



TRANSNATIONAL BRIDGES  
Migration, Development and Solidarity in the  
Philippines





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Philippines

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Manila, Philippines

2010





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## Foreword

Some four decades after the Philippine government launched the overseas employment program, the population of Filipino workers abroad has grown in size, reach and economic importance in the Philippines and their host countries. The overseas Filipino population also includes large numbers of migrants who have settled permanently in other countries. Aside from their increasing remittances over the years, many overseas Filipinos have also provided material and financial aid to many communities in the Philippines.



Stories of successful Filipinos who returned home bringing with them their expertise, skills and competencies, abound. They have accumulated savings that helped launch a wide array of productive economic activities. Many have also helped impoverished communities in the urban and rural areas, and have made philanthropy their way of life.

For over 20 years, the Commission on Filipinos Overseas has witnessed the generosity of overseas Filipinos through its *Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino* (Service to Fellow Filipinos), also known as Link for Philippine Development program. The Commission has observed how Filipino migrants respond quickly to calamities or financial crises.

From the time the Scalabrini Migration Center and the Commission on Filipinos Overseas implemented the Migrants' Associations and Philippine Institutions for Development (MAPID) Project in 2008, together with two other institutions in Italy and Spain, more stories of giving, caring and sharing by Filipino migrants had been told and re-told. The overseas Filipinos behind these stories are exemplars of time-





honored values of *pakikipag-kapwa* (compassion), *pagtutulungan* (cooperation) and *pagkakaisa* (unity). How they have helped a community or aided fellow Filipinos in areas such as employment, infrastructure, business innovation, entrepreneurship, and reconstruction make us proud to be a Filipino.

This publication, *Transnational Bridges: Migration, Development and Solidarity in the Philippines*, banners the story of LINKAPIL and stories of solidarity and cooperation which are among the major findings of the MAPID research in the Philippines. We recommend this publication to friends and colleagues as a testimonial of how our migration policy has advanced the lives of migrants and their families. We hope that their success stories will also help improve public and private sector partnerships, and build linkages between migration and governance for prosperity and development.



**DR. DANTE A. ANG**

Chairman

Commission on Filipinos Overseas

31 May 2010



## Acknowledgments

The idea for this publication was sparked by the response of the participants in the capacity-building programs carried out by the Migrants' Associations and Philippine Institutions for Development (MAPID) Project. Conducted in the latter half of 2009 in the Philippines (Davao City and Tagaytay City), Italy (Rome and Milan) and Spain (Barcelona and Madrid), the capacity-building programs marked the second phase of the MAPID Project. The participants in the Philippines (representatives of national government agencies and local government units, including policy makers, key staff involved in migration, and planning and development coordinators) and those in Italy and Spain (leaders or active members of Filipino migrants' associations) were inspired by examples of migrant giving, investment possibilities in the Philippines, and examples of working partnerships between overseas Filipinos and local institutions. Many participants said these stories needed to be shared to spread the word that migration is more than remittances, to provide examples of migrant giving and investments, and to inspire confidence in cooperating with Philippine institutions. Thank you for the suggestion!

The organizations, projects, investments and models of cooperation profiled in this book are part of the outcomes of the Philippine component of the MAPID Project. The support of the European Union for the MAPID Project is gratefully acknowledged. The Commission on Filipinos Overseas, a partner of the Scalabrini Migration Center in the implementation of MAPID-Philippines, provided financial support for the publication. Auspiciously, the book project coincided with the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the *Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino* (LINKAPIL) program, which has been quietly but efficiently managing the donations from overseas



Filipinos to fund social development projects in the country. Part of the book includes stories from LINKAPIL's twenty years of experience.

The preparation and completion of this publication derive from the contributions of many cooperators. Heartfelt thanks are extended to the following:

- the key informants and respondents who shared their experiences and graciously agreed to have their projects, investments and partnerships included in this volume;
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*The Editors*





# Introduction: Energizing Migration for Development in the Philippines

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Commission on Filipinos Overseas

In the world of migration, the Philippines is renowned as a major source country of global workers. From the 1970s, the number of Filipinos migrating to work abroad has followed an upward trend, and beginning in 2006, more than a million Filipino workers are deployed annually to close to 200 countries and territories all over the world. These departures are matched by the ever growing magnitude of remittances that are plowed back to the Philippines. With a stock estimate (as of December 2008) of about eight million Filipinos abroad, the Philippines occupies a spot among the world's top remittance-receiving countries. In 2009, despite the global economic crisis, the Philippines received an estimated US\$ 17 billion, which showed a modest growth over the remittances of US\$ 16.4 billion recorded in 2008.

Remittances are the most obvious and most cited measure of the development impact of international migration in the Philippines. The role of remittances in generating foreign reserves and its contributions to the Philippine economy is widely acknowledged. The role of



remittances in improving the material well-being of remittance-receiving families and households is evident in the beautiful houses built by successful migrants. Remittances also enable families of migrants to purchase land and other assets, send their children and other family members to private schools, start or expand business ventures, and have some savings.

All is not positive on the remittance front, however. Apprehensions about the likely dependence of remittance-receiving households on remittances have been raised. To prepare migrants for their return to the Philippines and to promote judicious use of remittances by families, government and non-government organizations have launched financial literacy programs. It is not only migrants and their families who are feared to have become dependent on remittances. There are also concerns that the success of the country's labor export program has spawned the "Dutch disease."<sup>1</sup> And it seems existing government policies on labor migration do not effectively address this issue and the other social costs of migration.

Up until now, the government's approach to labor migration has remained wedded to the deployment of Filipino workers. In fact, the government has resorted to setting a target of deploying one million workers every year. The million-mark was breached in 2006 and every time the target is met, it makes for headline news. When the global economic crisis hit in the last quarter of 2008, the government intensified its efforts to find new labor markets for Filipino workers. It has to be acknowledged though that the government has introduced various measures to protect Filipino workers at all stages, i.e., before they are deployed abroad to providing assistance while workers are

<sup>1</sup> The term originated from the situation that the Netherlands experienced in the 1960s with the discovery of natural gas in the North Sea. The inflow of foreign currency led to currency appreciation which rendered the country's other products less competitive on the export market. In the Philippines, labor export generates remittances which increase the country's foreign reserves. In a sense, the export of workers has become the country's comparative advantage to the detriment of export goods and products. In the process, the Philippine economy has become dependent on labor export as a strategy to generate jobs and remittances.



overseas to extending support and assistance upon workers' return to the Philippines. It is this combination of promoting labor export on the one hand, and protecting overseas Filipino workers on the other, which earned good marks for the Philippines in the area of migration management. Indeed, compared to other countries of origin, the level of institutionalization of labor deployment and worker protection in the Philippines is more developed. However, there is a missing link – labor migration policies are not linked to development policies. Moreover, other dimensions of international migration remain unconnected in the formulation of national and local development plans.

This book calls attention to the development potentials of international migration beyond the conventional approach of labor deployment and beyond the typical measure of migrants' remittances. Other countries are reaping the benefits of international migration in other ways, such as the investments of overseas Chinese in China, the rise of India's ICT sector as an example of brain gain, and demonstrations of migrant giving in Latin America. Manuel Orozco, an academic who has been studying the migration-development nexus in Latin America, identified five Ts which have the potential to initiate the development potentials of international migration – transfer of remittances, trade, telecommunication, transportation and tourism. In other words, there are other avenues through which international migration can contribute to national and local development.

Given their transnational location, the Filipino diaspora has an important role to play as the country's development partners. The cases presented in this book reflect the varied contributions of Filipino migrants to Philippine society beyond the transfer of remittances. Portraits of Filipino migrants as donors, investors and partners in community-building are depicted in the book as well as portraits of local institutions as trusted collaborators. The stories do not end here. To complete and strengthen transnational bridges, the Filipino diaspora from one end of the bridge, and Philippine institutions from the other end, will have to dialogue and find ways to work together in a transnational context.

## Organization of the book

The book is organized into two parts.

Part 1 tells part of the story of two decades of the *Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino* (LINKAPIL) program. Initiated by the Commission on Filipinos Overseas in 1989, the initiative aimed at matching the resources donated by overseas Filipino associations to meet the needs of disadvantaged communities in the Philippines. The LINKAPIL program has been in existence long before remittances, diaspora philanthropy or migrant giving and the migration-development nexus caught the interest of the global community. A brief introduction about the program is provided, followed by vignettes of selected donors and a focus on livelihood projects. Of the many LINKAPIL donors, nine overseas Filipino associations are profiled in the book. They include long-term donors which had been supporting various projects for many years. The selected overseas Filipino associations cover the regions of North America, Oceania, Europe, Asia and Africa. The list includes an association that has had a long history – the Filipino Association of Singapore, which was organized in 1937, and one – the Philippine Barangay Society of Nigeria – whose philanthropic involvement in the Philippines is very new. Also highlighted are four livelihood projects supported by LINKAPIL donors. Livelihood projects are not attractive to donors because these require not only funding but also capacity-building, management support and marketing support. In other words, in contrast to the one-time, high-impact visibility of health and humanitarian projects, the success of livelihood projects entails social processes that require time and engagement with different stakeholders. But as the four cases highlight, livelihood projects have the potential to enable beneficiaries to improve their economic base and well-being.

Part 2 presents sketches of migrant giving, migrants' investments and models of partnership between overseas Filipinos and local institutions culled from the research conducted by MAPID-Philippines in 2008. Some of these examples were shared at the capacity-building programs in the Philippines, Italy and Spain. Presented as "MAPID Chronicles," the cases are just the tip of the iceberg. Many other cases are not included because of the difficulty of securing the permission of key persons to have their organization, project or business to be fea-



tured in the book. In the absence of documentation of migrants' donations, investments and local partners, many such examples have gone unnoticed. MAPID-Philippines was able to capture these stories because it was part of the study's objectives to document the contributions of migrants to local development and to explore the cooperation of overseas Filipinos and local institutions. Unlike the LINKAPIL donations which are recorded, managed and monitored by the Commission on Filipinos Overseas, the cases documented by MAPID-Philippines were pieced together from information gathered mostly from interviews. Local governments have ample opportunities to manage how international migration can promote local development.

In organizing the materials, the entries are classified according to the following categories: migrant giving, migrants' investments and models of partnership. The categories are not mutually exclusive. For example, entries under migrant giving also provide insights into the elements of partnerships between migrants or overseas Filipino associations and local institutions. Similarly, cases categorized under models of partnership may also provide an account of migrant giving. The LINKAPIL entries under livelihood also reflect examples of migrant giving and the institutions which cooperated in realizing different livelihood programs. To facilitate the search process, an index of the entries organized according to the location of individual donors or overseas Filipino associations, the location of projects or investments in the Philippines, and cross-references of migrant giving (including support for livelihood projects), investments and partnerships is provided.

The challenges ahead are many, but hopefully, these stories of solidarity and partnership will provide reasons to be optimistic.



# LINKAPIL Stories





## *Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino:* Two Decades of Transnational Solidarity and Partnership for Development

Golda Myra Roma and Jose Edison Tondares  
Commission on Filipinos Overseas

In 1989, the Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO) initiated a program that would systematically manage donations from Filipinos based overseas and direct them towards enhancing local development initiatives. The program was named, *Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino* (LINKAPIL), which literally translates to “service to fellow Filipinos.” The program was a pioneering government effort in engaging overseas Filipinos to partner with local institutions in promoting development. The longevity of the program speaks of the enduring sense of *bayanihan* of Filipinos even when they have found new homes in other countries.

The eruption of the long-dormant Mt. Pinatubo on 15 June 1991 signaled the launch of the program. Touted as the second biggest volcanic eruption of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the eruption killed 700 persons and incurred property damages amounting to almost half a

billion dollars. Nearby provinces were buried under lahar. The Mt. Pinatubo eruption gained global attention and donations poured in for relief and rehabilitation. In the wake of the eruption, LINKAPIL received an astounding PHP249.5 million of donations.

Organized migrant giving touched off by the Mt. Pinatubo tragedy not only continued but also branched out to various other projects and initiatives. Of the donations received between 1990 and 2009, the largest share went to health and welfare assistance, which accounted for 83.9 percent; education-related programs had a share of 11.9 percent. The rest went to small infrastructure, 1.8 percent; livelihood programs, 1.4 percent; and skills and knowledge transfer, one percent.

### **Engaging with overseas Filipino donors**

LINKAPIL has sought to establish partnerships with Filipino associations and institutions overseas. Partnering with associations and institutions not only increases the potential for more financial and material donations, but also enhances overseas community relations and strengthens organizational capacities. About 85 percent of LINKAPIL donors are associations and only 15 percent are individual donors. Since its establishment, the LINKAPIL has partnered with 833 donors, many of whom have become regular contributors – examples are the One World Institute, World Medical Relief, Inc. World Opportunities International, Books for the Barrios, Inc., Free Rural Eye Clinic, the Philippine Medical Association of West Virginia, Action Medeor, Operation USA, Feed the Hungry, Inc. and Aloha Medical Mission Foundation.

Half of the 833 LINKAPIL donors comprise associations of doctors, nurses and other medical practitioners. Hence, medical missions rank high among the activities supported by overseas Filipinos. The Aloha Medical Mission Foundation (*see pp.21-23*) has a long history of conducting medical missions in the country. Aside from the associations mentioned earlier, the Auxiliary to the Philippine Medical Association of Michigan and Quezonian Foundation, Inc. are among those involved in annual medical missions to the Philippines and the donation of medicines and medical equipment.



Some donors “specialize” in specific concerns. The Philippine Economic and Cultural Endowment or PEACE-USA, founded in 1986 in the United States, has been supporting water-related projects, such as the building of artesian wells and water systems in areas without potable water supply for the past two decades. The Philippine Association of Metropolitan Washington Engineers or PAMWE builds homes for free. PAMWE and the Logan Filipino-Australian Community Association, Inc. (see pp.24-25) donate to scholarship programs while the Filipino Club Darwin (Australia) regularly donates to orphanages and homes for the aged.

Since 1990, PHP2.350 billion has been coursed through the program, benefiting an estimated 14.6 million people across the 79 provinces of the Philippines, including the National Capital Region. Medical missions and health-related programs attract the most donations seconded by relief and humanitarian programs. Over the years, other donors are supporting other concerns. For example, the Feed the Hungry, Inc. (see pp.15-17), a major and long-term contributor to the LINKAPIL program, very active in relief operation, gift-giving and feeding programs. It later supported scholarship programs, and in recent years, it has helped in building elementary and high classrooms and has also supported livelihood programs. The rebuilding of communities following a disaster entails rebuilding livelihoods. Some donors, including new partners, are focusing on this component. Hawaii International Relief Organization, established in 2004, finances livelihood projects for the rehabilitation of calamity-stricken areas in Aurora. The Philippine Barangay Society-Nigeria (see pp.37-39) has funded 13 individually-managed livelihood projects in communities which were affected by Typhoon Ondoy in 2009.

Several of the donors have become recipients of the biennial awards conferred by the President of the Philippines to outstanding overseas Filipinos or organizations for their exceptional or significant contributions to the reconstruction, progress and development of a sector or community in the Philippines, or their role in advancing the cause of overseas Filipinos communities. The Presidential Awards, which started in December 1991 by virtue of Executive Order No. 498, has already been conferred to 314 individuals and organizations based in 40 countries. The awards have four categories: (1) the *Lingkod*

*sa Kapwa Pilipino* (Service to Fellow Filipinos) category is conferred on Filipino individuals or organizations who have made exceptional contributions to Philippine development; (2) the *Banaag* (Ray of Light) category is conferred to those whose efforts had significantly benefited the overseas Filipino community; (3) the *Pamana ng Pilipino* (Filipino Heritage) category is conferred on overseas Filipinos who have demonstrated excellence and distinction in their work or profession; and (4) the *Kaanib ng Bayan* (An Ally of the Country) category is conferred on foreign individuals or organizations who have contributed significantly to the Philippines or overseas Filipino communities. Up until 2004, there was a fifth category, *Kaakabay* (Comrade), which recognized the generosity of overseas Filipinos to provide support and assistance in times of disasters and calamities.

The conferment of the awards has helped to strengthen the links of overseas Filipinos to their motherland. The awards have also served as a bridge between overseas Filipinos and the LINKAPIL program. Some of the recipients came to know about LINKAPIL after receiving the award, after which some have chosen to course their donations to the CFO, the secretariat of the awards.

LINKAPIL has gained the trust of its overseas partners because of the transparency of its operations. LINKAPIL explains to donors the intricacies and processes of transmitting material and financial donations to the Philippines. All LINKAPIL projects are covered by formal agreements stipulating the duties and responsibilities of the donor, with the CFO as fund conduit, the beneficiaries and partner agencies. Overseas donors choose the projects that they wish to support. They can take active part in the implementation of their projects in the Philippines with full access to financial and implementation reports.

In the implementation of projects in the Philippines, LINKAPIL also partners with internationally recognized organizations and projects such as Habitat for Humanity and the International Red Cross.

### **Investing in livelihood projects**

LINKAPIL donations have created many opportunities to contribute to social development in the Philippines. To date, over five



hundred scholars benefited from scholarship programs – they come from various schools in Iloilo, Batangas, Ilocos Norte, Metro Manila, Mountain Province, and other provinces. Thousands of calamity victims have been provided relief. Two thousand six hundred and thirty-five malnourished children have been restored to healthy state. Around 40 barangays in 22 provinces, including Metro Manila, were provided classrooms or new school buildings.

As mentioned earlier, donations are mostly for relief, humanitarian, health and education-related programs while those for infrastructure and livelihood programs are much less. Donors tend to shy away from these types of projects for various reasons. Livelihood programs require sizable and long-term investments (including investments in training and human capital formation), which only resource-rich donors can afford. Also, livelihood projects do not yield quick and evident results, unlike gift-giving. Despite these odds, some donors have ventured into supporting livelihood programs.

Since 1990, there have been 16 livelihood projects under LINKAPIL – assisted programs – most of them were supported by the Feed the Hungry Inc. The livelihood component of LINKAPIL encourages the establishment of small-scale or alternative income generating activities, and fosters the concept of self-help among community members. Supporting livelihood projects may take the form of cash capitalization or contribution of equipment to start or sustain livelihood projects, or to improve productivity and incomes. Specific projects could include extension of financial assistance through low-interest loans to local borrowers, which may be used as start-up or additional operating capital for micro-enterprises. Several promising or successful livelihood projects are profiled in this volume (see pp.41-52).

The other livelihood projects did not last long because of lack of training and management and implementation issues. In some cases, when a project becomes successful, some of the more advanced beneficiaries decide to go on their own. The most common problem is delayed or non-payment of loans. These experiences have discouraged other would-be donors from supporting livelihood programs. The lessons learned from these experiences have helped to fine-tune mechanisms and accountability in the granting of loans.



## Challenges and prospects

As a guiding principle, LINKAPIL abides by the donor's decision on which projects or beneficiaries to support. In an effort to match donations with priority needs, the CFO came up with the publication, *Philippine Sectoral and Needs Profiling System*, in July 2000. Although there is scope for presenting donors with options, in the end, the final decision rests with the donors.

Thus far, most of the LINKAPIL donors are based in the United States of America. Efforts to link with Filipino communities in Europe, Asia, and the Middle East are currently being undertaken modestly because of budget constraints.

Maintaining and nurturing links with overseas Filipinos is a central component of CFO's mandate. The CFO is able to accomplish this task through its programs, notably the pre-departure orientation programs. Departing emigrants, including the young (who comprise 30 percent of those who register as emigrants), are required to country-specific pre-departure orientations and provided with information and materials to assist them as they settle in their destination countries. The CFO works in coordination with various Philippine Foreign Service posts, as well as organizations overseas, by sharing information about the arrival of Filipino immigrants within certain jurisdictions. This work entails the creation of a database of all emigrants and Filipino community organizations overseas, including associations of migrant workers or temporary migrants. Newsletters, visits by CFO officials and information shared on the CFO website are some of the ways in which CFO and overseas Filipinos are connected.

Twenty years later, LINKAPIL continues to grow and evolve. With a conducive policy and legal environment, LINKAPIL can do much more in creating bridges of solidarity between Filipinos abroad and the homeland, and in the process, contribute to closing the gap between the rich and poor in Philippine society.



## Feed the Hungry, Inc.

Date established	1990 (as Feed the Hungry Orphans)/ 1995 (as Feed the Hungry Inc.)
Type of projects	Feeding programs, education, relief efforts, livelihood
Location of projects	Philippines
Status	Ongoing

### Origins

An encounter with a watch-your-car boy in Laguna left an indelible mark on Pablito Alarcon and Tessie Calderon-Alarcon. While on vacation in the Philippines, the couple met Toto (not his real name), when they stopped by a Laguna restaurant for lunch. At the entrance, they were met by Toto, who offered his services in exchange for some coins. Noticing Toto's weakness and paleness, Pablito asked him if he had eaten. "*Hindi pa po. Kahapon pa po*" (Not yet. I haven't eaten since yesterday), Toto replied. The couple invited him to join them and order anything he wanted. He took one leg of chicken and two scoops of rice. The picture of Toto eating like he has not eaten before moved the couple to do something for Toto and other children like him.

In 1990, Pablito and Tessie organized the Feed the Hungry Orphans (FtHO), an organization which visited the Philippines during the Christmas season and distribute gifts. Pablito, Tessie and the rest of the members of the association who were based in Washington, D.C., started to raise funds and distribute solicitations to their friends

worldwide to fund the activities of the FtHO. To their surprise, the funding received was beyond their expectations. The FtHO received cash donations, food, clothing, books and medicines. From then on, the FtHO started funding feeding programs and bringing gifts and food to homes for the aged, orphanages, poor communities, street children, the homeless and physically disabled.

As the years went by, the FtHO realized Filipinos needed something that could make them more self-sufficient. Other programs like scholarship grants and livelihood enterprise support were added until the Feed the Hungry, Inc. (FtH) was born in 1995. The FtH, an offshoot of the FtHO, is a charitable non-stock corporation registered in Virginia, USA. It was organized for the purpose of raising funds to support charitable, educational, and livelihood projects.

### **Implementation**

The FtH started to coordinate with the Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO) in 1993 after the World Bank/IFC-IMF Filipino Association (the original organization of the FtHO) became a recipient of the 1992-1993 Presidential Award for Filipino Individuals and Organizations Overseas. Upon knowing about the CFO's *Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino* or LINKAPIL program, the FtH decided to partner with CFO for the implementation of its assistance programs in the Philippines.

To fund its programs, the FtH conducts fund-raising activities such as the Spring Shindig, golf tournaments and carpet auction. Monies raised are transmitted to CFO, which then channels the funds to FtH-identified beneficiaries and activities. The CFO coordinates with beneficiaries for project identification, money transfer, implementation and monitoring, and the preparation of report for transmittal to the FtH.

Generally, the FtH already has an identified beneficiary culled from requests from their members' hometowns, alumni associations, parishes and other networks. Extra monies, if available, are given to CFO-identified beneficiaries, based on requests CFO receives during its community education campaigns, and requests coming from communities and organizations.



Presently, the FtH engages in gift giving, feeding and nutrition programs, community development, educational support and emergency and calamity relief.

### **Accomplishments**

From 1990 to the first semester of 2009, the FtH has donated more than PHP77.45 million worth of in-kind and cash donations that benefited 1.03 million individual beneficiaries in Metro Manila and 76 out of the country's 82 provinces. Through partnerships and collaboration with the government and non-profit organizations in the Philippines, the FtH continues to play a valuable role in assisting Filipinos in need.

Since it started operation in 1990, the FtH has built 65 classrooms in 22 cities and provinces; nine water wells across five provinces; three housing projects in Camarines Norte and Cavite and two latrine-type projects in Ifugao Province, and has participated in 16 livelihood and micro-enterprise ventures in places as diverse as Isabela, Marinduque and Southern Leyte; 37 feeding programs in different regions and 49 calamity relief missions. It has also sent 100 kids to school through the LINKAPIL's Adopt-a-Scholar program.

In recognition of its various programs to help Filipinos in need, in 1998, the FtH was conferred a Presidential Award (*Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino*). The simple gesture of kindness to Toto has grown into a comprehensive humanitarian mission.



## H.O.P.E. Foundation International

Date established	1993
Type of projects	Medical missions medical assistance
Location of projects	Central Luzon, mostly in Zambales
Status	Ongoing

### Origins

After the killer earthquake that shook Luzon in 1990, the Philippines was once again the center of international attention with the eruption of Mt. Pinatubo in 1991. The volcanic eruption unleashed ash falls, pyroclastic flow and lava (lahar) that spilled over Central and Northern Luzon and resulted in the devastation of major infrastructure, fishponds, water systems, power transmission lines, agricultural and residential lands in the provinces of Zambales, Pampanga and Tarlac. Factories were destroyed displacing more than 650,000 employees. The eruption affected almost 300,000 families or one million people and claimed almost a thousand lives. Zambales was particularly hit by the volcanic eruption.

The Health Organization for the Poor Enterprise (H.O.P.E.) Foundation International, a non-profit organization of Filipino doctors and medical professionals established on 9 March 1993, was one of the groups that offered assistance to families and communities affected by the Mt. Pinatubo explosion. HOPE prioritized the displaced indigenous communities surrounding Mt. Pinatubo, particularly the Aetas and various isolated groups in need of assistance.



## Implementation

Since 1993, HOPE conducts five to seven day-medical missions, usually every January, which treats about 5,000 patients with different cases and ailments. The medical team is composed of volunteer physicians, along with some lay people who are invited to join as assistants.

The medical missions organized by HOPE include donations of medical supplies and hospital and healthcare equipment such as hearing aids, hospital beds, gurneys, dental chairs, electro-cardiogram machines, walking canes for the blind and wheelchairs for needy patients. HOPE conducts hearing impairment classes for the deaf and provides instructional materials for the blind. The group also performs surgical operations on children with hare lip, cleft palate and other ailments.

Its projects with the Aetas started in the 1990s. In 1993, HOPE began a feeding program for 150 Aeta schoolchildren at the Kanaynayan resettlement site in Zambales that significantly reduced cases of malnutrition. In January 1998, HOPE built a 25-bed medical facility for the Aeta community at the Kanaynayan resettlement site. The facility, costing around US\$100,000, has a pharmacy, surgery room and dental and outpatient services. The facility is geared at making medical services readily accessible to thousands of indigenous people in Zambales and other nearby provinces.

In addition to medical missions and health programs, HOPE also supports educational and empowerment enhancement programs for the Aetas. HOPE granted scholarships to two Aetas to pursue a degree in nursing. The scholars, whose tuition and other educational needs were shouldered by HOPE, are now registered nurses.

The cooperation between HOPE and the Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO) started with a referral from the Philippine Consulate General in New York when HOPE inquired about how it can provide assistance to Mt. Pinatubo victims. It was enhanced when the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) issued Foreign Service Circular No. 61-00 in 2000 mandating that all donations coursed through the

DFA be given to the CFO for coordination and facilitation in the Philippines.

The CFO assists HOPE in the processing of documents and permission with concerned agencies in the Philippines for the approval of medical missions. The process usually takes at least three months. It includes submitting an application letter to the Department of Health and securing special permits from the Professional Regulation Commission if the mission involves the participation of foreign physicians and health related professionals. These documents have to be processed before a medical mission can be conducted in the Philippines.

HOPE also works with HOPE Foundation-Philippines, which oversees and monitors its projects in the country.

### **Future prospects**

To fund its humanitarian projects and medical missions, HOPE conducts charity golf tournaments and other fund-raising activities. In 2009, HOPE raised funds to help two Aeta children who required medical attention.

In recognition of HOPE's untiring efforts in assisting indigenous and underprivileged communities in the Philippines, a Presidential Award (*Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino*) was conferred to it in 1998.

Just like its name, HOPE brings light and promise to improve the conditions of Filipinos in need.



## Aloha Medical Mission

Date established	1983
Type of projects	Health and medical services
Location of projects	Philippines, Southeast Asia and the Pacific
Status	Ongoing

### Origins

The Aloha Medical Mission (AMM) was founded in 1983 by a group of Filipino-American doctors who are also members of the Philippine Medical Association (PMA) of Hawaii. It started as a committee within the PMA of Hawaii until it became a non-profit entity that obtained a tax-exempt status in 1985. After that, more volunteers participated in what members called the “mission fever.”

The AMM’s primary thrust is to provide free and voluntary medical, surgical and other health-related service. It also donates medical supplies and hospital equipment in underserved communities in the Philippines, Southeast Asia and the Pacific.

### Implementation

The activities of the AMM are backed by a strong teamwork of licensed physicians and nurses and non-medical professional volunteers who perform logistical and administrative tasks. Doctors specialize in internal medicine, family care, pediatrics, general and plastic surgery, dermatology and anesthesiology.

Since it was established in 1983, AMM has undertaken 116 medical missions in 15 countries namely: Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, East Timor, Indonesia, Laos, Micronesia, Myanmar, Nepal, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Solomon Islands, Hawaii, Vanuatu and Vietnam. AMM doctors and volunteers have treated 243,661 patients and performed 14,808 operations carried out by 1,000 selfless doctors from various countries and assisted by 3,938 volunteers. The group also supports two clinics in Bangladesh and one in Hawaii.

In the Philippines, the AMM has already conducted a total of 51 medical missions. The provinces of Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur, Pangasinan, Benguet, Pampanga, Bulacan, Romblon, Cebu, Davao, Cotabato, Bukidnon, Cagayan de Oro City, and the National Capital Region, among others, have benefited from free surgeries, check-ups, and provision of medicines and medical equipment.

Aside from medical missions, the AMM also trains physicians and offers fellowships for visiting doctors in Honolulu. The program aims to assure the sustainability and perpetuity of extending assistance to the needy and to build on the practitioners' knowledge of treating complex and serious illnesses.

In 1993, Dr. Jorge Camara, a Filipino, was the first recipient of the AMM Fellowship Training Program under the supervision of the University of Hawaii-School of Medicine and with financial support from the Consuelo Alger Foundation. The program was conceived because of the growing number of patients with cancers, tumors and congenital deformities in the eyelids and eye sockets. As of 2009, 24 ophthalmologists have received the specialized training in the Philippines. The doctors who participated in the training hail from different provinces and cities in the country.

In recognition of the value and impact of the training program to the Philippines, the AMM was conferred the National Treasure Award by the Philippine President in 2001. Also, the group has received the Hawaii legislature's Ambassadors of Goodwill and Good Health Award, a Presidential Award (*Kaakabay*) in 1996, and a Congressional Award from the United States Congress for Outstanding Contribution to the Community, State and Nation.



It was when the AMM received the *Kaakabay* Award in 1996 that the coordination between the AMM and the Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO) started. Since then, the CFO assists in the processing of necessary documents with concerned Philippine government agencies such as the Department of Health and the Professional Regulation Commission, for the approval of the AMM's medical mission and the physicians' temporary permits.

### **Future prospects**

The AMM's services go beyond borders. Medical missions planned for 2011 include not only calamity-stricken areas in the Philippines but also Haiti and Bangladesh.

The AMM also encourages medical students to take part in the group's medical missions to gain practical experience, especially in working in remote areas which are lacking in facilities and equipment. One of the foreign participants in the AMM Fellowship Training Program intends to teach at the Eye Center at the East Avenue Medical Center in Quezon City after the training.

Truly, the AMM is a messenger of goodwill that offers not only medical assistance but the spirit of "aloha" — a way of treating each other with love and respect — to needy communities in the Philippines and in other parts of the world.



## Logan Filipino-Australian Community Association Inc.

Date established	1993
Type of projects	Education, health, social, cultural and referral
Location of projects	Philippines and Australia
Status	Ongoing

### Origins

The Logan Filipino–Australian Community Association, Inc. (LFACA) was formed in 1993, aided in part by the Australian government’s policy of multiculturalism, which encourages immigrants to create associations to uphold their culture and heritage.

The association seeks to maintain Filipino immigrants’ social and cultural links with the Philippines while pursuing their personal and professional goals in Australia. It also endeavors to provide moral and spiritual support, and information, education and communication services to Filipino-Australians and their families.

The LFACA is a member of the Multicultural Affairs of Queensland, which is responsible in promoting community relations in Queensland and in coordinating the development of the Queensland government’s multicultural policy.



## Accomplishments

In 1998, the LFACA, in partnership with the Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO), implemented the Adopt-a-Scholar Program. The association grants full scholarship to indigent but academically-gifted students in the provinces of Cebu and Cagayan. Annually, the LFACA supports four college scholars.

Aside from education, the LFACA is also active in social welfare development programs. Since 1995, the organization annually sends boxes of used clothing to poor families in the Philippines. Also, from 2000 to 2002, the LFACA donated 20 boxes of various medical supplies to the Health Department of Cebu City and Cagayan Province. The medical supplies were used for their rural community services.

In addition to philanthropic programs in the Philippines, the LFACA provides post-arrival support and referral services to Filipinos in Australia. The association provides information services to new immigrants and temporary visitors on issues like immigration, access to community services, education, skills recognition, employment and training, and health. Filipinos who registered with the CFO and attended its pre-departure orientation seminars are referred to the LFACA for post-arrival services in Queensland, Australia. The LFACA liaises and works with local institutions in implementing post-arrival services and programs for new Filipino immigrants. The LFACA is recognized by the Family Services Department in Queensland as mediator between victims and service providers.

To further expand the operations and services of Filipino local associations in Queensland, the LFACA spearheaded several fundraising activities for the establishment of the Pilipino Community Centre. With the assistance of the Brisbane City Council, the Centre opened in July 2003 and it became the official base of the Filipino Community Council of Queensland, the umbrella of Filipino organizations in Australia.



## Stichting Kapatiran

Date established	1990
Type of projects	Children's education, community development
Location of projects	Philippines
Status	Ongoing

### Origins

With the vision to create a more just and humane Philippine society where poor communities could have more opportunities to develop themselves fully, Stichting Kapatiran, more commonly known as Kapatiran, was established on 30 November 1990 by a group of Dutch and Filipino volunteers in The Hague, Netherlands. The organization's main thrust is to foster greater unity and solidarity between Netherlands-based Filipinos and local communities in the Philippines through small-scale and self-reliant projects. Kapatiran also organizes information and education campaigns among the Dutch public in order to generate awareness on and concern for issues regarding Filipino migrants and the Philippines.

The group welcomes members and volunteers, regardless of nationality, who are interested in extending assistance and the promotion of welfare of the underprivileged. Kapatiran is financially supported by volunteers residing in different provinces in The Netherlands. It is managed by board members composed of Dutch and Filipino nationals.



## Implementation

Kapatiran was among the overseas Filipino communities that extended relief and rehabilitation assistance in the wake of the Mt. Pinatubo explosion. In 1991, it donated PHP194,000 for the victims of the disaster in Pampanga.

In 1995, in cooperation with the Catholic Church of our Savior in The Hague, it funded the medical operation of a victim of the cross-fire between government and rebel forces in Ipil, Zamboanga.

It raised almost PHP9 million for the Kids for Peace Cotabato in 2000 to benefit child refugees displaced by the conflict in Southern Philippines.

In response to the limitations of the Philippine educational system, Kapatiran organized the Basic Literacy Program to support the primary education of the children of poor families. To address the economic needs of poor families, it also launched the Kapatiran Livelihood Project. The beneficiaries of the small scale livelihood projects were the parents of the children who received support for their education. Since the inception of the Basic Literacy Program in 2000, it has provided almost PHP1.5 million to 511 elementary pupils in the provinces of Agusan Del Sur, Cagayan, Davao del Sur, Ilocos Norte, Negros Occidental, Oriental Mindoro and Zambales. From 2003 to 2005, Kapatiran has provided PHP6.5 million for microfinance and capacity building projects in cooperation with Novib Oxfam Netherlands, a Dutch organization. Among the livelihood projects it has supported are live-stock (goat and swine) production and nursery development.

Kapatiran has cooperated with local institutions in the implementation of various projects in the Philippines.

It established a tie-up with the Katilingban para sa Kalambuan, Inc. (KKI), a non-profit organization that helps poor and marginalized communities in Zamboanga City. Kapatiran supported KKI's programs on community organization and paralegal service development for urban poor communities.

Through KKI, Kapatiran partnered with Akay Kalinga Center, a halfway house that extends assistance and intervention to street children who are victims of poverty, armed conflict and violence in Zamboanga City. Kapatiran's assistance has enabled Akay Kalinga Center to cover expenses for the children's meals and non-formal education materials, and capital assistance for the children's parents in 2004. Both organizations have also begun sending the children to formal learning institutions. They started with 27 children in the elementary, high school and collegiate levels. As of 2009, the two partners have sent 58 children and youth to schools. They have also assisted the children's parents in starting small enterprises to augment family income.

In 2006, Kapatiran collaborated with the People's Recovery, Empowerment and Development Assistance (PREDA), a foundation established in the Philippines in 1981, which runs programs to give new life to endangered children, i.e., those who had been victims of sexual exploitation and domestic violence, those who had been jailed, those who had been rescued from brothels, and those mired in poverty. It has a shelter for children that offers therapy and family counseling. Kapatiran provided funds amounting to PHP1.28 million to the PREDA Center in Olongapo City in 2006-2007, which enabled 95 abused children to go to school.

The projects Kapatiran has supported in the Philippines have not only addressed specific needs but have also fostered self-reliance among the beneficiaries. In The Netherlands, Kapatiran has contributed to raising Filipinos' awareness of their rights and responsibilities as Dutch citizens and the needs of their *kababayans* back home.

In 2008, Kapatiran was conferred a Presidential Award (*Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino*) in recognition of its programs for Filipinos in the Philippines and in their host country.



## Association Lending Assistance in Exigencies at Home, gem e.V. (Ala Eh)

Date established	1994
Type of projects	Funding for building classrooms, medical facilities
Location of projects	Philippines, mostly in Batangas
Status	Ongoing

### Origins

In Batangas and the rest of the Southern Tagalog region, the expression, "*ala eh*" is a shortened version of "*wala*," which means "nothing." It is also an interjection at the beginning of a conversation that also means "nothing." However, in another part of the globe, particularly in Germany, ALA EH means an assurance and guarantee of a better future.

The Association Lending Assistance on Exigencies at Home or ALA EH is a non-profit organization whose members are Filipino citizens, those of Filipino descent or foreign nationals married to a Filipino, who are living or working in Germany. The association is dedicated to the principle of helping the needy help themselves, particularly through livelihood projects.

Between the 1980s and the early 1990s, many Filipino and Filipino-German associations were established in Germany. Most of



these organizations were primarily intended to bring Filipinos closer to one another during annual social gatherings. Later, the founders of ALA EH explored the possibility of giving meaning to these activities. They carefully studied how they can best use their efforts and financial resources to give back to their communities back home. They agreed to the idea of granting financial capital to jumpstart projects — mainly health and education — in their local communities in the Philippines.

### **Implementation**

When it started in 1994, ALA EH allocated DM10,000 (about PHP200,000 at that time) to two projects at DM5,000 each, in two recipient communities in Batangas, Philippines. Barrio Pallocan of Batangas City became the recipient of ALA EH's first project — a school building to accommodate the growing number of children in the community. ALA EH also funded the renovation of a dilapidated health center in the town of Agoncillo, Batangas. The total allocation for each project was about PHP100,000.

In 1995, ALA EH financed the construction of a kindergarten building in Wawa Elementary School, Nasugbu West District, under the supervision of the Non-Formal Education Coordinator. Several teachers found permanent employment as a result of the creation of additional classes.

More artesian wells, classrooms and health centers were constructed in Batangas over the next few years. ALA EH's first project outside Batangas was the construction of three artesian wells in Orion, Bataan. The building of the badly needed water pumps benefited dispersed communities from the Mt. Pinatubo eruption in Barangay Camachile, Daan Pare and Capunitan. Aside from the water pumps, ALA EH allocated funds to furnish three day care centers with mono-block chairs and ceiling ventilators in Daan Bago, Wawa Pag-Asa and Calungusan.

By 1999, a total of PHP1.2 million had been provided to different communities and municipalities through the 12 projects that the association had sponsored. In the period 2000-2005, ALA EH's



assistance expanded to support projects in Mexico, Pampanga; Mati, Davao Oriental and Amadeo, Cavite.

In May 2007, ALA EH donated hydraulic beds with mattresses and 30 bed side tables to the Antique Regional Hospital, amounting to PHP4 million. Six months after, the association, in cooperation with PADIGAPA Foundation, donated 12 hospital beds with mattresses and gutters, 21 bed side tables, two ECG monitors, 53 wheel chairs, 47 walkers, 28 pairs of walking sticks, several urinals, bed pans and other hospital equipment to the Batangas Provincial Hospital.

### **Future prospects**

To make the programs more sustainable, the association has promulgated the following rules as part of its monitoring and evaluating scheme. First, the project must be documented, complete with supporting papers from recipient community officials, receipts of purchased materials used and pictures showing the progress of work. The project documentation must adhere to auditing procedures. Recipient communities are required to issue *Sangguniang Bayan/Barangay* resolutions confirming project completion. The representative of ALA EH supervising the project is obligated to secure and provide legitimate proof, as s/he alone is accountable for the allocation he/she received. Failure to do so would mean returning the amount plus interest.

Second, any expenditure in excess of the funds allocated by the association shall be shouldered by the recipient community through the provision of labor and other expenses. The recipient community is informed in advance of the project and they are required to present proposals as to what project is most urgently needed.

In recognition of ALA EH's continued support to the needy in remote provinces in the Philippines, a Presidential Award (*Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino*) was conferred to the association in 2006.



## MAHARLIKA-SWITZERLAND

Date established	1993
Type of projects	Education, social and cultural
Location of projects	Philippines
Status	Ongoing

### Origins

Maharlika-Switzerland was founded in 1993 by Filipino migrants based in Rheinfelden, Switzerland. In the beginning, the primary goal of the association was to preserve Filipino culture in Switzerland through cultural and social events and various festivities. The group also serves as an avenue for promoting cohesion among Filipinos in Switzerland. Over the years, Maharlika-Switzerland also became active in planning, organizing and financing projects in the Philippines, supporting projects related to education, infrastructure, and social and cultural development.

### Accomplishments

In Switzerland, the association offers educational, cultural and recreational programs for its members: Tagalog language, German language, computer classes; ballroom dancing lessons; and guidance and counseling.

Among the programs Maharlika-Switzerland has supported in the Philippines are the following:



### *Housing and Infrastructure*

- ◆ Construction of 13 low-cost housing units in the Mexico-Arayat Resettlement Site in Buensuseco, Arayat, Pampanga and 10 units in Mabalacat, Pampanga benefiting 23 family-victims of the Mt. Pinatubo eruption in 1991 – the projects were in collaboration with the Adopt-A-Family Movement of Cielo Macapagal-Salgado and the Mt. Pinatubo Commission.
- ◆ Facilities improvement of ERDA Technical and Vocational Secondary School, an institution providing training for less privileged students
- ◆ Construction of a two-storey school building for Karis Christian Academy in Pajo, Quezon City – this was in partnership with Servants of Asia
- ◆ Concreting of roadway and installation of box culvert in Bliss Site, Barangay Baybay, Catarman, Northern Samar – the project helped prevent flooding in the area which contributed to better health and sanitary conditions in the area
- ◆ Construction of two Multi-Purpose Halls in Davao del Sur and eight halls in various barangays of Pateros, and eight public toilets near the activity areas
- ◆ Construction of a feeding center and public toilet in San Roque, Pateros which benefited thousands of malnourished children

### *Medical*

- ◆ Supported feeding programs for 60 malnourished pre-schoolers in Zones 6 and 2 in Santa Ana, Pateros; 75 percent of the children were rehabilitated to normal weight
- ◆ Donated a total of PHP83,000 to the Coron, Palawan Outreach Program to finance the purchase of water purifier, dental equipment and medicines for a medical mission



Transnational Bridges - Migration, Development and Solidarity in the Philippines

- ◆ Shouldered the maintenance and operating expenses of the Day Care Center for special children of low income families in Pasig, Pateros and Taguig

*Livelihood*

- ◆ Provided livelihood projects for Aetas who were victims of the Mt. Pinatubo eruption

In recognition of Maharlika-Switzerland's contribution to improve the lives of Filipinos both in Switzerland and the Philippines, the association was conferred a Presidential Award (*Banaag*) in 2002.





## Filipino Association of Singapore

Date established	1937
Type of projects	Educational grants, fund-raising, coordination
Location of projects	Singapore and the Philippines
Status	Ongoing

### Origins

Established on 29 August 1937, the Filipino Association of Singapore (FAS) predates the arrival of large numbers of Filipinos in the city-state. The FAS is part and parcel of the history of the Filipino presence in Singapore.

In the 1930s, the small Filipino community in Singapore consisted of musicians and a few employees who worked for British firms. At the time, most Filipino families in Singapore lived in the vicinity of Selegie Road up to Kitchener Road. In one of the community's informal gatherings, 12 socio-civic minded Filipinos decided to form an organization to foster camaraderie and to provide mutual aid to the members. They decided to name the group as the Singapore Filipino Association, which was renamed into the Filipino Association of Singapore in 1954.

The association served as the de facto Philippine consulate for Filipinos who came or passed through Singapore. After gaining independence from the United States in 1945, the FAS assisted visiting Filipino diplomats and other officials who came to Singapore and aided

Filipinos who encountered problems. In 1947, the FAS provided temporary shelter and facilitated the repatriation of seven Filipinos who survived a shipwreck. In 1950, the FAS made representations with the Port Health Authorities of Singapore to allow a group of Filipino Muslims who were bound for Mecca to go ashore so they can purchase some necessities. The FAS has assisted in the opening of the Philippine Consulate in Singapore in 1956, which was later upgraded into the Philippine Consulate General. It has lent its support to the official visits of various presidents to Singapore, including Ferdinand Marcos, Corazon Aquino and Gloria Macapagal Arroyo.

### **Implementation**

The FAS has extended the spirit of *bayanihan* to Filipinos back home through their involvement in several initiatives. It has donated PHP6 million for the benefit of the victims of the Mt. Pinatubo eruption in 1991; sponsored elementary and secondary students through the ABS-CBN Bantay Bata Foundation; distributed relief goods to typhoon victims in Quezon Province and Bicol in 2005; and organized a dental mission in Naga City, in cooperation with the Domingo C. Albeus Sr. Foundation and Camarines Sur Dental Association, that benefited 450 indigent Filipinos.

Throughout its long history, the FAS has surpassed its goals to promote camaraderie and to establish mutual aid among Filipinos in Singapore. Helping Filipinos in the Philippines is becoming part of its programs and activities. In 2006, the FAS received a Presidential Award (*Banaag*).



## Philippine Barangay Society – Nigeria

Date established	1973
Type of projects	Education and livelihood
Location of projects	Nigeria and the Philippines
Status	Ongoing

### Origins

Filipinos began migrating to Nigeria as early as the 1970s. Among the pioneers were engineers, welders and pipe layers who were recruited to work in oil companies. They were followed by teachers and medical professionals who found employment in Abuja, the capital city. As of December 2008, there were about 3,000 Filipinos in Nigeria.

The Philippine Barangay Society–Nigeria (PBSN) was founded in 1973 with the support of the Philippine Embassy in Abuja. It was created to formalize and bring together the loosely organized groups and to promote good relations and unity among Filipinos in Nigeria. The PBSN is headed by a Chairman and supported by an Executive Committee, with headquarters located in Caverton Helicopter Staff House in Ikeja, Lagos.

### Accomplishments

Since its founding, the PBSN has worked closely with the Philippine Embassy in Abuja in disseminating information on consular matters to the Filipino community and in supporting distressed Filipinos, such as providing assistance for repatriation and the shipment of remains. The PBSN also

grants soft loans to its members facing financial difficulties and extends financial assistance to members in times of accidents, illness and bereavement.

The PBSN initiated and contributed to the construction of a multi-purpose Filipino Community Clubhouse in Lagos, which is used as a venue for Barangay Day, a gathering of Filipinos in Lagos to build and cement camaraderie. In the future, the clubhouse is envisioned to become a trade center that will showcase and promote Philippine goods, products and services.

Until recently, most of the organization's programs and activities centered on the Filipinos in Nigeria. Later, the PBSN expanded its programs to assist underprivileged Filipinos in the Philippines as well as Nigerians.

In 2005, the PBSN's fund-raising campaign among the Filipino communities in Ikeja, Victoria Island/Ikoyi, and Apapa in Nigeria raised a total of US\$12,000, which it donated to the Classroom Galing sa Mamamayang Pilipino (CGMA) project, a Philippine government initiative to build classrooms in public schools. In 2006, it gave US\$2,000 to the landslide victims in Guinsaugon, St. Bernard, Leyte.

In gratitude to the host country, the PBSN organized the KiriKiri Initiative to raise funds for programs that will benefit disadvantaged groups in Nigeria. The program has provided regular funding of US\$5,000 a year for building schools and buying school materials for poor children. In 2006, a US\$5,000-donation completed the roofing of the RCM Primary School, a Catholic Mission School in Benue State.

Since 2006, the PBSN has actively participated in the Small World Event, the biggest fund raising event in Lagos. The participation of the PBSN in this event provides an opportunity to showcase Filipino music, dance, food and tourist destinations to African and other foreign audiences. Proceeds from this event are intended to support the primary education of selected underprivileged African children.

In recognition of the PBSN's efforts in undertaking projects that empowers Filipinos in Nigeria and supporting development projects



Migrant Giving

in the Philippines, its president, Esperanza R. Derpo, was conferred a Presidential Award (*Banaag*) in 2008.

The award paved the way for the PBSN and the Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO) to work together. In February 2010, the PBSN coursed through the CFO's LINKAPIL program, a donation totaling PHP225,000. The donation was earmarked to support livelihood assistance to 13 families in Cavite, Laguna and Bulacan and one church-based organization in Manila. The beneficiaries were affected by Typhoon Ondoy which hit the country in September 2009. As of this writing, the livelihood projects had just started.





## Sabutan Production Livelihood Project

Date started	2005
Type of projects	Weaving
Location of projects	Baler, Aurora
Status	Ongoing
Donor	Feed the Hungry, Inc.
Partners	Barangay Buhangin Weavers Association Samahan ng mga Kababaihang Maglalala ng Baler

### Origins

Located on the coastline of the Pacific and nestled between the mountain ranges of Sierra Madre and Caraballo, Baler, the capital of Aurora, enjoys rich sources of livelihood, particularly fishing, hunting and farming. But the province is also prone to typhoons. Between 2004 and 2005, Baler and the whole province of Aurora were battered by four super typhoons, destroying thousands of lives and millions worth of property and livelihood.



*Women beneficiaries weaving hats (upper photo); Hats, bags and fans made of sabutan*

### **Project implementation**

To help the Balerianos, the Hawaii Filipino-American Relief Committee of the Filipino Community Center in Hawaii and the Feed the Hungry, Inc. (FtH), through the Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO), donated US\$15,000 (PHP810,000) for the rehabilitation of Barangay Buhangin, Baler. The barangay was made a beneficiary since 90 percent of its 5,000 residents suffered from the four typhoons. Moreover, Barangay Buhangin was more accessible than other calamity-stricken areas in Aurora.

As part of the rehabilitation program, Aurora Governor Bellaflor Angara-Castillo proposed the establishment of the Sabutan Production Center that would aid in making *sabutan* woven handicraft for international export. The *sabutan* plant, a relative of the *buri* plant, is grown in Aurora and is used to make hats, placemats, bags, fans and other handicrafts.

After several months of planning and coordination, the groundbreaking ceremony was held in November 2005 and the CFO turned over the funds and materials to the local government of Baler. As a counterpart of the project, the beneficiaries and the provincial government of Aurora allocated PHP78,743.10 to cover the labor cost. In February 2006, the Sabutan Production Center Livelihood Project was formally inaugurated for the benefit of the Samahan ng mga Kababaihang Maglalala ng Baler (SKMB), composed of 25 women aged 22-78 years old.

### **Problems and future prospects**

The CFO and the FtH monitored the status of the center to ensure that the donated items were properly being used. During the last visit of the CFO in January 2009, SKMB President Toni Arroyo identified some of the center's birth pains, which affected its market performance and the *sabutan* production weaving industry. She informed the CFO that the constant change of leadership in the center impaired the proper turnover of responsibilities and the endorsement of financial statements. She added that SKMB members, after gaining training and experience, left the center to put up their own weaving



businesses. The members, on the other hand, cited problems with the weaving equipment. Every time a weaving machine broke down, it affected the production and delivery of orders. The members also raised concerns about the quality and competitiveness of the finished products compared to those of other production units that utilized state-of-the art equipment. They cited the aging and malfunctioning sewing machines. The CFO is currently coordinating with the Fth to address these problems.

Despite these difficulties, SKMB expanded its operations after opening a trading booth at the Baler Pasalubong Center and participated in a number of trade fairs in 2008. At present, the center provides work and income to families in Baler and nearby municipalities by outsourcing some of their products to accommodate bulk orders.

The rehabilitation of Baler is a manifestation of the grace, resilience and industry of the Balerianos. The production center is also a metaphor of sorts — it weaves not only grass and *sabutan*, but also hopes and dreams for a better and greater town.



## Fishing Livelihood Project

Date started	2005
Type of project	Livelihood
Location of projects	Barangay Libjo, Infanta, Quezon
Status	Ongoing
Donor	Feed the Hungry, Inc.
Partners	Provincial Government of Quezon Municipal Government of Infanta



### Origins

Infanta, one of the oldest towns in the province of Quezon, is the gateway to the Pacific Ocean. Given its rich marine life, the majority of its population depends on fishing and aquaculture for a living. However, it is also vulnerable to typhoons and tsunamis.

Two tropical cyclones hit the town one after the other in 2004. These were followed by flashfloods that devastated its agricultural fields and marine industries and destroyed 14 of Infanta's 36 barangays.



*Motor boats, fishing supplies and equipment donated by the Feed the Hungry, Inc.*





The disasters cost Infanta roughly PHP103.3 million worth of damages in agriculture and PHP300 million in infrastructure, including public utilities and facilities. In addition, 4,266 houses were destroyed, 9,256 families were displaced and 176 people were killed.

### **Project implementation**

The government of Infanta immediately launched the “Bangon Infanta, Bangon” (Rise Infanta, Rise) program to rehabilitate the whole municipality and revive its industries, particularly aquaculture. The program embarked on an ambitious eight-fold restoration program of infrastructure, health, psycho-social, agriculture, environmental protection, education, housing and disaster preparedness sectors. The program required the help of the Quezon provincial government, several national government agencies, international organizations and Filipino associations overseas.

The Feed the Hungry, Inc., (FtH) was quick to respond to the challenge of rehabilitating the town. In view of the community’s reliance on fishing and aquaculture, the FtH donated motor boats, fishing supplies and equipment such as motor engines, basins and fishnets. These were distributed to the community through a donation amounting to PHP1,080,000 (US\$20,000). Among the beneficiaries were fisherfolk belonging to three organizations in six barangays. The beneficiaries involved more than 700 families. The beneficiaries, all registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission, were:

- (1) Samahan ng mga Mangingisda sa Libjo (SAMALIB), a group composed of about 100 Barangay Libjo residents whose livelihood depends mainly on fishing. SAMALIB was established in the early 1990s. It became inactive for several years but decided to reorganize to address the damage caused by the two typhoons;
- (2) Biyayang Handog ng Dalampasigan (BIHADA), which is composed of about 400 families residing in Barangay Dinahican, Binulusan, Abiawin, Libjo, Boboin and Pinaglapatan. BIHADA was established 1985 by fishermen involved

in *bangus* fry-gathering. The group fights illegal fishing activities in Infanta; and

- (3) Pinagbuklod na Maliliit na Mangingisda ng Dinahican (PIMAMADI), which has a membership of about 207 fisherfolks in several barangays in Infanta. It is involved in various civic activities, including safeguarding the ocean against illegal fishing.

In compliance with the Memorandum of Agreement signed on 2 December 2005, the grant was divided into three parts. BIHADA received PHP136,865 worth of fishing equipment, SAMALIB had a share of PHP529,910 which included motor engines and fishing boats, and PHP413,100 was donated to PIMAMADI. The supplies and equipment were purchased by the Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO) and the Infanta local government, and turned over to the representatives of the fisherfolk organizations.

#### **Problems and future prospects**

Initially, there were problems in scheduling the rotation of fishnets, motorboats and other supplies. The local government addressed this confusion by developing guidelines on the timely and proper distribution of the donated items.

To support the project, the municipality of Infanta was tasked to monitor and evaluate the project and submit to the CFO regular status reports, including financial reports, official receipts, photographs and other details. The monitoring and reporting system kept things transparent and helped detect problems encountered and identify solutions.

Overall, the donation of fishing equipment and supplies contributed to restoring livelihood and rebuilding lives.



## Micro Lending to Women Broom-Makers

Date project started	2007
Type of project	Micro lending
Location of project	Barangay Paknaan, Mandaue City, Cebu
Status	Ongoing
Donor	Feed the Hungry Inc.
Partners	Options Inc. Luna Lower Tamatis Neighborhood Association Women Broom-Makers Zone Ube Women's Association



### Origins

Broom-making is a source of income for some of the poor families in Mandaue City. However, their earnings are lessened because business-people buy their products at cheap prices. Options Inc., a non-government organization based in the city, wanted to help the broom-makers to earn more, increase their production, and expand their market.



*Preparing the brooms before distribution to the market*



In October 2007, Options Inc. launched the broom-making project in Barangay Paknaan, Mandaue City. It discussed its plans with 25 female participants belonging to the Luna Lower Tamatis Neighborhood Association Incorporated (LLTNA) in the said barangay.

### Implementation



*Broom-making can be a home-based production*

The broom-making project involves four actors: the Feed the Hungry (FtH), Inc., which provided the funds; the Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO), which received the funds; Options Inc., the project implementer; and the members of the LLTNA, the intended beneficiaries. CFO provided Options Inc. with a capital of PHP50,000, drawing 1.25 percent interest per quarter, payable in three years. Options Inc., in turn, loaned the amount to LLTNA with two percent interest.

Each beneficiary is given PHP1,000 as starting capital. The brooms produced by the association's members are then passed onto the treasurer for the centralized distribution to buyers. Prices vary depending on the size of the broom; some cost PHP10, others PHP20 and PHP50.

Options Inc. also assisted in marketing the brooms. For example, it invited the Colegio de la Immaculada Concepcion to conduct exposure trips for their students in the community. After the field exposure, the school



*Buli, the raw material used in making brooms*



purchased enough brooms from the association for its whole year's needs. There are also on-going negotiations with the city government of Mandaue to purchase brooms from the LLTNA.

**Challenges and future prospects**

Finding regular buyers was and remains to be a challenge. In addition, the raw material for broom-making, *buli*, which used to be abundant in Paknaan prior to the reclamation project, now has to be sourced from Talamban and Compostela.

As the LLTNA project was winding down, in December 2008, Options Inc. started a similar project with two other women's organizations in the community — the Women Broom-Makers and the Zone Ube Women's Association. The LLTNA project ended in December 2009. Meanwhile, the two new recipients continue to produce brooms and they have paid part of the loan to the donor.





## Payaw Fishing Method

Date started	2008
Type of project	Livelihood
Location of projects	Municipalities of Makato and Numancia, Aklan
Status	Ongoing
Donors	Aklanons of California Feed the Hungry, Inc.
Partner	Rotary Club of Metro Kalibo

### Origins

Illegal fishing methods, adverse environmental conditions and the lack of seasonal restrictions on fishing have caused the depletion of the fish population along the coastlines of the Municipalities of Makato and Numancia in Aklan. Due to this condition, marginal fishermen (e.g., gill net, hook and line users) have to venture further out to the dangerous Jintololo Channel without any assurance of being able to locate, much less catch fish. Fishing is usually done at dawn or late at night when motorboat lanterns will cause fish to gather.

On an ordinary day, a fisherman may catch around five kilos of fish, often of the smaller variety like sardines (*tamban*), mackerel (*hasa-hasa*), galunggong (*round scads*) and bullet tuna (*aloy*). On a lucky day, a fisherman could catch bigger fish like frigate tuna (*kanturayan*), yellow fin tuna (*panit*) and Spanish mackerel (*tangige*)



and take home more than ten kilos. The catch will then be sold at a wholesale price in the town market in Numancia. The catch from the sea, which normally translates to some PHP100-200, will have to be augmented by other sources of income like *baklag* freshwater shrimp gathering, subsistence farming and other forms of manual labor. Fresh water shrimp catch has dwindled as well due to silting, mangrove farming and water depletion.

To address the issue of fish shortage, the fisherfolk of barangays Baybay and Alibangon in Makato, and Navitas in Numancia, formed the Baybay Multi-Purpose Cooperative with the help of the Rotary Club of Metro Kalibo (RCMK). The RCMK and members of the cooperative planned to apply a local but near-abandoned practice of *payaw* fishing to help assure a continued supply of fish and regular source of income. A *payaw* is an artificially introduced fish shelter and fish aggregating device. It is composed of natural debris (e.g., twigs, palm fronds, wood) suspended through large buoys in the mid-depth of the coastal water and anchored by a concrete ballast. The *payaw* will attract both small and large varieties of fish while following the natural food chain. With the *payaw*, fishermen engaged in marginal methods will no longer have to venture far out into the sea. They just have to go to their buoys.

### Implementation

The first five *payaw* castings were completed in 2008. They were initially funded by the RCMK and a partner organization, and were cast along the coast of Barangay Baybay. The castings were technically supervised by the RCMK and the Bureau of Fisheries. The *payaws* were placed about 500 meters from the shoreline and spaced at about 500 meters from each other. The management of the *payaws* was delegated to the cooperative and the barangay governments. Seeing the success of the first *payaws*, the RCMK applied for a grant from the Feed the Hungry, Inc. (FtH) to fund the preparation and the casting of additional *payaws*. In March 2009, the FtH, through the *Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino* program of the Commission on Filipinos Overseas, released PHP125,000 to fund 10 more *payaws*.

In just a few months after its implementation, the entire *payaw* project became a huge success. It won the “2008-2009 Best Community Service Project, Outstanding Community Service and Most Outstanding Community Service Project” of the Rotary International District 3850.

As of April 2010, there are 40 *payaws*, with the number still growing. The goal is to install a total of 50 *payaws* by the end of 2010. Additional *payaws* were funded through the savings of the cooperative members. About 80 families (each with about 10-15 members) from barangays Baybay and Alibangon in Makato, and Navitas in Numancia are benefiting from the *payaws*.

A *payaw* is shared by three to five members. Each yields some 10-20 or more kilos of fish per day on a regular basis, giving marginal fishermen an assured daily income of no less than PHP300, less risk while at sea and more time with their families. It is expected that in a few years, fish migration through the Jintololo Channel will develop a diversion to the *payaws* along the coast of Makato and Numancia resulting in greater fish catch.

With the *payaw* project, the beneficiary localities learned to practice non-destructive fishing, protect and preserve the sustainability of the coastal marine environment, help ensure abundant fish supply and enhance local food security.

### **Challenges and Prospects**

Illegal fishing remains to be the biggest challenge for the *payaw* project members. In the first quarter of 2010, purse seine fishing vessels were spotted operating at nighttime near the *payaws*. The matter has been reported to the local coast guard. Local marginal fishermen are hesitant to apprehend the illegal fishing vessels as their crew might be armed.

At present, the focus of the project stakeholders is to reach the target of 50 *payaws* by the end of 2010. In the near future, and when the project earns enough income, *payaw* fisherfolk may branch out to fish processing and other related activities.



# MAPID Chronicles





# Glad Tidings: Migration and Development in the Philippines

Maruja M.B. Asis  
Scalabrini Migration Center

The entries in this section were gathered from the research conducted by MAPID-Philippines in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao in the second half of 2008. The members of the research team had to start from scratch in finding examples of migrant giving, businesses launched by migrants, and partnerships or cooperation between overseas Filipinos and local institutions because there were no recorded accounts of these cases. Thus, the researchers had to do a lot of asking around, following up leads, and collecting further information on selected cases which offer insights and lessons for future reference. Despite the information vacuum and the time constraint, the research was able to establish a range of development-related initiatives involving Filipino migrants and local institutions. In part, local government units did not have information on international migration because there were no offices or personnel tasked to monitor international migration-related concerns. At the time of data collection in 2008, there were just a handful of local government units which had a migration desk or a staff dedicated to migration concerns. The research, in fact, raised the awareness of respondents in the regions and local government units about the possible contributions of international migration



to their regional or local development prospects. Later, participants in the capacity-building programs in the Philippines realized the need to develop a migration database, which they saw as a step in integrating international migration in local or regional development plans.

The examples discovered by MAPID-Philippines confirm that the *bayanihan* (cooperation or acting together to achieve an objective) spirit of overseas Filipinos has not been extinguished by distance or time. This was reinforced by the Filipino migrants who attended the capacity-building programs in Italy and Spain, many of whom expressed the desire to give back something or to share their blessings to their home country. All the donors profiled in the book were moved to improve the welfare of fellow Filipinos or their home communities. Usually, a visit to one's hometown serves as an eye-opener to community needs. The seed for the Ormoc City E-Learning and Research Center was planted when Mr. Manuel Baylon, a US-based Filipino, visited his hometown and he observed that public school children did not have access to learning opportunities offered by the Internet. Likewise, Dr. Christopher Guerrero was motivated to start a medical mission in Nueva Vizcaya when he noted the lack of access to medical services of poor families in his home province. The destruction wrought by disasters is also powerful driver of compassion. The Best for Women Program in Albay was one of the programs that were set into motion after Albay was hit by a super typhoon in 2006.

Similar to the patterns of giving in the LINKAPIL program, the MAPID cases of migrant giving are also inclined towards health, small infrastructure development and scholarship projects. Only one case of knowledge transfer, the experience of a *balik* (return)-scientist participant under the Department of Science and Technology's *Balik-Scientist Program*, was noted. Knowledge transfer or skills transfer is one form of migrant giving which can be further explored so that the country may maximize from the possibilities of brain gain.

Except for the Ormoc City E-Learning Center, which is supported by an individual donor, the other examples of migrant philanthropy are supported by migrants' associations. While hometown associations (and similar place-based associations, including regional and national



groups) are fairly common, overseas Filipino associations also include alumni, professional and church-based groupings. Thanks to the Internet, transnational hometown associations are now possible – the Association of Bansaleños Worldwide is an example of a hometown association formed in cyberspace.

Eight businesses established by migrants, ranging from small ventures to major investments and from local to transnational companies, are described in the book. In particular, MAPID looked for businesses other than variety stores or jeepney/tricycle enterprise, the usual businesses migrants engage in. The longest running business documented by MAPID is Kamiseta ni Julio, a family-owned clothing company started in the 1980s by Mr. Julio Lozada upon his return from Saudi Arabia. A former seafarer, Mr. Norberto Bajenting, started a transport business, which he later transformed into a transport cooperative. The inspiring story of Ms. Myrna Padilla, a former domestic worker-turned-president of MyndConsulting, an ICT company, is an example of how hard work, continuing education, resourcefulness and drive have made it possible for her to become her own boss. A returnee who had many years of ICT experience overseas, Mr. Benjamin Custorio, founded a medical transcription school and outsourcing company upon his return to the Philippines. A former nurse in Saudi Arabia, Ms. Teresita Perez Villanueva, established a cosmetics company which is now trying to break into the international market. The hospitality sector, i.e., resort or hotel, seems to be emerging as the business of choice of migrants. The Bohol Bee Farm and the Macagang Business Center, Hotel and Resort are among the successful hotel/resort businesses recorded by MAPID-Philippines. Investing in apartments or commercial buildings which can be rented out is also popular among migrants. Mr. Miguel Bolos built a mall in his hometown, not just to collect rentals, but also to revive the local economy. The businesses started by former migrants or overseas Filipinos share one thing in common — their businesses were not just profit-seeking investments. All had other purposes in mind — to generate jobs, to build human capital, to provide better services and facilities, and so forth. The Bohol Bee Farm also demonstrates care for the environment. As employers, Ms. Wallace of Bohol Bee Farm and Ms. Padilla of MyndConsulting instill work ethic and pride in their work among their staff. Mr. Bolos and Ms. Padilla,

who were active in the communities of overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) when they were abroad, continue to be involved in advocacies and programs advancing OFW issues.

One of the significant findings of the MAPID-Philippines research is the discovery that local institutions and beneficiaries contribute to the projects supported by overseas Filipinos. The counterparting may not be similar to Mexico's *tres por uno* program,<sup>1</sup> but it cannot be said that local institutions are simply at the receiving end of donations from overseas Filipinos. The cases highlighting models of cooperation reveal contributions by the local governments of Naguilian, Ormoc City and Magsaysay in the form of funds, land, office space and personnel. The initiative of local chief executives to engage with overseas Filipinos has been mentioned in a number of cases. The local government of Morong sought the cooperation of the Morong Balikbayan Association to underwrite several infrastructure projects in the community. To ensure the continuing support of the city government of Ormoc to the E-Learning and Research Center, the city government passed a resolution for this purpose.

Mention must also be made of the efforts by the private sector in giving back to the migrant community. For example, Robinson's Mall in Imus and Dasmariñas, Cavite (a major sending province of OFWs), cooperated with the local government in putting a Pamilya Center (Family Center), where OFWs and their families can avail of services and information, including access to livelihood training programs.

Having a local partner is important in the planning, implementation, monitoring and improvement of local development projects in the Philippines. The Association of Bansaleños Worldwide and the Igorot Global Association, organizations whose members are located in different countries, established a local counterpart to carry out and manage their projects. The Damayang Pilipino sa Nederland was able to forge links with various stakeholders in the community – the municipal

<sup>1</sup> Under this scheme, for every dollar donated by a migrants' association for a project, each of the municipal, state and federal governments donates a dollar. The *tres por uno* has evolved into a *cuatro por uno* program, with the participation of the private sector.



## Introduction: MAPID Chronicles

government, a local NGO and community-based people's organizations – an approach which may enhance ownership of the project and which offers an opportunity for social learning. The Best for Woman Program in Albay also had multiple stakeholders. Other cases documented by MAPID-Philippines (which are not included in the book) partnered with universities (especially when the overseas counterpart is an alumni association), civic organizations, media, church institutions and NGOs.

The stories do not end here. With the concerted efforts of all the stakeholders, the Philippines can find fresh approaches to benefit from international migration with the least cost to migrants, their families and the country as a whole.





## Medical Mission in Nueva Vizcaya

Date project started	1994
Type of project	Medical mission
Location of project	Nueva Vizcaya
Status	Ongoing
Partners	Dr. Christopher Guerrero and other US-based medical practitioners Provincial Government of Nueva Viscaya Municipal Health Office Rural Health Unit St. Mary University

### Origins

In 1993, Dr. Christopher Guerrero, a family doctor based at the University of Illinois in Chicago, returned to Nueva Vizcaya for a vacation. He met with then-Governor Rodolfo Agbayani, who showed him the state of health services in the province. Moved by the lack of medical facilities in the remote areas of the province and the inability of poor residents in mountain areas to send their children to school, he stated his desire to help his home province.



*US-based medical practitioners during their medical mission in Kayapa, Nueva Viscaya.*

The following year, Dr. Guerrero spearheaded what would become an annual medical mission that also involved other medical practitioners based in the United States. Agbayani, who was governor of the province up to 2004, supported the mission.

Over the years, Dr. Guerrero and his team would come home to offer free medical services and donate medicines and medical equipment to needy communities. At the time of data collection, the most recent medical mission was in February 2008, when a team of 25 foreign doctors and nurses arrived for the mission. They treated about a thousand patients in the municipality of Kayapa.

Dr. Guerrero's experience in organizing medical missions to his home province inspired him to engage in a similar project outside the Philippines. He co-founded the Global Medical Foundation (GMF), a non-profit organization that conducts medical missions in rural communities in different countries.

### **Implementation**

The implementation of the two-day medical mission in February 2008 is the result of close cooperation between overseas and local partners. The Rural Health Unit (RHU), the Municipal Health Office (MHO) led by Dr. Bernardo Chua, and the students of the School of Health Sciences of St Mary University assisted in the undertaking. The GMF brought medical supplies, the local government provided food, and local doctors continued the unfinished work on the third day. The provincial hospital, Lieutenant Tidang Memorial Hospital (LTMH), made its facilities and resources available to support the GMF. The GMF also donated cash and medical supplies to the LTMH.

### **Challenges and future prospects**

The motivation of Dr. Guerrero to help his home province was a major factor in starting the medical mission. Besides this, he also has a scholarship program to support students coming from low-income families. When he comes home, he gives lectures to senior nursing students in St. Mary University. The support of Governor Agbayani was also critical in sustaining the program. This suggests that, should a



## Migrant Giving

new administration have other priorities, the program may be affected. The involvement of other local institutions – the Municipal Health Office, the Rural Health Unit and the School of Health Sciences of St. Mary University – helps ensure that health care and monitoring are provided after the GMF has left.

Questions about sustainability, leadership, institutional linkages and the need to address the province’s health issues need further reflection.





## Morong Balikbayan Association

Date project started	1997
Type of projects	Community infrastructure
Location of projects	Morong, Rizal
Donor	Morong Balikbayan Association
Partner	Municipal Government of Morong

### Origins

Morong, Rizal has seen many of its residents leave to find better opportunities elsewhere. International migration has become so common that going abroad has become a way of life in the community. Former residents, however, have not forgotten their roots.



*Morong Balikbayan Association Marker, Morong*

In 1996, during a visit of former residents from the US, Australia and Canada, then-Mayor Jorge Bernardo suggested forming an organization of overseas-based Morongueños. The idea was realized with the formation of the Morong Balikbayan Association in 1997. The association’s vision is “to preserve the Morong cultural traditions and heritage with a strong commitment to community development, the





*Gazebo located inside Balikpapan Park, Morong*

implementation of civic, social, health and educational programs for Morongueños” ([www.mbassninc.com](http://www.mbassninc.com)). Since then, the association has linked with the local government on various community infrastructure projects.

### **Cooperation with the local government**

The first project the association took up was the construction of the Balikpapan Hall. In 1997, Mayor Bernardo approached the association regarding a plan to honor Morongueño immigrants by designating a part of the municipal hall to be the Balikpapan Hall. This proposal took the form of a resolution passed by the municipal council (Balikbayan Hall – SB Res. No. 90.S.1996). The association raised funds for the project and an agreement was formally signed between Mayor Bernardo, representing the local government, and Mr. Monico Mateo, president of the association. Dedicated in April 2000, the hall is a concrete expression of the commitment of Morongueños — wherever they may be — to support their town.

The association helped obtain funding for other projects, which were proposed by the municipal government. These were the construction of Balikpapan Park (Balikbayan Park — SB Res. No. 48. S. 2001), whose construction began in 2001 and was inaugurated in April 2004; the construction of landmarks and welcome arches and the donation of an ambulance (2005).



*Entrance to Balikpapan Park, Morong*



### **Future prospects**

This case study shows a local government actively seeking links with its overseas-based residents. The formation of the association was an idea of a former mayor, and over the years, the local government has approached the association with project proposals. In some instances, these proposals were in the form of a resolution passed by the municipal government. The local government has duly acknowledged the support provided by the association. In one instance, the Province of Rizal, under Governor Casimiro Ynares, funded the construction of a boardwalk along the river as the province's contribution to the Balibayan Park. It appears that changes in government officials have not affected the cooperation between the association and the local government. If these good practices continue, the cooperation between the association and the community of Morong, Rizal is likely to be an enduring one. Hopefully, the next generation of leaders and members of the association will be as equally committed to maintain their links and support to the hometown of their forebears.





## The Best for Women Program

Date project started	ca. 2007
Type of project	Empowerment of women
Location of project	Barangay Anislag, Daraga, Albay
Status	Early stage completed; ongoing
Partners	Albay Services Group, Inc. (ASG) Soroptimist International Eastwood City (SIEC) Soroptimist International for Albay (SIAM) Habitat for Humanity Municipal Government of Daraga

### Origins

Following the destruction brought about by Typhoon Reming in 2006, a US-based association of former Albay residents and local NGOs banded together to carry out a comprehensive project aimed at improving the lives of families in the Anislag resettlement area in Daraga, Albay. The cooperating groups are the Soroptimist International Eastwood City (SIEC), the Soroptimist International for Albay Magayon (SIAM), and the US-based Albay Services Group, Inc. (ASG).



*The Anislag Livelihood Center, also known as Village Multi-Purpose Community Center*

The idea for the project started when Ms. Delia Intia, a retiree and member of ASG and SIEC, returned to the Philippines to discuss ASG's intention to support livelihood programs in Anislag.

### **Implementation**

Conceived as a three-year development intervention, the Best for Women Program aims to promote social justice, equity and empowerment of women by fostering their economic independence and greater participation in local governance. To meet this goal, the program consists of the following components: capacity building (which includes skills training, entrepreneurship and financial literacy), awareness raising on the rights of women and children, and advocacy to prevent violence against women and children and preventing trafficking.

The construction of a 60-square meter Village Multi-Purpose Center was completed on 26 July 2008. Next, various consultations were conducted in the community to identify project priorities and strategies. Since then, the program has conducted educational campaigns on violence against women and anti-trafficking, set up a training program for fashion accessories and making virgin coconut oil, and put up support mechanisms for women and girls with cancer.

The implementation of these activities involved the cooperation of the three key organizations, other NGOs, the local government and relevant national and regional government agencies. The municipal government, through the efforts of Mayor Cicero Triunfante, acquired a lot in Anislag, while the National Housing Authority identified the site and provided specifications for the construction of the center. The ASG, for its part, provided the funds (US\$5,000), the Habitat for Humanity was responsible for the construction of the center, and SIAM was designated to manage the facility and livelihood projects. The cooperation of the different players and stakeholders was formalized by the signing of a memorandum of agreement.

To operate the center, SIAM intends to seek the support of other institutions: the local government for the payment of electricity and water, Department of Labor and Employment, the Department of



Social Welfare and Development, the Technical Skills Development Authority, and ABS-CBN Bayan Academy for the conduct of various training programs. For the anti-violence against women component, SIAM plans to work with the Bicol Small Business Institute, Inc. (BSBI). SIAM hopes to set up the Crisis and Rehabilitation Center for victims of violence against women in the BSBI building, and tap the expertise of doctors and psychiatrists.

### **Future prospects**

This initiative demonstrates the cooperation of overseas Filipinos, the local government unit and local NGOs and institutions. The idea to assist the families affected by Typhoon Reming came from overseas Filipinos and this was elaborated by the inputs of local NGOs and the beneficiary community. One good practice that can be learned from this experience is the drafting of memoranda of agreement among cooperating institutions. Strategies for implementing the capacity-building programs have been identified. At some point, the program will have to consider the next steps after the women and their families have been provided with skills.





## Igorot Global Organization

Date project started	2000
Type of projects	Educational funds, scholarships
Location of projects	Cordillera Administrative Region
Status	Ongoing
Donor	Igorot Global Organization

### Origins



The Igorot Global Organization (IGO) is a non-profit organization composed of individuals from the United States, Canada, Europe, Australia, New Zealand, Middle East and many parts of Asia who trace their roots to the Cordillera Region.



The mission of the IGO is “to preserve for future generations the diverse heritage of the Igorot people and proactively promote their upliftment, advancement and interest and those of related people” ([www.igorotglobal.org/about](http://www.igorotglobal.org/about)). The idea for the formation of the IGO was conceived during the first Igorot International Consultation (IIC) held in West Covina, California in 1995. It was endorsed at the second IIC held in Lexington, West Virginia in 1997 and was formally organized at the third IIC which was conducted in Baguio City, Philippines in 2000. The IIC brings together members from different parts of the world to discuss issues of concern and interest to Igorots in the diaspora and at home.

### Project implementation

One of the main ongoing projects of the IGO is the Igorot Scholarship Program (ISP). This initiative has three components.





The first component is scholarship support for qualified college students. The scholarship covers tuition fees and allowance for books and school supplies. The program restricts the assistance to “economically challenged fourth-year Igorot students who have top academic credentials and are interested in attending a local Cordilleran post secondary institution.” The applicants are ranked according to academic performance, financial need, proof of documentation such as parents’ income tax returns, and principal’s endorsement. The ISP provides support for qualified students in the natural sciences, social sciences, business, technology, language and literature. As of October 2008, the ISP has 16 scholars coming from different provinces in the Cordillera. The MacLiffe Fund, a private fund earmarked for Bontoc scholars, is also administered by the IGO.

The second component pertains to augmenting school facilities and the educational resources of Cordilleran colleges, universities and other post-secondary institutions. The third component deals with supporting research in Igorot history, culture, education, economy and government.

The IGO is also involved in other projects like saving the rice terraces, embarking on a solar energy project in a community in Kalinga, and conducting medical missions.

Members of the group support these projects by making cash tax deductible donations or by contributing their time and efforts to program implementation.

### **Future prospects**

The IIC serves not only to reunite and reconnect Igorots with each other, but also provides a venue to discuss the conditions in the origin communities and how IGO may contribute to support socio-economic, health and environmental programs. Equally important are cultural programs and activities, especially for the younger generations.



## Associations of Overseas Bansaleños

Date project started	2006
Type of projects	Education, livelihood
Location of projects	Bansalan, Davao del Sur
Status	Ongoing
Donors	Association of Bansaleños Worldwide (ABW) Bansalan-American Incorporated (BANAMI) Conrado H. Ariaga Foundation, Inc. (CHAFI)



### Origins

In recent years, Bansaleños abroad have formed associations which have, as one of their purposes, contributed to the development of their hometown. One such group is the Association of Bansaleños Worldwide (ABW). It was started when Edwin Bibera posted some photos on the Internet featuring Bansalan landmarks. The postings attracted Bansaleños in many parts of the world, leading to the creation of an online portal that gave birth to the ABW. The cyber community has promoted friendship among its members and cemented a shared interest to promote the development of their beloved hometown:

The dream is there: to share our blessings and to give back to the town of our youth. Wherever we are in the world, we still look back to that little town which is the cradle of our birth, a place for our youth and a part of our lives ([www.bansalan.com/abw/index.htm](http://www.bansalan.com/abw/index.htm)).





In December 2007, the ABW held a grand reunion in Bansalan and invited several local government officials. In cooperation with the local government, the group has since supported various projects – distributing free medicines, conducting medical missions, funding scholarship programs, sponsoring skills training programs, improving public facilities and promoting environmental protection. Also, other hometown associations emerged with the same intention of supporting the development of Bansalan. Apart from forming associations, individual Bansalenos also support community projects, among others being the renovation of the ABC Gym, a site of many memories.

### **Implementation of projects**

The ABW established a home-based chapter that coordinates the projects in Bansalan. For example, the implementation of ABW's "Give Back: Literacy Project" involves three ABW members, a school principal and a barangay council member and coordinator, each. The screening committee is in charge of selecting the grantees, evaluating scholars at the end of every school year, assessing the project, and making recommendations to improve the program. The literacy project supports 91 elementary pupils and two high school students enrolled in various schools in the municipality. Elementary pupils are granted PHP500-600 miscellaneous in fees per year while high school students are given PHP5,000 per year and high school uniforms.

The ABW also implemented a similar project in Dugong Elementary School in North Cotabato, in cooperation with another migrants' association, the Damayang Pilipino sa Nederland.

### **Future prospects**

Some members of the ABW broke away from the group and formed the Bansalan-American Incorporated (BANAMI). Other BANAMI members later split to found the Conrado H. Ariaga Foundation, Inc. (CHAFI). Both groups were established in 2006.

BANAMI offers scholarships, provides textbooks and organizes medical and dental missions. CHAFI also has educational programs and assists poor communities through "Daang Palengke, Bansalan." It also introduced "Gulayan sa Masa," a green revolution program aimed at providing extra income to poor families.



## Balik-Scientist Program

Date project started	1975; re-launched in 2007
Type of projects	Knowledge and skills transfer
Location of projects	Nationwide
Status	Ongoing
Implementing agency	Department of Science and Technology

### Origins

The Balik-Scientist program (BSP) was initially launched by the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) in 1975. It “aims to strengthen the scientific and technological human resources of academic, public and private institutions in order to accelerate the flow of technologies and stimulate the development of new or strategically important technologies that are vital to national development and progress.” Science and technology experts who are Filipinos, or foreigners of Filipino descent, are encouraged to return or reside in the Philippines and share their expertise in order to accelerate the scientific, agro-industrial and economic development of the country” (DOST Administrative Order No. 005 of 2007). The implementing rules and regulations of the program were eventually revised, paving the way for its re-launch in 2007.

Scientists based abroad who are interested in joining the program may choose to participate either through the Long-Term (a two- to three-year stint) or Short-term Programs (at least one month). Applicants are asked to submit all requirements to the DOST. They are free to choose their host institution for the duration of the program.





### **Dr. Norberto Ison, a “Balik-Scientist”**

Dr. Norberto Ison was one of the BSP recipients in 2008. He served as visiting professor at the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science, University of the Philippines Baguio (UPB) from June-October 2008. He was also a BSP recipient 30 years ago, having taught at the University of the Philippines Los Baños, where he set up the university’s computing services.

Dr. Ison is a graduate of the University of the Philippines Los Baños and the University of the Philippines Statistical Center, where he completed a Bachelor’s Degree in Agriculture and a Master’s Degree in Statistics, respectively. He obtained his doctoral degree in Statistics at Kansas State University and did his post-doctorate work at the University of Waterloo in Canada. Over the past 30 years, he has worked with various academic institutions in the US and Canada. He was connected with the University of California at Berkeley, where he was manager of the Departmental Onsite Computing Services while teaching statistics courses part-time when he decided to return to the Philippines under the BSP program.

The BSP provided Dr. Ison’s airfare and monthly stipend for three months. However, he used his personal funds for the rest of his one semester-stay at UPB. In return, UPB provided Dr. Ison free housing at the faculty apartment building during his first two weeks in Baguio, along with office space at the faculty room during the semester. Dr. Ison updated BSP officials on his work at UPB by e-mail and telephone. The BSP arranged a seminar presentation of his final report at UPB.

During his stay at UPB, he chose to teach undergraduate courses (Math 101 and Biology 101) and set up Web sites for his classes to ensure that the course materials were readily available to the students through the Internet ([www.google.com/a/ntison.org/math-101](http://www.google.com/a/ntison.org/math-101) and [google.com/a/ntison.org/bio-101](http://google.com/a/ntison.org/bio-101)). His suggestions to put up a wireless access point in the campus library and put up online calendars on Google for Math and Computer Science have also been taken up. With further improvements and investments by the university, these systems were created. In his terminal report, he recommended two major innovations for the consideration of the UPB College of Science faculty



and administration: (1) the formation of a statistical group on campus to be made up of faculty from the various departments; and (2) the formation of a computing support group on campus to expand the current computing support staff, including exploring partnerships with computer vendors and other institutions in developing the campus' computing infrastructure and services.

Dr. Ison also took the time to visit other campuses of the University of the Philippines, including Los Baños, Diliman and Cebu, to assess the status of their computing services. At the time of interview in 2008, he shared his plans to return to the Philippines in 2009 for a longer engagement. The University of the Philippines Visayas and Benguet State University have expressed interest in hosting him.

### **Future Prospects**

UPB's recognition of Dr. Ison's expertise and potential contributions to the university and its students, its openness to accept special arrangements and its willingness to implement new systems contributed to the success of the program.

Dr. Ison sees the need to expand and improve information dissemination on the BSP to boost the participation of Filipinos abroad. He stated that the program is "both challenging and rewarding for the professional and a benefit to the institution that he/she will be associated with." Furthermore, Dr. Ison identified science and technology as the prime areas where expertise from abroad can benefit the Philippines the most. He added business, specifically the area of entrepreneurship, as a field to be explored. In the longer term, he sees the BSP as a relevant avenue not only for the transfer of knowledge and skills, but also to gain exposure to "new ideas and new ways of doing things, especially in the global economy."



## Bohol Bee Farm

Date project started	1998
Type of business	Organic farming, bed and breakfast, restaurant, souvenir shop
Location of business	Davis, Panglao Island, Bohol
Status	Ongoing
Investor	Ms. Vicky Wallace (returnee from the US)

### Origins

The bloodline of our country is agriculture. We should go back to the basics because this is an agricultural country

– Ms. Vicky Wallace

Ms. Vicky Wallace, a native of Tultugan, Calape, Bohol, went to the US in 1980 when she married a US national. She stayed there for eight years during which time she was a fulltime homemaker. During her free time, she attended art classes. When her husband died of cancer, she returned to the Philippines, studied nursing and went back to the US



*Bohol Bee Farm is located in Barangay Dao, Davis, Panglao Island, Bohol.*



*Bohol Bee Farm has a restaurant serving organic food and offers bed and breakfast facilities.*

and worked there between 1993 and 1995. While she was in the US, she longed to go back to Bohol someday.

In 1995, she and her two children returned to Dauis, Bohol. She wanted to raise her children in the Philippines because she wanted them to imbibe Filipino values. She started organic farming using basic composting to grow vegetables. She used part of her household budget as capital and had four workers to start the Bohol Bee Farm in 1998.

### Implementation and developments

In 2000, the Bohol Bee Farm expanded to include a restaurant, and in 2003, a bed and breakfast was added. She also started a livelihood project for women in the community. The women received training in weaving raffia curtains and bag making. The products are sold in the Bee Farm's shop. The raffia weaving and bag making livelihood project not only generates income for the women workers. Ms. Wallace

also encourages them to value their work and to take pride in their creations.



*Ms. Wallace started organic farming in 1998.*



*Crafts created by women workers.*



*Organic food products sold at Bohol Bee Farm.*

The Bohol Bee Farm has come a long way from its modest beginnings. The seed money sourced from the household budget has grown into a successful enterprise worth about PHP10-15 million. From four workers, it now has 128 employees.

### **Future prospects**

Initially, her family and friends were skeptical of her plan to go into organic farming. Her persistence, frugality and passion turned things around. As she put it, "It is all about hard work. I very much enjoy gardening and baking. I didn't have much when I started here, but I have my enthusiasm and passion, and that kept me going." These are the same values that she cultivates among her employees. She introduced a policy of pooling the tips so that all workers will have the same opportunity to earn extra income. The amount collected is deposited in the bank. In times of need, employees may withdraw money without paying interest.

In sum, the Bohol Bee Farm's success cannot be measured by economic criteria alone. It was founded on hard work, caring for workers and caring for the environment. No wonder the venture has prospered and it will not be surprising that it will continue to do so in the future.



## Macagang Business Center, Hotel and Resort

Date project started	1999 (built); 2000 (opened); 2007 (expanded)
Type of business	Business center, hotel and resort complex
Location of business	Barangay San Antonio, Nabua, Camarines Sur
Status	Ongoing
Investor	Mr. Florenio P. Regala (Filipino-American electronics engineer)

### Origins

As a child growing up in Nabua, Camarines Sur, Florenio P. Regala worked as a busboy and helper in the family-run “Carinderya Caviteña.” He furthered his education, got married, raised a family and immigrated to the United States. His is a classic story of an immigrant who struggled in his early years in the US but worked his way up to found his own company. He developed and invented four satellite communication antennas for shipboard, airborne, and vehicular applications, all of which are registered with the US Patent Office.

His many years of residence in the US did not diminish his regard for his hometown. In his visits, he mused that Nabua had not changed much since he left. But he noted the absence of facilities for conferences or social events. He decided to invest in a business center, hotel and resort complex as a way of helping his hometown and, in the process, providing local residents and visitors with modern and excellent facilities. Prior to making this investment, he had been an ardent supporter of many community projects. He has also encour-



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*The Macagang Business Center, Hotel and Resort is a first-class tourist facility equipped with luxury rooms, a function room with a seating capacity of 1,000 and sports facilities.*

aged other US-based Nabuaños to contribute to the development of their home.

### Developments

Mr. Regala invested his hard-earned money in the construction of the Macagang Business Center, Hotel and Resort. The name “macagang” refers to a type of blue heron that was a common sight in Nabua when he was a child. The construction started in 1999. A year later, Nabua became the home of a quality tourist accommodation fully equipped with first-class rooms, a variety of sports and recreational facilities, and an air-conditioned function hall that could accommodate 1,000 people. Since it opened in 2000, the complex has become the venue of many social events. The community, in turn, has benefited from this venture by way of taxes, jobs, and the promotion of Nabua as a tourist destination. The complex also employs more than 50 people, all local residents, with room for additional hires.

### Challenges and future prospects

Bureaucratic issues, extortion and additional requirements delayed the initial phase of the center’s construction. On a positive note, Mr. Regala acknowledges the help of government personnel from the *Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas* (Central Bank of the Philippines), Department of Tourism, Board of Investment and the Department of Trade and Industry.

The availability of funds ensured continuity and speed in the completion of the resort complex. Mr. Regala also availed of the tax incentives that the US government offered for investments. His many years of experience in managing large projects came in handy as well. The bright prospects for Camarines Sur could also mean a bright future for Mr. Regala’s investment.



## Kamiseta ni Julio

Date project started	ca. 1980s
Type of business	Clothing
Location of business	Tacloban City, Leyte
Status	Ongoing
Investor	Mr. Julio Lozada (returnee from Saudi Arabia)

### Origins and developments

Kamiseta ni Julio is a family-owned business that has been in existence for almost 30 years. It was started by a former overseas Filipino worker, Mr. Julio Lozada, upon his return to the Philippines. With a seed capital of PHP50,000 given by the Overseas Workers' Welfare Administration (OWWA), Mr. Lozada started his garment business using the knowledge about fashion and design he gained after years of working in Saudi Arabia.



*Kamiseta ni Julio is located at 279 P. Burgos Street, Tacloban City, Leyte.*

The seed capital from OWWA was the only source of funds Mr. Lozada tapped into to start the business. He was solely responsible for planning and running the business. To this day, he continues to run the business. In order to



stay competitive, he still attends seminars and training programs to keep up with the latest trends in fashion.

The enterprise was able to provide a steady income to its workers, some of whom had no previous work experience or were erstwhile homemakers before joining the company. Presently, Mr. Lozada has 10 employees.

### Challenges and future prospects

The business has encountered difficulties such as funding and the lack of quality raw materials and equipment for printing. He has succeeded, though, and attributes it to wise spending, payment of obligations on time, honesty and sincerity in running the business, and willingness to make the enterprise grow.



Kamiseta ni Julio has gained a steady clientele over the years and has established a niche in the clothing business in Tacloban City and the rest of the region.

*Kamiseta ni Julio sports jerseys are popular among clients.*

Mr. Lozada believes in maintaining both the quality of his clothing line and the trust of financial institutions. He also cites the important role of the local government in training people to become entrepreneurs and providing them with financial support to encourage local businesses to thrive. Further, he believes that overseas Filipinos must invest in local communities to generate jobs and to support entrepreneurial ventures. He is open to collaborating with overseas Filipinos to promote the development of Tacloban City.



## MyndConsulting

Date project started	2006
Type of business	Information and communication technology (ICT)
Location of business	Davao City
Status	Ongoing
Investor	Ms. Myrna Padilla (return migrant)

### Origins

Ms. Padilla is no stranger to work. She started working as a child to help support her family. By dint of hard work and persistence, she was able to graduate from high school. When she became a mother, she was determined to provide a better future for her children. Working abroad



presented this possibility. She first went to Taiwan and worked there as a caregiver. After Taiwan, she next went to Singapore where she was employed as a domestic worker. In her third attempt, she worked as a domestic worker in Hong Kong for the next 12 years. Altogether, she spent 20 years of her life working and living away from home.

While she was in Hong Kong, Ms. Padilla found ways to invest her time wisely. For her, time was a resource that should not go to

waste. She became one of the founding members and president of the Mindanao Hong Kong Workers Federation (Min-Fed), composed of 12 associations of Mindanaoan overseas Filipinos workers in Hong Kong. MinFed provides support and services to Filipino workers in Hong Kong and to their families in the Philippines. Her employers



*Ms. Myrna Padilla receiving the Most Inspiring and Outstanding Entrepreneur Award from the Davao City Chamber of Commerce and Go Negosyo in 2009.*

supported her work and provided her with a telephone line, computer and Internet access to help her with her advocacy. To know more about computers, she enrolled in a computer course, where she was initiated to bug testing after writing a letter to a software company to report problems that she encountered with its software. The company not only responded to her report, but also hired her as a debugger.

This introduced her to the borderless world of ICT.

Due to a health problem, she decided to return to the Philippines in 2006. The separation pay from her employers served as her start-up capital. Upon her return to Davao City, she set up some business projects, but these did not prove successful. In the same year, she established MyndConsulting, a business process outsourcing firm, inspired by the idea that she discovered years ago about Internet-based work.

### Developments

MyndConsulting currently supplies foreign clients with a virtual staff of programmers. The company can also deploy, manage and moderate social media platforms for its clients and specializes in Facebook and



*Ms. Padilla with the MyndConsulting staff*

Word Press content generation and content/comment moderation. Its other services include:

- Net and open source web development
- Database development
- Mobile applications
- Graphics design and flash animation
- Remote network administration and technical support training

MyndConsulting has reaped numerous awards for excellence, including the 2009 Most Inspiring and Outstanding Entrepreneur Award from the Davao City Chamber of Commerce and Go Negosyo.

Hard work and servant leadership are the core values of the company. MyndConsulting is not just a business venture. It is a company where the welfare of its employees comes before profits. It offers salaries above the minimum requirement. The company also provides school supplies to the less fortunate pupils in a school in Kidapawan City, North Cotabato. Ms. Padilla also established a website for overseas Filipino workers, [www.bangonfilipino.com](http://www.bangonfilipino.com), where OFWs can air their ideas and discuss with other OFWs. Thus, even if she is back in the Philippines, she continues to contribute to empower OFWs using technology.

### **Challenges and future prospects**

MyndCounseling is a testament to Ms. Padilla's determination, persistence, hard work and vision:

If I dream, I work for it and I make sure that I can really do it. If you think you lack something, learn it. Whatever I learned abroad, I used it. I used technology to help develop the economy of our country.

The practical and good things I learned abroad, I put to use when I returned home. In my case, I used technology to do my small part to stop the brain drain



Migrants' Investments

of our best and brightest while, at the same time, helping to keep families together.

As OFWs, we should know when to assert our rights in a respectful but firm manner.

Ms. Padilla believes in lifelong learning; for her, "there is no finishing line when it comes to learning."

In the future, she plans to develop a training program for OFWs that will provide them with basic knowledge about ICT so that they can use this knowledge to continue learning via the Internet. She wants to empower OFWs with knowledge so that they can help themselves, a goal which is inspired by the concept that "you give a man a fish and he will eat for a day, but if you teach him how to fish he can eat for a lifetime." She also believes that departing OFWs should be empowered with ICT knowledge to enhance their value as OFWs and to be able to protect themselves in foreign and sometimes hostile environments.





## Southeast Mindanao Transport Multi-purpose Cooperative (SEMTRAMPCO)

Date project started	2003
Type of business	Cooperative
Location of business	Davao del Sur
Status	Ongoing
Investor	Mr. Norberto 'Boy' Bajenting (former seafarer, return migrant)

### Origins

The transport business ranks among the popular business options of overseas Filipino workers. Mr. Norberto 'Boy' Bajenting also had a similar plan, but he developed his business in a different way.



*Mr. Bajenting (fourth from right) with the officers and members of SEMTRAMPCO.*

The seeds of Mr. Bajenting's business started when he bought his first Armak jeep in December 1987 for his personal use. The next year, he bought another one, and added more units over the years. By 1991, he had four units running under his Norlin-Noribeth Liner. After five years, upon the advice of his brother-in-law who was a mechanic, he

gradually shifted to the bus business. He found that operating a bus business was less costly than running a jeep line.

From 1992 to 1997, the bus business operated on a trial basis. Being new to the business, he was still trying to figure out policies to manage the business effectively. In 1997, he decided to stop working as a seafarer to devote his time to manage his thriving bus business. By 1999, the five buses running under the Norlin Liner had become a familiar name among commuters.

In October 2002, Mr. Bajenting decided to join a cooperative and considered converting his business operation into a voluntary transport cooperative. In 2003, the Southeast Mindanao Transport Multi-Purpose Cooperative (SEMTRAMPCO) was launched.

### **Developments**

The cooperative started with just 50 members. At present, the cooperative has 80 regular members who are required to contribute minimum amount of PHP4,000 each as capital share. Mr. Bajenting also opened the membership to non-employees. Thus, the cooperative now has 1,200 associate members who need only to pay the registration fee of PHP250 (inclusive of the training fee on cooperativism) and buy one share worth PHP100. He invited some overseas Filipino workers to invest in the cooperative but only few were interested.

When the cooperative started, the eleven buses personally owned by the Bajenting family were rented by SEMTRAMPCO. The eleven buses are still owned by the Bajenting family up to this time and are registered under the name of his wife Erlinda Bajenting. He plans to eventually sell all his family-owned buses to SEMTRAMPCO when the cooperative gains enough financial standing to qualify for bigger loans.

At present, SEMTRAMPCO fully own five bus units worth PHP19 million, and these are all operating under the management of the cooperative. In 2007, the cooperative was able to acquire an air-conditioned bus unit. Two of the cooperative's buses are currently

under a service contract with the Energy Development Corporation, Kidapawan City. The cooperative has acquired a lot about 2,799 sq.m. where it is putting up a gas station and an office. Also the required paid up capital has reached up to PHP8 million while its asset has grown to PHP22 million

### **Challenges**

Initially, people were hesitant to join the cooperative because of some misconceptions about the idea of cooperativism. Thus, new members are required to attend a seminar to understand how cooperatives work.

During its third year of operation, all Norlin employees were terminated so they could be absorbed by the cooperative. Part of Mr. Bajenting's agreement with his employees was that they would invest part of their separation pay in the cooperative. It was his intention to turn his former employees into investors. Fueled by uninformed speculations from non-members, a conflict arose between the company and the employees. To settle the issue, the case was brought to the Department Labor and Employment and was resolved.

The cooperative also had to contend with irregularities prevalent in the transport industry, such as conductors collecting fares without issuing tickets. Since the members were also commuters, these practices can be checked. Furthermore, because the members are also co-owners, they have a stake in the business and are more vigilant about the operation. Likewise bus conductors have also become members of the cooperative.

The cooperative has hurdled problems along the way. Mr. Bajenting's determination and perseverance to transform a family business into a venture with a more developmental purpose, his openness to new insights, and the application of management skills he learned from working overseas, and his being a hands-on manager were instrumental to the success of SEMTRAMPCO.

### **Future prospects**

Mr. Bajenting plans to sell all his bus units to the cooperative someday. Although he continues to be involved in the management



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of SEMTRAMPCO as the General Manager/Member of the Board, he is slowly distancing himself from the leadership of the cooperative. He intends to train other managers and to prepare for the transition to the next generation of cooperative leaders. He is also studying going into other businesses related to the transport industry, such as a gasoline station and automotive spare parts distribution business. The sustainability of SEMTRAMPCO will rest on the new crop of leaders and managers who will have the task of building on what the cooperative has established thus far.





## Medical Transcription School and Outsourcing Services

Date project started	ca. 2000s
Type of business	School, outsourcing services
Location of business	Koronadal City, South Cotabato
Status	Ongoing
Investor	Mr. Bernardino Custorio (return migrant)

### Origins

After 20 years of working overseas as a computerization project manager in the field of information, communications and technology (ICT) industry, Mr. Bernardino Custorio returned to the Philippines in 2002. Having spent many years overseas, including the United Kingdom, Saudi Arabia, Oman and several European countries, he felt the need to give something back to the community. He brought home with him experiences and expertise he gained from working and living abroad. Upon his return to Koronadal City, South Cotabato, he started



*One of the transcription schools established by Mr. Custorio*

his own Internet café and a computer training center for children called Early World of Learning Computer School while working in the academe and the government at the same time.

Later, he put up a transcription school in the city. But this did not prosper because of problems with a business partner. The failed venture, however, did not stop him from trying again. With the help of various local institutions, he put up another transcription school within a month. The new school, called the QPEX Global School, is co-owned by Mr. Custorio and other local investors. The school aims to provide human resources needed by the industry. Mr. Custorio later added an ICT outsourcing production house for overseas clients, mostly hospitals in the US, employing graduates of his school. In 2010, Mr. Custorio decided to put up his own outsourcing business, which he called DinSource Int'l ICT Solutions.

### **Implementation**

The transcription school and the outsourcing production house were planned, implemented and managed by Mr. Custorio. Other schools were established in other parts of Mindanao – one in Davao City and another in Tagum City. Kidapawan City and General Santos City are next in line. Although the day-to-day management of the business is handled by school administrators and production managers, Mr. Custorio remains in charge of overall management. He is also the Chief Executive Officer of Transcript King, Inc. in Chicago, IL, the client sourcing end of the business.

### **Challenges**

The main challenge faced by the outsourcing part of the business was the lack of skilled workers to meet current demands. Another challenge was the attitude of workers – Mr. Custorio notes the lack of professionalism and good work ethic. He also had to contend with the tendency of Filipino investors to want a fast return of their investment.

Asked about the factors contributing to the success of the business, Mr. Custorio cites his work ethic, values and professionalism. Although he recognizes the importance of capital, he considers building

trust and credibility among clients, staff and other partners as most critical. He also acknowledges the support of the Koronadal city government, the provincial government, the South Cotabato Chamber of Commerce and the regional offices of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) and the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI). DOLE Region 12 helped him recruit qualified workers while the DTI supported the company in investment generation and promotional activities. TESDA, meanwhile, provided scholarship support to students. Key informants credited Mr. Custorio's expertise in ICT and his business knowledge as success factors.

### **Future prospects**

The business shows great potential for expansion. Mr. Custorio's plans to expand the business not only in Mindanao but in Visayas and Luzon were realized with the establishment of their own production and corporate office in Eastwood City, Quezon City in mid-2009. According to Mr. Custorio, the job prospects in the ICT sector are alternatives to overseas employment. The demand for ICT-related services is likely to remain strong, which spells good news for the continued success of the business.



## Mall and Spa

Date project started	2005 (spa); 2007 (mall)
Type of business	Mall and spa
Location of business	Guagua, Pampanga (mall); Manila (spa)
Status	Ongoing
Investor	Mr. Miguel Bolos (returnee from Saudi Arabia)

### Origins

Mr. Miguel "Mike" C. Bolos Jr. worked for 25 years for a multinational firm in Saudi Arabia. A certified accountant, he rose from the ranks and retired as an assistant comptroller. He could have lived off his hefty pension, or could have chosen to retire comfortably elsewhere. But instead, he chose to return to his hometown, Guagua, Pampanga, with a vision of introducing change. Mr. Bolos was saddened that Guagua, which used to be a hub of commerce in Pampanga, had been outpaced by neighboring San Fernando City. When he returned home in 2005, he set his sights on building a mall to provide a venue for local businesses and to reinvigorate the local economy.



*Mr. Miguel Bolos sharing his dreams for his hometown during the interview.*

Advocacy was not new to Mr. Bolos. During his stint in Saudi Arabia, he was a staunch advocate in the promotion of the rights of

overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) in the Middle East. He was active in the campaign for absentee voting and was one of the conveners of the International Coalition for Overseas Filipinos' Voting Rights. He was also part of the V-Team, an OFW rights advocate, and *Pusong Mamon* (Gentle Heart) Task Force, an organization that provides immediate assistance to distressed OFWs. Aside from volunteering his time and services, he also donated to finance assistance programs for the benefit of OFWs.



*Given his active involvement in OFW issues, it is not surprising that his bar and restaurant is named "Advocacy."*

## Implementation

Mr. Bolos kicked off his project by purchasing a vacant lot along Plaza Burgos, a stone's throw from the municipal hall and a strategic site for business. After several negotiations with the owner and creditors, the purchase of the property was clinched and the construction of the mall began. In 2007, One Crowne Plaza, a three-storey shopping mall, was completed. One-third of the PHP60 million-mall came from his earnings and savings.



*The three-storey One Crowne Plaza is located in Plaza Burgos in Guagua.*

At the time of the interview in 2008, the mall was already fully operational but had yet to reach 100 percent occupancy. This is because Mr. Bolos puts a premium on enterprises that come from his hometown, or those owned by OFWs or



their families. He wanted the local people to invest and urged other small businesses to grow with him. He admits that he has yet to generate profits. "The important thing is to pay off the monthly debts and I am already happy with that," he says. One Crowne Plaza has already accomplished some of his objectives: new businesses have sprung up, several banks have set up a branch in Gua-gua and existing businesses improved their products and services.

Aside from One Crowne Plaza, he has another business, which he acquired in 2005. When he heard that the Bay Spa (along Macapagal Avenue, near SM Mall of Asia in Pasay City) was up for sale, he did hesitate to acquire it. His purpose was two-pronged – to save jobs and to engage in a business close to his heart (as he likes going to the spa). He also franchised a 7-11 convenience store and a Netopia Internet café, and brought these to Guagua. He also put up a bistro bar, Advocacy, in his mall.

### **Future prospects**

Mr. Bolos' entry into business was not wholly motivated by profit. In this sense, he is more of a social entrepreneur than a hardnosed businessman. Facing very tough competition (One Crowne Plaza competes with a well-known mall in San Fernando City while the spa industry has spawned many businesses), Mr. Bolos will have to strategize to stay in business and contribute to the local economy and by providing employment. For the time being, his immediate plan is to establish as many branches of the Bay Spa as possible because it serves as a good source of employment and income for women who are not able to finish their education.

It is not just business that preoccupies Mr. Bolos. He continues to support scholarship programs. From time to time, he participates in financial literacy programs and promotes savings among OFW families. He emphasizes that one need not accumulate millions to start a business. "Learn to save even from a small salary," he says, "and invest this wisely in a business you yourself enjoy doing. And never stop learning and reading." Apparently, he never tires of philanthropy. His next goal is to establish a school for the less fortunate children of Pampanga.



## Pervil Cosmetics

Date project started	2002
Type of business	Cosmetics company
Location of business	Cabanatuan City (production plant), Nueva Ecija; Manila and other cities (marketing)
Status	Ongoing
Investor	Ms. Teresita Perez Villanueva (returnee from Saudi Arabia)

### Origins

Ms. Teresita Perez Villanueva was among the many Filipinos who sought greener pastures in Saudi Arabia. In 1980, she took a leave of absence from her job as a nurse with the National Irrigation Office in Nueva Ecija and accepted a one-year contract with the Saudi Ministry of Health. After a stint with the Saudi office, she transferred to the King Fahd Central Hospital, where she worked for more than a decade. Due to the outbreak of the first Gulf War, she was transferred to the Riyadh Armed Forces Hospital under the Ministry of Defense. Later, she was reassigned to the palace clinic of a key government official.

Her work in the palace clinic involved interacting with members of the royal family, among them a princess who was keen about beauty products. At the time, Ms. Villanueva was frequenting a dermatologist-friend outside of the palace who was formulating beauty creams. She started experimenting with her own concoctions, helped in part by friends who were willing to be her “guinea pigs.” Several formulations



*Ms. Villanueva plans to introduce Pervil Products to other countries.*

and tests later, Ms. Villanueva was convinced that her product was good enough for the princess. The princess had her own mixes of fragrances and beauty products and did not use commercial ones. To her delight, the princess liked her skin whitening cream product and even recommended it to her other sisters and the female

employees of the palace. Orders poured in, and she had to work even at night to meet the growing demand.

### Implementation

Positive reviews about her skin whitening cream product spread by word of mouth, with orders placed from as far as the United States. She sent several boxes of her product to the Philippines, where her husband would market it and establishing contacts for marketing purposes. This informal set-up went on for some time, until she decided in 2002 to quit her job and to establish her own business in Cabanatuan City. She named her company, Pervil Cosmetics (Pervil is a contraction of her last name, Perez, and her husband's last name, Villanueva). She put up a laboratory in a vacant lot near her house. After securing a permit from the Bureau of Foods and Drugs, she hired several workers and began the production of beauty products, mainly whitening cream, soap and lotion.

Due to the increasing demand from local and international customers, her staff grew to 30 employees from an initial 10 workers. Sheer diligence, hard work and word of mouth marketing eventually paid off. She secured several deals with several drug store companies, department stores and supermarkets nationwide to offer her products. Also, she exports her products to countries with large concentrations of Filipinos such as



*The Magic Cream is the first product launched by Pervil Cosmetics.*



the United States, Canada and the Middle East. Six years after it was launched in the market, Pervil Cosmetics has reaped several awards, including the Asia Pacific Excellence Awards, the Philippine Marketing Excellence Award and citations from other business associations.

### **Challenges**

With success also came some problems. Ms. Villanueva had to contend with cheap imitations of her products in the local market. A national TV program aired complaints about the ill effects of the imitations. Ms. Villanueva had to go on public to clear the confusion. She invited the same TV program, its host and crew to visit her laboratory and witness firsthand the procedures and equipment used in the manufacture of their products. She also decided to change the packaging of Pervil products to make it difficult for imitators to copy.

### **Future prospects**

The company is up against giants, including internationally renowned companies which have huge resources to mount heavy marketing and advertising campaigns. However, Ms. Villanueva is confident that Pervil Cosmetics will thrive amidst the competition. She has tapped a media personality to endorse her products. The company has also established offices in Metro Manila and other regions across the country to improve its marketing and distribution arm. She has networked with exclusive distributors handling the markets in the USA, Canada, Dubai in the United Arab Emirates and Vietnam, while eyeing to expand the reach of the products' reach in the United Kingdom, Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong and China in the future.



## Action Center for Overseas Filipino Workers and Their Families

Date project started	1998
Type of project	Assistance to overseas Filipino workers and their families; promotion of local development
Location of project	Naguillan, La Union
Status	Ongoing
Partners	Bannuar Ti La Union-Naguilian Chapter Kanalungan Center Foundation, Inc. Municipal Government of Naguilian



### Origins

The Bannuar Ti La Union (Heroes of La Union) is a province-wide federation of overseas Filipino workers (OFWs), return migrants and their families that was formed with the support of the Kanalungan Center Foundation, Inc. One of the key programs of Bannuar chapters is to set up an action center in their localities to provide assistance and counseling to distressed OFWs and support livelihood projects. Together, Bannuar Ti La Union and Kanalungan network with the



*BTLU-Naguilian President Ms. Josie Butial addressing the general assembly of the organization.*



local government units in the province to formulate policies and programs for OFWs and their families.

Of the nine Bannuar chapters in the province, the Naguilian Chapter, organized in 1998, is considered the most successful. Kanlungan selected the Naguilian Chapter to partner with when it launched the Local Economy Development (LED) Program, an initiative aimed at providing an alternative to overseas employment, in 2003. The LED Program involved education on goal-setting, savings, use of remittances of OFWs and their families, and linking with local government units, government agencies, micro-finance institutions and enterprising migrants to support livelihood projects and/or enterprise development.

### **Developments and future prospects**

With the help of Kanlungan, the Bannuar Ti La Union-Naguilian Chapter has become even more active in running its action center and its programs. A continuing effort is made in recruiting more members. Membership is open to OFW returnees or family members of current OFWs. The membership fee of PHP120 is apportioned as follows: PHP80 goes to the *barangay*, PHP20 to *Saranay* or mutual aid, and the last PHP20 remains with the chapter. Members are expected to participate in the organization's programs and activities directed at OFWs and their families, providing paralegal assistance, education and values orientation programs and micro-lending.

Cognizant of the role of overseas Filipinos in the development of Naguilian, the local government has been supportive of the organization. It provided the Naguilian Chapter with office space in the Balikbayan Building free of charge. In addition, it extended a loan of PHP300,000, which the organization managed. This loan is exclusively used for enterprise development. The chapter has renewed the loan several times, proof of its ability to manage micro-lending funds. It submitted a proposal for micro-enterprise development project to enable to the association to expand its work.

The members attribute the success of the Naguilian chapter to the support provided by Kanlungan and the local government. In the



### Partnerships

future, the group plans to set up a canteen and continue to provide training to its members as it prepares for the eventuality of operating without the aid of Kanlungan.





## Ormoc City E-Learning and Research Center

Date project started	2007
Type of project	Internet access to public school students
Location of project	Ormoc City, Leyte
Status	Ongoing
Donor	Mr. Manuel Baylon (Filipino-American)
Partner	City Government of Ormoc



### Origins

The Ormoc City E-Learning and Research Center is the brain-child of Mr. Manuel Baylon, a native of the city who is now a US citizen based in Arizona, together with the Ormoc City government. The idea came about when Mr. Baylon visited his home city in 2006. He noticed the lack of computers in public schools, which he felt puts students at a disadvantage as it limited their access to information and knowledge that could otherwise be opened up by access to the Internet.

Mr. Baylon discussed his proposal with the Ormoc City government and both parties reached an agreement on how the project would be implemented. He committed to donating 50 computers and other computer-related equipment while the Ormoc City agreed to provide the space and personnel and shoulder the costs of utilities. Mr. Baylon sent the city government money for the purchase of the computers. As agreed upon, the city government designated space on the second floor of the public market for the center. It also assigned



personnel to run the center, including a technical staff to check and maintain the computers. The cooperation between the two parties was formalized via “Provincial Ordinance No. 136, An Ordinance Establishing the Ormoc City Community E Learning and Research Center (CeLRC) and for other purposes” in 2007. The center was formally launched after the bill was passed.



*The city government of Ormoc provided space for the center.*

### Implementation

The center aims to provide economically disadvantaged students free access to the Internet to aid their schooling. Another objective is to make available to local residents information about the city, government services, ordinances and online transactions. The latter objective is linked to the goal of promoting greater citizen participation in the city government.

With free access to computers, the Internet and printing services, the center hopes to promote computer literacy and to extend Internet support to public school students. The center serves some 60 to 70 students everyday, mostly from public schools, as was the intent of the project. At the time of data collection in late 2008, the center had received 20 computers from Mr. Baylon, with the remaining 30 to be delivered soon.



*The E-Learning Center caters to around 60 to 70 students daily, mostly from public schools.*

The Planning Department of the Office of the Mayor worked hand in hand with Mr. Baylon in the conception, implementation and operation of the center. In addition, a board of trustees comprised of the mayor and some local

government officials was created to oversee the operation of the center and tasked to source funds to support the center. The center has a staff consisting of a manager and six contractual employees, whose salaries are provided by the city government.

To date, the center has not encountered problems that it could not address. Based on the residents' feedback, the center is a huge success, which in turn has been attributed to the close collaboration between Mr. Baylon and the city government.

### **Future prospects**

The ordinance provides that the center will be continued by the city government, hence ensuring the project's continuation. This provision thus does not tie the center to the current administration. The creation of the board of trustees is also seen as a good strategy since it contributes to helping run the center and is responsible for sourcing funds to support its operations. It is essential, for example, in maintaining and upgrading the equipment.

Mr. Baylon intends to replicate the project in other parts of Ormoc City and encourages other Filipinos in the US to support similar projects in the future.



## Damayang Pilipino sa Nederland

Types of projects	Hospital assistance, school building rehabilitation, women empowerment
Location of projects	Magsaysay, Misamis Oriental
Donor	Damayang Pilipino sa Nederland
Partners	Municipal Government of Magsaysay Local NGO People's organizations

### Origins

The Damayang Pilipino sa Nederland (“Filipino Solidarity in the Netherlands”) was registered as an association of Filipino migrants in 1986. It has a two-fold objective – to provide assistance to Filipinos in the Netherlands and to support people’s organizations and development projects in the Philippines. The latter objective involves building partnerships between organizations in the Netherlands and Philippines-based groups.

### Implementation of projects

Damayan started mobilizing the Filipino community in the Netherlands to support development projects in the Philippines since its inception. It has supported around 16 small scale initiatives, mainly providing scholarships to indigenous communities and livelihood projects for women.

It started several initiatives in Magsaysay, Misamis Oriental from 2005 as a result of a partnership with St. Michael Basisschool in de

Bilt. The first project was the construction of the fence of Cabubuhan School. In the same year, Damayan provided 6,000 euros to the district hospital in Magsaysay to purchase an emergency electric generator, laboratory materials and to repair and repaint the ceiling and walls. This allowed the hospital to be accredited for Phil-Health insurance. Damayan also pursued in 2007 a partnership project with the Parent-Teacher Association called "Pimp the School" that rehabilitated a school building into a modern four-room learning center.

In 2006, Damayan initiated a project called Maria Goes to Town (MGT) with the aim of empowering the rural women by establishing a marketplace where they can sell their products and by training them to become entrepreneurs. The idea to build a women's marketplace was crystallized when Jessie Ligan, a resident of Magsaysay who left the country in the 1980s to settle in the Netherlands with her Dutch husband, came home in Christmas 2004. She experienced having to travel to other places to buy vegetables, fruits and meat products. She saw some women selling their products from house to house or they had to walk several kilometers to another community to sell their products. When Jessie returned to the Netherlands, she thought of developing a proposal for a women's market to be submitted to the 2005 Migrant Idea Contest, which was organized by OIKOS, Stichting Mundial Samenleving and CORDAID. Together with Basco Fernandez, who wrote the proposal, Damayan pursued the idea of enhancing women's social status by organizing and training women for social enterprise and by providing the women a collective economic facility to manage.

The proposal was chosen the best migrant idea for 2005 winning 10,000 euros, but had to be supplemented by another 8,000 euros secured from other funding agencies and foundations like Alle Beetjes and SEVA. The proposal intended for one year had to be supplemented with another 13,000 euros from Oxfam Novib to support the social preparation and the enterprise and management trainings of the women. The project started in August 2006, and the MGT women's community market was officially launched in May 2007. After a year of operations, the 48 women reported an increase of PHP3,000 in income. Two members also won in the barangay elections.



Local institutions also contributed to the project. The local government unit of Magsaysay donated a 1,000-square meter lot, where the market was built. The mayor also provided transport and venue for trainings. A local resource group, JEP Consultant and Training, was tapped to provide gender orientation, skills training, organizational development and the management of the market. The Bidlisiw Women's Federation organized in January 2007 from the 200 women of barangays Cabubuhan, Kauswagan and Tulang oversaw the construction of the market, and are now managing the market.

### **Success factors, problems and future prospects**

As the primary mover, Damayan did not only mobilize funds but also made regular visits to the community. In introducing this new approach, Damayan leveraged its social capital in Magsaysay to create the partnership in support of Maria Goes to Town. Damayan has been successful in forging ties with local stakeholders whose active support helped promote the role of women and ensure their ownership of these initiatives. Nonetheless, Damayan encountered some problems. Feeling left out, the men in the community objected to the women-only focus of the Maria Goes to Town Project. With the support of the town mayor, Damayan was able to overcome the resistance posed by the Cabubuhan men.

Since many women are engaged in secondary farming, they suffered from having enough products to sell. In response to this problem, JEP provided the women with training on improved ways of farming of bananas, cassava and vegetables. JEP also linked the women to different micro-finance institutions for their capital needs. Increasing women's access to capital will be an important step in the economic empowerment of women.



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## ABOUT MAPID

The Migrants' Associations and Philippine Institutions for Development (MAPID) Project is supported by the European Union through the Aeneas Programme (Financial and technical assistance to third countries in the field of migration and asylum) - Aeneas Grant Contract No. MIG R/2007/130-548(11).

The overall objectives of MAPID are:

- to advance the understanding of the migration-development nexus by two important stakeholders, migrants' associations and Philippine institutions; and
- to promote cooperation for development between migrants' associations and national and local institutions in the Philippines.

MAPID aims at building the capacity and partnership between migrants' associations in Italy and Spain, and key national and local Philippine institutions in promoting development in the home country.

## MAPID ACTIVITIES

The MAPID Project consists of three major activities – research, capacity-building and dissemination – conducted across the Philippines, Italy and Spain over a three-year period.

- In 2008, the MAPID Project completed the research phase. In Italy and Spain, the research focused on migrants' associations and the migration, integration and transnational practices of Filipinos in the host countries. In the Philippines, the research probed into policies and practices that promote the development potentials of migration and the mapping of diaspora-supported projects, migrants' investments, and partnerships involving overseas Filipinos and local institutions. Findings from the three-country research served as inputs for designing the training programs and materials.
- In 2009, capacity-building programs were implemented in the three countries. In Italy and Spain, the participants were leaders and active members of Filipino migrants' associations while in the Philippines, the participants were representatives of government agencies and local government units.
- In 2010, the MAPID Project will conduct consultations and conferences to share the results and recommendations from the research and capacity-building activities in the three countries. Reports, policy briefs and feature stories will be produced as part of the dissemination activities.



## **INSTITUTIONS BEHIND MAPID**

The Scalabrini Migration Center (SMC) is the main proponent and overall coordinator of MAPID. It is cooperating with Fondazione ISMU in Milan, Italy, the University of Valencia in Spain, and the Commission on Filipinos Overseas in implementing the project. MAPID is co-funded by the European Union and the SMC.

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