

MIGRANT ASSOCIATION and PHILIPPINE INSTITUTION for DEVELOPMENT/AENEAS PROGRAMME

Regions 10, 11, 12
Mindanao

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Development Prospect

- Development Prospect is mostly related to economic development, agriculture, infrastructures and services while international labor migration is hardly factored in all development thrust and plans.
- Regional Development Plans in all regions and development directions that National Line Agencies pursue did not identify International labor migration as a potential for development.



Development Prospect

- Lack of programs addressing the present cost of International Labor Migration in all regions except for the assistance extended OWWA is providing for the Overseas Filipino Family Circles (OFCs)
- The Local Government Units reflected the same Scenario as that of the Regional Level Development Prospect. The potential of International Labor Migration has never been an integral part of the plans as a potent force for local development.



Policies

- Lack of policies and development direction regarding Migration and Development
- No mention of international migration and its potentials for development in all regional medium term development plans.
- The lack of Migration Desk in all government line agencies except for OWWA and POEA caused lack of program and development direction for Migration and Development.



Policies

- International labor migration were never mentioned in all Provincial and Municipal/City development plans except for Bansalan, Davao del Sur that targeted Overseas Filipinos as Potential Investment source. Davao City also formulated ordinance protecting the welfare of the Overseas Filipinos



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View and Perception on international migration

- Poverty drives people to leave the country
- Lack of employment opportunities in the country
- No data as to the threshold of number of Overseas Filipinos
- Feminization of International Labor Migration
- Not given much importance - No data and not integrated on plans, programs and projects in almost all levels – contribution and importance were highlighted during the interview



Benefits of International Labor Migration

- Better lives (economically and ability to send children to school)
- More skills (applied to home country)
- Remittances
 - Increase demand for consumer goods
 - Improve Real Estate Industry
 - Vibrant local economy
- Investments
 - Micro investments account for a larger contribution to economy
 - Increase the diversity of economic activities
- Education
 - Skills transfer (OFW to community)
 - OFW Children are getting better education



Cost of International Labor Migration

- Social cost of migration
(maltreatment and abuses in the foreign land)
- Juvenile delinquency
- Broken marriages



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Views about future prospects of international migration

- Future demands for Overseas Filipino Workers would help keep economy afloat
- Over-dependency of the economy on the Overseas Filipino makes economy vulnerable
- The recession of the country of destination would have impact on the plight of the Overseas Filipinos
- Women Household Service Workers (HSWs) are increasing in the neighboring countries of Southeast Asia.



Programs to maximize the benefit and minimize cost

- Comprehensive database (Survey of the Overseas Filipinos)
- Complete Accounting of the Overseas Filipinos' contributions
- Protection for Overseas Filipinos (Welfare and Security)
- Improve communication technology
- Improvement of economy and creating employment alternatives



Programs to maximize the benefit and minimize cost

- Maximize Program for Overseas Filipino Investment
- Training activities for Entrepreneurship as preparation for reintegration (OWWA and DOLE)
- Training on building partnership
- Establish a clear program on partnership between Overseas Filipinos and Government Institutions (Replication of Tres Por Uno)



Practices

- The lack of Data and Vital Statistical Information regarding Migration and Development resulted to the lack of policy direction and the lack of programs integrating migration and development.
- No migration desks in all National Line Agencies Regional Offices except for OWWA and POEA.
- There is no Migration desk in all Local Government Unit. In Surallah, South Cotabato, an office dealing with migration issues is still attached to the Municipal PESO.



Existing Migration Structures or Mechanisms

- Davao City Ordinance creating a center for overseas Filipino
- Surallah Overseas Filipino Workers Desk
- Local church initiative in Tagum City in partnership with OWWA
- OFW desks in PESO (Tagum) collaborating with OWWA
- Collaborative intervention of the church and OWWA in educating the OFWs
- Modification the OFW Family Circle (OFC) federating the Provinces of Davao Region and Compostela Valley.





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MAPID TRAINING PROGRAM - PHILIPPINES

SESSION 2

MIGRANTS' ASSOCIATIONS AND PHILIPPINE INSTITUTIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT: NORTHERN MINDANAO*

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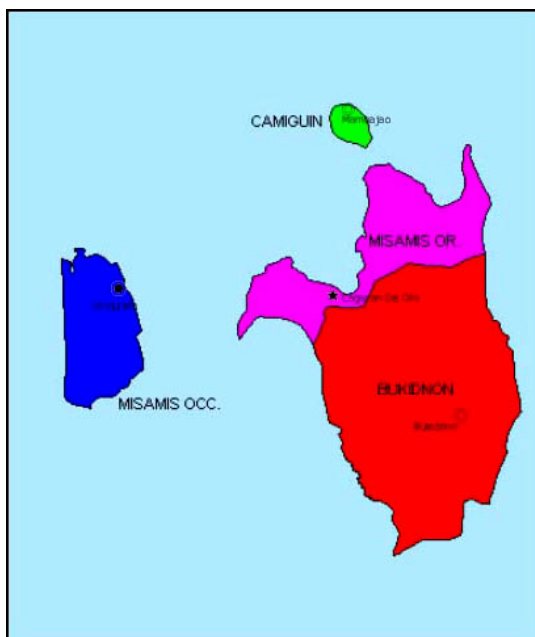
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Executive Summary

Regional Overview of Development Realities and Prospects



Region 10 or commonly called the Northern Mindanao Region is comprised of five provinces, 9 cities, 84 municipalities, 2,022 *barangays* and 12 congressional districts. According to the result of the 2000 population census, the region has 3.506 million people, 10 percent higher than the 1990 population count. The region posted an annual average growth rate of 2.23 percent.

The region registered a robust growth of 6.8 percent in 2006, surpassing its target and the previous year's economic growth of 4.6 percent. This is reflected in the regional level interviews wherein informants claim that the economic development of the region is stable and is exhibiting constant growth.

The region is considered to be the largest economy in Mindanao and it ranked third highest in growth among the regions in the whole country. More investments, the opening of different large scale economic endeavors and the good performance of all sectors contributed to this impressive growth. The best performing sector has consistently been the services sector. As reflected in the Medium Term Regional Development Plan (MTRDP, in press), the structure of the region's economy is shifting towards services and industry.

Despite its impressive economic performance, poverty reduction has been minimal. Poverty incidence declined slightly by 0.3 per cent in the period of 2000-2003. Average family income in the region also dropped by 3.1 percent in 2000-2003.

The MAPID study focused on Misamis Oriental, the top origin province of overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) in the region. Interviews at the provincial level led to the identification of the Municipality of Magsaysay as the municipality with a big number of migrants. Furthermore, the municipality was also identified as having an active migrant-giving organization that invested in the locality through various projects. It was the governor himself who identified Magsaysay municipality as the beneficiary of a migrant initiative. All the informants agreed that migration data are scanty from regional down to the municipal levels.

Informants were mostly representatives from National Line Agencies (LGA) at the regional and provincial levels and Local Government Units (Provincial and Municipal). Case study informants were identified during the data collection period. Knowledge and involvement in the project were the main considerations for the selection of Key Informants for the case study.

Regional Overview of International Migration Trends

Secondary data from the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) for Region 10 only covers four provinces. These are Misamis Oriental, Misamis Occidental, Camiguin and Bukidnon. The province of Lanao del Norte, the newest province added to the Region, is still considered as Region 12 in such document. Based on the OWWA's Distribution of OFWs by Region and Province, the total number of Overseas Filipinos Workers from the five provinces of Region 10 is 28,224 OFWs with 21,547 land-based and 6,677 sea-based workers. Misamis Oriental is the top producer of OFWs in the region with a total of 12,006. Camiguin has the least number of OFWs (Distribution of OFWs by Region and Province as of 2006, OWWA)

Available data on the composition of migrants in the region is scanty. The lone source of secondary data on the composition of migrants is OWWA's membership data. According to OWWA data, the region has a total of 2,053 male and 3,824 female land-based OFWs, or a total of 5,877 OFW members. Misamis Oriental has the most number of OWWA members in the region.

International Migration in Government Development Plans and Thrusts

International migration has not been mentioned in all of the government plans both from National Line Agencies (LGA) and Local Government Units (LGU). The study result shows that the contribution of overseas Filipinos, apart from the remittances, has never been considered as a major development potential. Regional and local government institutions did not include international migration as part of their development thrust.

It was only the Governor of Misamis Oriental who had heard earlier of the *tres por uno* scheme and he suggested a local version of such scheme which he named Kurambus (what is termed as counterparting).

There is a lack of data on the history, characteristics and composition of overseas Filipinos in the region. Consequently, informants from different government institutions have no idea about international migration matters.

Apart from the Municipal Government and the Provincial Government and of Magsaysay's partnership with OFWs in the Netherlands, there is no evidence of overseas Filipinos and local institutions' partnership in the region. Most of the government officials interviewed for the study were not aware of the present contributions and the possible role of international migration in the development of the region, not until they were reminded of this in the course of the interview of this study.

Migrant-supported Development Projects, Migrant Investments, and Model of Cooperation Involving Migrants and Local Institutions

The only link or partnership between the local government unit and overseas Filipinos in implementing development programs in a community was the experience of Magsaysay Municipality and the Damayan ng Pilipino sa Netherlands. There were

other initiatives by other migrant associations, but they were mostly one shot deals, and no means of sustaining the efforts was initiated.

The projects implemented within Barangay Cabubuhan, Magsaysay, Misamis Oriental involving the partnership of the Damayan ng Pilipino sa Netherlands, the Local Government Unit (LGU) and the Community of Cabubuhan consists of three different interventions. One is health services assistance to the hospital; another is education services of the community through the improvement and renovation of the school building; and the third is women empowerment and economic enterprise intervention through the establishment of women's market and women empowerment and capability-building.

The main feature of the project is the collaboration and strong partnership of the overseas Filipinos and the local organizations in coming up with a development intervention for the community. At first, the project seemed to be too big to be true for a small town in Misamis Oriental. However, the determination of the women of the local community to address poverty and establish the economic intervention for the community was the driving force pushing the Overseas Filipinos, particularly the Damayan ng Pilipino sa Netherlands to find ways to help the community.

The Maria Goes to Town project is not a common philanthropic dole out-project. It was conceptualized, planned and implemented with the strong collaboration of the different stakeholders— i.e., the Overseas Filipinos, the local women organization and the LGU.

Another feature that supported the project is the role of the women in the whole implementation of the project. According to some of the informants women are more determined entrepreneurs than men.

They are the ones who know the family situation, they do the budgeting of the households and they try their best to make both ends meet. They are the first to feel the pain and worries for the lack of food in the family because they are more attached to the family (President, Damayan ng Pilipino sa Netherlands).

The Maria Goes to Town is not just an infrastructure project but a comprehensive approach to addressing the economic prospects of the community. The structure itself is not only a venue for trading, but it also serves as an invitation for the whole community to invest their time and resources in improving their farm output due to the proximity of the market and the economic potential it provides.

Although the project shows strong support from overseas Filipinos, one feature that has supported the project is the bottom-up approach. According to the overseas Filipino informants, the community identified the problem and the possible interventions that may address the problem. They said that the women in the Bidlisiw Federation of Women's Organization are really the main players in the identification, development and implementation of the project.

Despite the strong social preparation for the project 'Maria Goes to Town,' it still encountered difficulties and challenges during the implementation of the project.

There was resistance from the male group who wanted control over the project. However, we wanted it to be women driven because, in the first place, it is the women who are capable to deal with the household enterprise. It is the mothers that are good in dealing with enterprise (President, Damayan ng Pilipino sa Netherlands).

Another challenge was political intervention. There used to be a low level of support from the barangay council because of some reasons. First, it was the women who were organized and the barangay council, which is dominated by men, wanted the organization to be open also to men. Second, the ownership of the land was contested. Although they did not really stage opposition, one of the contentions of those who were not interested was that the land was already donated for the use of the hospital. They also said that there is already a market somewhere in the municipality.

One of the things that were considered as a drawback was the lack of leveling off between the community members and the assisting consultants in the implementation of the project.

According to the local informants they thought that the money was enough to give them initial capital but was all used for trainings and construction of the infrastructure, leaving them with nothing to start their enterprise.

Realizations and The Way Forward: Perspectives from Policy Makers and Local Chief Executives

The study has become an eye opener for the informants. Government institution informants figured out that international migration can be a potent force for achieving the development potentials of the region. They also recognized, however, that too much reliance on the contributions of the overseas Filipinos makes the economy vulnerable not only for the region but for the whole country.

Government institutions admitted that the lack of data and understanding of the real scenario of international migration leads to the lack of awareness of the potential contributions of overseas Filipinos to development.

Studies on the present needs of overseas Filipinos, assessment of the social costs of migration, project monitoring and assessment of migrant-supported projects were suggested as topics for the training program.

The Department of Trade and Industry regional and provincial informant suggested holding more training for overseas Filipinos on entrepreneurship and investment opportunities. The partnership between DTI and overseas Filipino can help promote investment and entrepreneurship in the region.

Local chief executives expressed interest in partnership development. LGUs from the municipal and provincial levels suggested conducting training activities and capability building on effective partnership between the local community, the LGU and overseas Filipinos. Another suggested topic for training is financial management training, especially among program implementers and local communities. The Governor mentioned that the community has to know all the financial and implementation aspect of the project and how to sustain the partnership. The governor mentioned the Kurambus or counterparting in the implementation of a development project. He said that through this mechanism, all levels of government institutions and partner institutions will contribute to the project. He said that this counterparting is much like the *tres por uno* in Mexico. He believes that this encourages participation and ownership of the project.

Conclusion

The research findings show that the lack of data about the overseas Filipinos resulted to lack of awareness on the part of government development planners. Thus, international migration has not become part of the development agenda of almost all of the government institutions in the region. This lack of awareness has hindered the realization of a meaningful partnership between government institutions and Overseas Filipinos in development interventions.

The cooperation between the Damayan ng Pilipino sa Netherlands and local institutions in Magsaysay met different challenges and drawbacks. However, this case of a diaspora-supported project shows that overseas Filipinos' initiated programs for development can be successful and can be effective means for promoting local development.