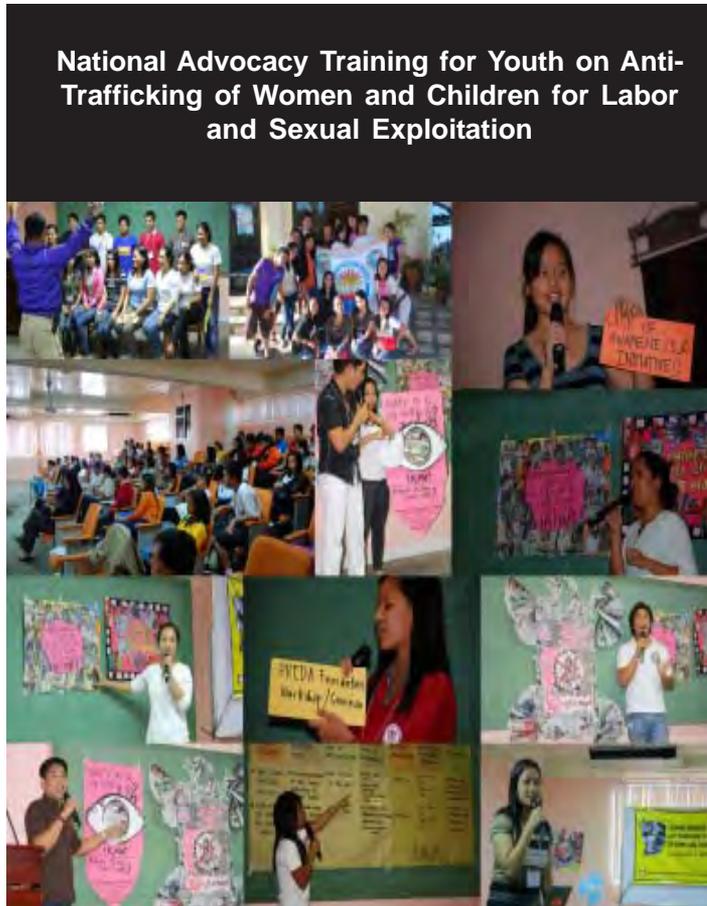
Philippines; and Pag-ugmad sa Kabataan Foundation. Five (5) participants are officers of *Sangguniang Kabataan (SK)* in Benguet, Zambales and Makati City.

The participants were given lectures on labor migration, sexual trafficking, updates on Republic Act 9208 and other laws, legal procedures, support networks and advocacy, and use of the Philippine Information System on Trafficking.

The participants reported on their previous advocacy workplans and their status, and were given workshops on the patterns of migration in the community, video production, song writing and slogan/poster/collage making, preparation of local ordinance and complaint/affidavit, and networking and advocacy strategies. They also presented a final workplan and pledge of commitments for implementation in their schools and communities.

The advocacy trainings for youth were in line with the mandate of CFO-TFHT under Executive Order No. 548-A, to conduct a community education and information campaign program against trafficking in persons. The national advocacy training was the last activity of the CFO-TFHT because Executive Order 548-A which created the Task Force, ended on 31 March 2010.

## National Advocacy Training for Youth on Anti-Trafficking of Women and Children for Labor and Sexual Exploitation



CFO Executive Director Jose Maria Palabrica (first from left) receives cash donation for the animal dispersal project in Batanes from the Filipino Community of the Hunter Region, Inc. (FILCOHRI) during its turn-over ceremony on 21 January 2010. The donation was awarded by (L-R) Ms. Teen Philippines-Australia Cersha Burn, Ms. Teen Charity Philippines-Australia Leilan Escalante, Mr. Teen Philippines-Australia TJ Surjan and Little Prince Philippines-Australia Daren Field.

## Filipino-Australians provide livelihood assistance

On 21 January 2010, the Commission on Filipinos Overseas welcomed the delegation of the Filipino Community of the Hunter Region, Inc. (FILCOHRI), a Filipino-based organization in Newcastle, Australia. The delegation headed by its President, Ms. Virginia Hudson, conducted its biennial visit

in the Philippines for the immersion of the delegates — the title holders for the Quest for Mr. and Ms. Teen Philippines-Australia and Little Prince and Little Princess Philippines-Australia — to Philippine life and develop further appreciation for the FILCOHRI's programs in the Philippines.

The FILCOHRI actively promotes Filipino culture and traditions overseas, and supports development initiatives in the Philippines and Australia through various fund-raising activities. They provided around Php113,250.00 for various projects under the CFO's *Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino Program* or the *LINKAPIL* in 2005 and 2007. During their visit, they turned over a cash donation amounting to Php20,000.00 to partially fund the Animal Dispersal Project in Batanes.

# Anti-trafficking

## CFO attends trial of trafficking case in Hong Kong

Executive Director Jose Maria J. Palabrica and Ms. Janet B. Ramos, Senior Emigrant Services Officer of the CFO-Task Force Against Human Trafficking, went to Hong Kong Special Administrative Region from January 31 to February 3, 2010 to attend the trial of a human trafficking case involving Filipinos filed at the Wan Chai District Court. The CFO officers met with the Filipino victims and assured them government's support for their trial, and reintegration assistance upon their return to the Philippines.

In June 2009, the two victims were recruited by a relative to work as waitresses in Macau. When they arrived in Macau, they were told that a job was waiting for them in Hong Kong. The victims traveled to Hong Kong but were forced to work as entertainers/prostitutes in a club in Wan Chai. After two days, they were rescued by some Filipinos and assisted them in reporting their plight to the Philippine Consulate General. The formal complaint, filed with the Organized Crime and Triad Bureau of the Hong Kong Police Force, resulted in the arrest of nine Filipinos at the club where the victims worked. The club owner and a staff were

jailed and charged with human trafficking, while the seven Filipinos were deported to the Philippines.

Since the filing of the case, the victims remained in the custody of a Hong Kong-managed shelter house and closely monitored by the PCG and the Hong Kong police.

Alongside attending the trial, the CFO had a meeting with Filipino and Hong Kong officials who played key roles in bringing the case to court. The PCG, headed by Consul General Claro S. Cristobal and Vice Consul Simon Val Roque, Hong Kong Police Force headed by Superintendent Adrian Kwan, Diocesan Pastoral Centre for Filipinos headed by Sr. M. Felicitas Nisperos, RGS, and Caritas-Hong Kong Social Worker, Ms. Phoebe Lam, were also present during the trial.

On the last day of the trial, Executive Director Palabrica and Consul General Cristobal together with Vice Consul Roque and Ms. Ramos, met with Undersecretary Tung-Kwok Lai of the Security Bureau of the Central Government Office. The CFO and PCG representatives thanked the Hong Kong government for helping the Filipino victims.



Exec. Director Jose Maria Palabrica and Ms. Janet Ramos

Undersecretary Lai called for dialogue and exchange of information and intelligence between the Philippines and Hong Kong to combat trafficking and give the victims justice.

On March 5, a month after the trial, Wan Chai District Court Judge Garry Tallentire found the two defendants, a club owner and a staff, guilty of human trafficking and sentenced them to three years of imprisonment.

## Three traffickers get life imprisonment

The Quezon City Regional Trial Court recently sentenced to life imprisonment and a fine of P2 million three persons for violation of Republic Act 9208, the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003.

The case involved a minor, 16 years old at the time of the commission of the crime, who was lured to work abroad but was forced into prostitution by a syndicate.

On 01 September 2006, the victim was at her boarding house when she was referred by her board mate to the accused who were recruiting people to work in Japan. The victim, desperate for a job, called the accused who told her that two foreign clients were in town to audition job applicants. The accused told the victim to meet them at one mall in Quezon City. At the meeting, the accused was promised a good job if the clients liked her. She was instructed to accompany the client that night so she would get P5,000.00 to pay for the processing of her passport. One of the accused accompanied her to a parking lot where they met the alleged clients.

The victim was told to board the car to accompany the clients for the audition. She was also told to meet them the next day for the P5,000.00. During the trip, the victim fell asleep. When she woke up, she was surprised to find that the audition would take place in a motel room.

The client tried to undress the victim but when she refused, the man got mad, prompting the victim to undress herself. The client forced the victim to have sex with him twice. The victim - scared, alone and desperate - gave in. The next day, she met the accused and received P500.00 on the promise she would get the balance upon processing of her passport.

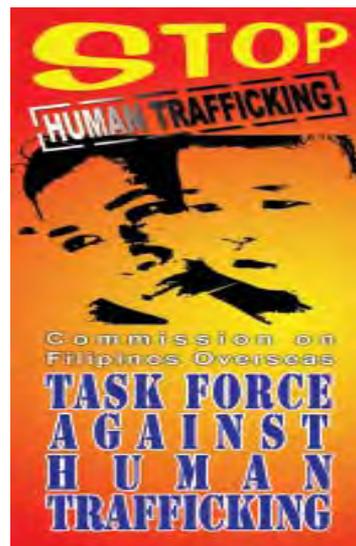
Realizing that she had been exploited, she informed her mother about the incident and went to the National Bureau of Investigation to report the matter. She was examined by the NBI Medico Legal Department and was referred to the Child Protection Unit of the Philippine General Hospital for further examination. It was determined that the victim's anogenital parts showed clear evidence of blunt force and trauma.

The straightforward narration of the victim of the sexual intercourse and the incidents leading to it were given more evidentiary weight by the court than the denial of the accused.

Judge Roslyn M. Rabara-Tria meted out the penalty of life imprisonment and a fine of P2 million to the three accused for qualified trafficking, the gravest offense under RA 9208. Alias warrant of arrest was also issued to two more accused who remain at large.

The case was handled and closely monitored by the Commission on Filipinos Overseas - Task Force Against Human Trafficking from the time of filing to the promulgation of judgment.

The CFO-TFAHT is currently handling six cases of trafficking filed in court.



# Anti-trafficking

## Singapore has the most number of trafficking victims - TFHT

Since its establishment in February 2007 up to November 2009 by virtue of Executive Order No. 548-A, the CFO - Task Force Against Human Trafficking (TFHT) has responded to 230 cases involving 398 victims. Assistance includes investigations of reported cases, repatriation,

TABLE 1  
COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN



psycho-social and legal counseling, filing and monitoring of cases, and reintegration benefits.

The country with the most number of reported human trafficking handled by TFHT is Singapore with 58 (25%) cases involving 107 (27%) victims. Majority of the cases handled were referred by the Philippine Embassy in Singapore to the TFHT for necessary assistance upon the victims' repatriation. Following Singapore is another neighboring country, Malaysia, with 25 (11%) cases involving 72 (18%) victims. (refer to table 1)

In order to better address the alarming increase of human trafficking cases from Singapore, a profiling was conducted on the victims that were handled by TFHT. The information was obtained from interviews with the victims and their families, verification from their travel documents, or as provided by the Philippine Post.

### PROFILE OF TRAFFICKED VICTIMS

The human trafficking victims coming from Singapore are all women.

There are 23% victims who are between the age range of 22-25 years, 13% are 18-21 years old, 12% are 26-29 years old, 11% are 30-33 years old, 4.67% are 34-37 years old and .93% are 38-41 years old. There are 35% who did not disclose their age. (refer to table 2)

TABLE 2  
AGE GROUP



Out of the 107 victims, 52% are single, 22% are married, and 26% did not disclose their civil status. (refer to table 3)

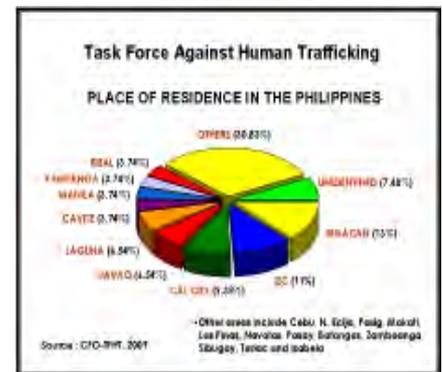
TABLE 3  
CIVIL STATUS



Approximately 92% (98) of the victims were sexually exploited while the rest experienced labor exploitation. The figures below prove the vulnerability of young and unmarried women to sexual exploitation.

Majority of the victims are from Luzon. There are 13% trafficked victims from the province of Bulacan (29% in Bocaue); 11% in Quezon City (42% in Novaliches); 9.35% in Caloocan City (30% in Camarin); 6.54% each in Davao Region (43% in Davao del Sur) and Laguna (29% each in Pangil, Cabuyao and Calamba); and 3.74% each in Cavite, Manila, Pampanga and Rizal. Other areas comprising the 30.83% include Cebu, Nueva Ecija, Pasig, Makati, Las Pinas, Navotas, Pasay, Batangas, Zamboanga Sibugay, Tarlac and Isabela. There are 7.48% who did not disclose their place of residence. (refer to table 4)

TABLE 4  
PLACE OF RESIDENCE



The trafficking victims were recruited to work as entertainers (35%), waitresses (16.82%), household workers (3.74%), receptionists (2.80%), hotel staff (2.80%), tourists (1.87%), sexual workers (.93%) and factory workers (.93%). The 36% did not disclose the job offered them. (refer to table 5)

TABLE 5  
PROMISED JOBS



Most of the victims admitted that they were aware that they would enter Singapore as tourists but would be recruited to work. Several victims purposely entered Singapore as tourists but were sexually exploited upon arrival. The perpetrator allegedly posed as a travel agent who offered them package tour to Singapore.

Among the 98 trafficking victims who were sexually exploited, 43.88% were brought to Tanjong Pagar in Singapore, 22.45% in Orchard

continued on page 20

## CFO-TFHT Case Profile

A look at the data compiled over the years by the Task Force, vital in determining the pattern of human trafficking in the country and how to effectively fight it

Since its creation in 2007 until December 2009, the CFO Task Force Against Human Trafficking has handled 240 trafficking and other related cases involving 410 victims.

In a span of three-years, CFO-TFHT has come up with and analyzed data on the nature of cases responded to by the Task Force and the countries where these cases took place, which could aid in determining the trend or pattern of human trafficking and other related cases involving Filipino victims.

In 2007 alone, the CFO-TFHT has responded to 25 cases involving 56 victims. For that year, Japan and Malaysia accounted for the most number of reported trafficking and related incidences with 4 (16%) cases occurring in each country. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), United Arab Emirates (UAE)

and Hong Kong SAR rounded up the top five with 3 (12%) cases reported from each country. Two (8%) cases of trafficking were reported to have taken place within the Philippines, one involving a minor female and the other involving a wife of a foreign national. The “other countries” with 6 (24%) cases include Singapore, Kuwait, Syria, Brazil and China. (refer to Table 1)

Majority of the cases reported to CFO-TFHT in 2007 are trafficking incidences involving 12 (48%) cases of sexual exploitation which occurred mostly in Japan, Malaysia and Hong Kong, and 4 (16%) cases of labor exploitation from KSA and UAE. Two (8%) cases were reported each for violation of immigration laws and request for financial assistance, while 1 (4%) case was reported each for domestic violence, location of whereabouts, unknown cause of death, request for repatriation, and that of an OFW sentenced to death. (refer to Table 2)

One of the first cases handled by CFO-TFHT was a sexual exploitation case from Hong Kong involving six victims which resulted to the conviction of two Filipina traffickers in Hong Kong. The Philippine Consulate in Hong Kong sought the assistance of CFO-TFHT in the filing of qualified trafficking charges against their Philippine-based recruiter. The case is currently pending at the Cabanatuan City Regional Trial Court.

Year 2008 saw the rapid increase of reported trafficking incidences from Singapore with CFO-TFHT responding to 34 cases occurring in the said country, which accounts to 33% of the 104 cases

TABLE 1  
COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN

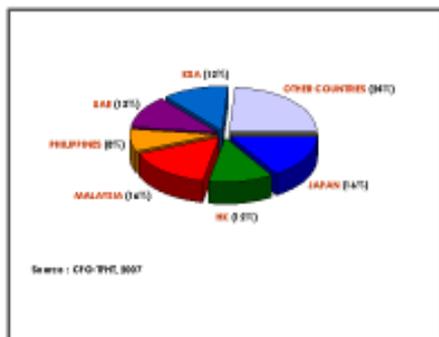
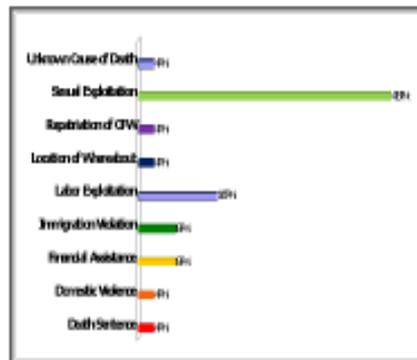


TABLE 2  
TYPES OF CASES



handled by CFO-TFHT for the entire year involving 192 victims. This was followed by Malaysia with 12 (11%) cases, with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia completing the top three with 8 (7%) cases. Six (6%) trafficking incidences occurred in both the Philippines and Syria. UAE and Kuwait each recorded 5 (5%) cases, while Bahrain and South Korea had 4 (4%) cases each. The “other countries” which accounted for 20 (19%) cases include: Brunei, China, Hong Kong and Japan in Asia; Cyprus and UK in Europe; Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Qatar in Middle East; USA in North America; and Brazil in South America.

The rise of trafficking incidences in Singapore is attributed to the availability of low fares from Philippines to Singapore as well as the visa-free entry privilege for a period of not more than 30 days. Most of the victims are lured to Singapore with promises of employment as entertainers, waitresses, or household workers. They, however, entered the country only as tourists and ended up being forced into prostitution.

There were 66 trafficking incidences reported in 2008 involving 39 (37%) sexual exploitation cases with majority of the cases occurring in South East Asian Countries (Singapore, Malaysia and Brunei) and 27 (26%) labor exploitation cases mostly from Middle Eastern Countries (UAE, Bahrain and Syria). Thirteen (12%) cases of illegal recruitment were reported for the year followed by requests for repatriation of remains and location of whereabouts with 4 (4%) cases each. There were 3 (3%) reported mail order bride cases and 2 (2%) cases each of benefits claim, health problems, request for repatriation, and violation of immigration laws. The “other cases” include money laundering, passport irregularities, rape and request for immigration assistance.

continued on page 21

TABLE 6  
PLACE OF WORK



Singapore has (from page 19)

Road, 6.12% in Paramount, 4% in Kampong Bahru, 2% in Ann Siang Road, 2% in Cuscaden Road, and 1% in Johor Bahru. There are 15.30% trafficking victims who did not disclose the place they worked. (refer to table 6)

Among the identified bars/clubs, The Peyton Club in Orchard Road had the most number of trafficking victims, followed by the Causeway Bar in Tanjong Pagar.

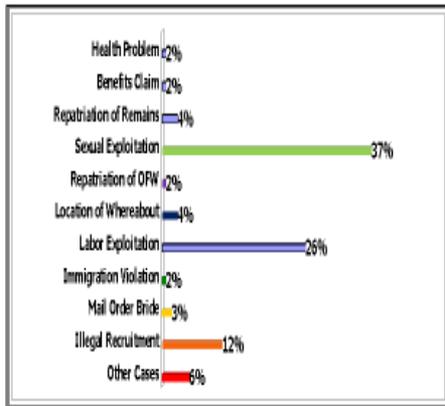
Only 16% filed formal complaint against their perpetrators/traffickers while the 84% were not inclined to file charges. A case filed in a provincial court is still pending. Six cases are under investigation by the law enforcement agencies, while seven victims withdrew their complaints.

# Anti-trafficking

Case Profile, (from page 20)

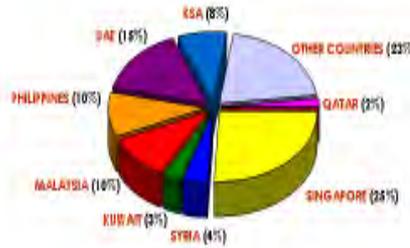
For 2009, CFO-TFHT in coordination with the National Bureau of Investigation, successfully carried out two entrapment operations which resulted to the arrest of three suspects for sex trafficking and two suspects for mail order bride scheme. (refer to Table 3)

TABLE 3  
TYPES OF CASES



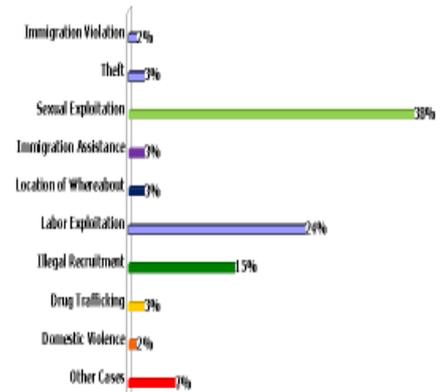
Singapore still led the pack with 28 (25%) cases of the 111 reported trafficking and other related incidences in 2009, followed by UAE with 14 (15%) reported cases. Eleven (10%) cases were both reported from the Philippines and Malaysia while KSA completed the top five with 9 (8%) reported cases. Syria, Kuwait and Qatar logged behind with 5 (4%), 4 (3%), and 3 (2%) reported cases respectively. The “other countries” which accounted for 26 (23%) cases include: Ghana and Ivory Coast in Africa; China, Indonesia and South Korea in Asia; Belgium, England and Norway in Europe; Lebanon and Egypt in the Middle East; Australia, New Zealand and Palau in Oceania; USA in North America; and Ecuador in South America. (refer to Table 4)

TABLE 4  
COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN



Source : CFO-TFHT, 2009

TABLE 5  
TYPES OF CASES



## Feature

Of the close to 200 countries and territories where Filipinos have ventured into, Italy and Spain rank among the more hospitable places for overseas Filipino workers (OFWs). Unlike most countries temporarily hosting OFWs, Italy and Spain offer the possibility of long-term residence and eventually citizenship to migrants. More importantly, legal residents in these two countries may be joined by parents, spouses and minor children. After more than four decades of migration from the Philippines, Filipino communities are now very much a part of the social landscape in Italy and Spain.

The migration of Filipino workers to Italy and Spain was pioneered by women who took up domestic work. The state was not involved in organizing their migration, not like the large-scale and organized labor migration to the Middle

East that started at around the same time. Until about the 1990s, Filipino communities in Italy and Spain were highly feminized. Since then, the demographics of the Filipino population now include a sizable male population, the second-generation, and an emerging cohort of elderly.

that migration has development potentials beyond remittances.

These twin concerns are among the reasons for a study done last year in these two host countries and in the Philippines by the Scalabrini Migration Center (SMC). The research was the main activity of the Migrants' Associations and Philippine Institutions for Development (MAPID) Project in 2008, an initiative supported by the European Union's Aeneas Programme. The European Union provided 79 percent of funds (EUR 580,250.20 or about Php 41 million) to support the project; the rest of the funds - 21 percent - constituted the share of SMC.

SMC directs and coordinates the MAPID Project and partners with the Commission on

## Moving Forward: From OFWs to Donors and Investors

by Perla Aragon-Choudhury



Although many migrants and their families have prospered, time and time again, migrants' rights advocates have stressed that migration policies must go beyond the deployment of workers, and

continued on page 22

## Special Feature

*Moving Forward (from page 21)*

Filipinos Overseas in the Philippines, the Fondazione ISMU (Fondazione per le Iniziative e gli Studi sulla Multietnicità) in Italy, and the University of Valencia in Spain in carrying out this three-year three-country project to build and strengthen the partnership between migrant communities (particularly through migrants' associations) and government institutions in the Philippines. In Italy and Spain, the study looked into the concern of Filipino workers for their homeland, their intent to invest in the Philippines, and the potentials of their associations to help Filipinos in the host country and to develop their home country. Highlights from the studies in these two destination countries are presented here.

### The respondents

In both Italy and Spain, a total of 200 migrants were interviewed in each country. In Italy, Laura Zanfrini of Fondazione ISMU directed the conduct of the MAPID study in Milan and Rome, where many Filipinos live and work. The Italy-based respondents are from 30 to 49 years old; 69 percent women, 56 percent married, mainly with Filipinos; 74% with children in the Philippines and in Italy.

Some 60 percent of these workers are college-educated or graduates in the Philippines. They are mostly employed in domestic work. They are all regular migrants, mostly first generation, and 84 percent are Catholics.

In Spain, the University of Valencia research team headed by Edelia Villaroya conducted the survey in Madrid and Barcelona, home to the largest concentration of Filipinos in the country. Most of them are around 40 years old; 66 percent women; and largely first generation Filipinos.

Half of the interviewees are married, mainly to Filipinos; 63 percent have children (mostly born in Spain). Half either started or completed college in the Philippines; and are employed in domestic work mostly.

All the interviewees are regular migrants in the sense of being documented, many hold Spanish passports; and most are Catholics.

### Remitting but not yet fully investing

A main finding stresses the close ties between migrant workers and their families. "In both Italy and in Spain, their main objective is to help their family and to earn more," Baggio reported. "Their main transnational practice is sending remittances regularly."

In addition, many of the Filipino workers in Spain dream of putting up a business in the Philippines, the researchers documented. This appears feasible with their household income of EUR 1,000- 3,000 (about Php 71,000- 212,000) - an amount seen by most respondents as enough for

their expenses and to help their relatives back home.

The same dream was verbalized to the researchers by migrant workers in Italy, who normally own or rent houses and have a household income of EUR 2,000-3,000 (about Php 142,000-212,000) and who (one in every four) also aspire to have a business in the Philippines.

### Helping the Philippines develop

And so, how prepared are Filipino workers in Spain to help their home country? Baggio described how they have a strong wish to help via philanthropy and support to community projects.

"There may be very little investment in the Philippines but there is some collaboration in local projects - mainly disaster relief," he said.

And how about Italy? Filipino workers there have very little investments back home but some collaboration (10 percent) in local development projects.

But are there factors to facilitate and coordinate these projects? To find out, researchers from the University of Valencia also interviewed four directors of Filipino migrants' associations in Madrid and six in Barcelona (six), as well as 40 key informants.

Informants included Filipino diplomats in Spain; Filipinos who are pioneers, religious leaders, community leaders and professionals in Madrid and Barcelona; representatives of Spanish institutions working with Filipinos; representatives of NGOs and associations; and teachers and health professionals with links to Filipinos.

MAPID documented how Filipinos in Spain generally tend to remain in Filipino groups, do not participate in Spanish associations; tend to rely more on NGOs, especially the Church, for help; and generally do not avail of government-provided assistance.

Can Filipino migrants' associations in Spain become agents of change? This is not among the declared objectives of any such group but solidarity with the Philippines is a founding element of many of them.

Also, the groups have very little contact with Spanish institutions; little information on funding possibilities; and a reliance on membership fees which cannot possibly support development projects.

"They have problems too of internal management and group management skills," Baggio reported.



**Most migrants' associations were formed primarily to promote solidarity and provide support to their members.**

But even then, half of Filipino immigrants in Spain say that their migrants' associations can cooperate in the development of their country of origin.

In Italy, Fondazione ISMU identified and interviewed 20 Filipino associations in Rome and 20 more in Milan, with many officers declaring involvement with solidarity and relief projects back home.

Fondazione ISMU also interviewed Filipino diplomats in Italy; Filipino pioneers, religious leaders, community leaders and professionals and artists in Rome and Milan, and representatives of Italian agencies working with Filipino communities there.

Similar to Spain, Filipino migrant workers in Italy have a low level of integrating with the larger society - becoming what Baggio called an invisible community, intent on not creating problems and surviving as self-supporting groups.

But on the whole, interviewees from Filipino migrants' associations in Italy are interested in investments that will benefit family and relatives in the Philippines. In fact, 30 percent of these groups have been asked to support community projects here, and 40 percent have done so.

"There is a great potential for future engagements," Baggio concluded.

### What's next?

The research findings of the MAPID study in Italy and Spain were considered in the design of training programs and materials for leaders of Filipino migrants' associations in these host countries. MAPID hopes to tap the potentials of migrants' associations as change agents. Most migrants' associations were formed primarily to promote solidarity and provide support to their members. Through capacity building programs, migrants' associations can realize their potential

*continued on page 23*

## Spain, Philippines sign agreement on Spanish language

Spain will help the Philippines reintroduce Spanish language instruction at public schools in the southeastern Asian country under an agreement signed Tuesday between the two nations.

The study of the language is currently voluntary at public high schools in the Philippines, a former Spanish colony, but the government plans to make its availability widespread from 2012.

Under the agreement signed Tuesday, Madrid will help train Spanish language teachers in the Philippines, help develop the curriculum and provide electronic teaching aids as well as technical advice, the Spanish foreign ministry said.

The language, one of the world's most spoken, has since largely vanished from everyday use in the country of just under 100 million people, with English and the local languages now commonly used.

Unlike in Madrid's colonies in Latin America, the Spanish language was never as widespread in the Philippines, mainly because of the small number of Spanish settlers in the archipelago.

English was introduced to the country when it passed from Spanish to American control after the Spanish-American war of 1898.

Source: Philippine Daily Inquirer

## Italy adopts law to curb migrants

Italy's parliament has given final approval to a law criminalizing illegal immigration and allowing citizens' patrols to help the police keep order. The new measures have been strongly criticized by human rights groups and the Vatican. Illegal immigration will be punishable by a hefty fine and those who knowingly house illegal migrants will face up to three years in prison. The law also extends detention periods for illegal migrants to six months. It was passed in the Senate (upper house) with 157 in favour and 124 against. The lower house passed it in May.

### Citizens' patrols

The unarmed citizens' patrols are among the most controversial measures. A right-wing uniformed group called the Italian National Guard was set up last month, likened by some to Benito Mussolini's Fascists. It vowed to start patrolling the streets. But Interior Minister Roberto Maroni said the group, which sports beige

uniforms and black military-style hats, would not be allowed to mount street patrols. Mr Maroni, a member of the anti-immigration Northern League, has steered the legislation through parliament. The party is a key ally of Italy's right-wing Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, and made tougher measures against immigration a condition of its support for his re-election last year.

The new law makes illegal immigration punishable by a fine of 5,000 to 10,000 euros (£4,276 - £8,553). It also requires parents registering a birth to present documents proving that they are legal residents. Italy has just introduced a policy of returning boatloads of migrants to Libya before they can claim asylum.

The government says it faces an unmanageable flood of immigrants, many arriving on outlying islands which do not have the means to cope. More than migrants landed on the shores of Italy last year - an increase of about 75% on the year before. Critics say the government is targeting especially immigrants and Roma (Gypsies).

The Vatican said the new law was "focusing on crime and leaving integration completely out of the picture".

Source: [www.pinoy-abroad.net](http://www.pinoy-abroad.net)

### Moving Forward (from page 22)

to promote the full participation of Filipinos in their host societies and as development partners of their home country. The capacity building programs were the main activity of the MAPIID Project in 2009.

Based on the response of the participants in the training programs conducted in Italy (Rome and Milan) and Spain (Barcelona and Madrid) between September and November of this year, Filipino migrants' associations wish to become more proactive in their engagement with Italian, Spanish and Philippine institutions. In Milan, some migrants' associations are already thinking of participating in the call for proposals by the municipal government. These are encouraging signs of Filipino migrants' associations rising to the challenge of expanding their role as agents of change in a transnational context.

\*\*\*\*\*



This feature story was prepared as part of the MAPIID Project's objectives to share research-based information to a broader audience. Please feel free to publish or quote this material in print or broadcast media or as an Internet posting. Kindly inform the Scalabrini Migration Center about the use of this material at tel/fax. 7243512 and 7214296 or by email - [smc@smc.org.ph](mailto:smc@smc.org.ph).

### Say Cheese (from page 24)

Sixteen months came by and went and I left the Netherlands with infinitely more than just a master's diploma. It was an eye-opening experience to exchange views, and form special friendships with 200 other classmates and professors from sixty or so other countries. It was liberating to hop on a 5 euro discount train or plane ride and find yourself immersing in a different culture, communicating on a different tongue and getting lost in a web of passages, nooks and crannies each of which has something unique to share and offer. It was touching to realize that however they look like and wherever they came from, humanity has felt the same trials and triumphs, differing only in levels of intensity or extenuating circumstances.

Discombobulated the stories and memories maybe, I observed something similar in all of the Filipinos I've met during my so-called scholarly hiatus in Europe. I saw it in Maya's smile when she told me how to get to *Plaza*

*Cataluña*. I felt it in Alvin's home when he sheltered us from the autumn showers of Pisa. I smelled it in Tita Rose's *adobo* when she fed the entire gang in Vienna. I tasted it in the beer Louie served at the closing of *Oktoberfest* in Munich. I saw it in Mang Joe's eyes when he sorted my metro map of the Paris underground. I heard it in Aimee's

every time she sang in our favorite after-school watering hole, *Prinz*. It was more than just the unexplainable joy of hearing someone speak a familiar language amid a mob of strangers. More

**“Rumor has it that the easiest way to find Filipinos in Europe is by going to mass delivered in English. Consider this rumor confirmed.”**

than anything else, it was the unspoken longing for home; and for a moment, the idea that it is never too far away after all.

\*\*\*\*\*

Rino D. Paez, 31, finished his Master of Arts in Development Studies at the International Institute of Social Studies Erasmus University Rotterdam. He started his stint in public service in 2001 and never left since.

