

Case Study by Economy
Southeast Asia

The Philippines

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Revised Paper

After

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Demographic Changes and International Labor Mobility in the Philippines: Implications for Business and Cooperation ¹

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Abstract

The massive and increasing global movement of people is a very visible issue among economies in Southeast Asia. In 1970s, migration within the region was estimated to be around 300,000 but this has recently risen to around 4 million. These regional flows of workers together with the forces of globalization have contributed much to the economic transformation of East and Southeast Asia with its corresponding benefits and costs to sending as well as receiving economies.

Temporary migration of workers is not entirely an internal issue. As such, there is a need for a regional response to the issues that both receiving and sending economies are experiencing with this contemporary global phenomenon. The Philippines, as one of leading labor-exporting economies in the region, has absorbed and managed some the positive and negative consequences of temporary labor migration on the family, community, and the economy. Economies in the region can learn from best practices that the Philippines has adopted in managing temporary labor migration in the last three decades.

The issues of access, protection, and impact pertaining to the temporary international labor migration should be the focal points of regional discussion. Areas for regional cooperation should include liberalization of immigration policies, convergence of domestic policies pertaining to the employment of foreign workers, decreasing the cost of migration, human resource development, brain drain tax, increasing the incentive for return migration, and protection of migrant workers. Resolving these issues will further enhance the benefits already enjoyed and mitigate the negative consequences of temporary labor migration.

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INTRODUCTION

One of the most visible phenomena currently is the massive and increasing global movement of people. A World Bank study estimates that the number of migrants doubled or even tripled in most net-labor importing economies for the past two decades. In the early 1970s, migration within Southeast Asia was estimated to be around 300,000. In more recent years, this stock of foreign workers has risen to around four million and another two million foreigners are working in Northeast Asia. These regional flows of workers have contributed to great extent in the economic transformation of East Asia.

Various factors have contributed to this massive movement of people across national boundaries. The forces of globalization through the liberalization of services have facilitated the temporary movement of natural persons. However, the movement of workers in the Asia Pacific region can be viewed primarily as responses of individuals and economies to regional economic and demographic asymmetries that produce differential impact on the regional labor markets. The exhaustion of the labor reserves in Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong, Singapore, and Chinese Taipei have pressured them to source labor externally primarily from Southeast Asia to meet their emerging labor shortages.

These regional labor and demographic asymmetries have the potential for contributing to regional advancement. However, the movement of people is a very sensitive issue for receiving economies and may also incur social costs on sending economies. Receiving economies are apprehensive on the impact of the inflows of foreigners on their labor markets, and the heavy pressures on social infrastructure. As a result, they make it difficult for workers

from surplus labor to move across boundaries. On the sending economies, there are corresponding risks involved in exporting manpower services including, among others, over-dependence on remittances from overseas employment, overvaluation of the real exchange rate, displacement of labor and domestic industries, and brain drain.

Since temporary migration of workers is not entirely an internal issue, there is a need for a regional, if not a global, response to the problems and issues that both receiving and sending economies are experiencing from this global phenomenon. In this light, there is a need for a regional discussion on the issues and map out an agenda for cooperation on international labor mobility in the Asia Pacific region towards enhanced and shared prosperity in the region.

The Philippines is considered one of highest migrant-sending and labor-exporting economies worldwide with almost 9 percent of its 86 million people living and working in at least 150 economies around the world. Filipino seafarers comprise more than one fourth of the entire merchant marine fleet in the world. It is estimated that about 3,000 Filipinos leave daily to seek overseas employment.

Given the magnitude of temporary labor migration, its impact on the economy, household and the community, it is imperative to know how the Philippines has managed the temporary movement of labor to seek overseas employment. As a regional issue, various stakeholders want to explore the implications of temporary labor migration on various sectors including business and identify common challenges as well as possible cooperative responses on these issues.

MAGNITUDE OF EXTERNAL MIGRATION IN THE PHILIPPINES

SHORT HISTORY OF FILIPINO LABOR MIGRATION

External migration has been a part of the lives of Filipinos for over a century now. During the Spanish colonial period, sons of the emerging middle class were sent to Europe to study, while the working class manned the trading ships that crossed the Pacific between Manila and Acapulco. During the American period, colonial ties allowed the easy entry of Filipino workers in the plantations of Hawaii and California, the acceptance of Filipino scholars in American universities, and the permission of Filipinos to serve in the United States' Navy (Tullao & Cortez 2006a).

The liberalization of immigration policies and the removal of the quota system in the 1960s made the United States more accessible to Filipino professionals particularly nurses, doctors, accountants, engineers and teachers (Tullao & Cortez, 2006a). One significant observation in the migration flows to the United States, however, has been the movement primarily for permanent residence. This trend has likewise been observed in migration flows of Filipinos to Canada and Australia.

In the past, Filipinos did not only leave the Philippines to seek permanent residence abroad but sought temporary employment. For over several decades, the significant flows of temporary workers started with construction and logging workers in Indonesia and Malaysia in the 1960s. Filipino musicians and entertainers were seen in several major cities in Asia during the post-war years. Subsequently, the oil boom in the 1970s expanded several economies in the Middle East and has attracted all kinds of Filipino workers, both

professionals and laborers, into the region. The more recent economic prosperity of Hong Kong, Chinese Taipei, Singapore, Malaysia, Japan and South Korea has also attracted thousands of Filipino workers including entertainers, factory workers, domestic helpers and construction workers to these places. Recent estimates reveal that, Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) are in more than 150 economies all over the world.

MAGNITUDE AND DIRECTION OF OVERSEAS EMPLOYMENT OF FILIPINOS

Overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) have been making significant contributions in the maintenance, stability and growth of the Philippine economy as they continuously search for various markets around the global labor market since the 1970s and faithfully send remittances to their families. The total volume of documented OFWs with processed contracts has persistently been increasing (Philippine Overseas Employment Administration [POEA], 2006).

TABLE 2A
Deployed Land Based Overseas Filipino Workers
by Major World Groupings from 1991 to 2006

Year	Total*	Africa	Asia	Europe	Middle East	Oceania	The Americas	Trust Territories	Unspecified
1991	489,260	1,964	132,592	13,156	302,825	1,374	13,373	11,409	-
1992	549,655	2,510	134,776	14,590	340,604	1,669	12,319	11,164	-
1993	550,872	2,425	168,205	13,423	302,975	1,507	12,228	8,890	-
1994	564,031	3,255	194,120	11,513	286,387	1,295	12,603	8,489	-
1995	488,173	3,615	166,774	10,279	234,310	1,398	13,469	7,039	-
1996	484,653	2,494	174,308	11,409	221,224	1,577	8,378	4,869	-
1997	559,227	3,517	235,129	12,626	221,047	1,970	7,058	5,280	-
1998	638,343	5,538	307,261	26,422	279,767	2,524	9,152	7,677	-
1999	640,331	4,936	299,521	30,707	287,076	2,424	9,045	6,622	-
2000	643,304	4,298	292,067	39,296	283,291	2,386	7,624	7,421	6,921
2001	662,648	4,943	285,051	43,019	297,533	2,061	10,679	6,823	11,530
2002	682,315	6,919	288,481	45,363	306,939	1,917	11,532	6,075	10,882
2003	651,938	8,750	255,287	37,981	285,564	1,698	11,049	5,023	46,279
2004	704,586	8,485	266,609	55,116	352,314	3,023	11,692	7,177	1
2005	740,632	9,103	255,084	52,146	394,419	2,866	14,886	7,596	135
2006	787,921	9,450	222,940	59,313	462,545	5,216	21,976	6,481	-

* Based on the report of POEA's Labor Assistance Center on the actual departure of OFWs at the international airports, NAIA Cabin Crews and POEA Regional Extension Units.

Source: Philippine Overseas Employment Administration

Shown in Table 2A is the deployment of land based OFWs. In 2006, the Middle East absorbed more than 58 percent of the deployed OFWs making it the leading destination relative to other major world groupings. Of the total 788 thousand OFWs deployed in 2006, 463 thousand were deployed in the Middle East, while a total of 223 thousand were sent to various parts of Asia, 59 thousand in Europe and 22 thousand in the American territory. Among the economies in the Middle East, Saudi Arabia is where OFWs are mostly concentrated as shown in Table 2B where approximately 50 percent of OFWs are deployed. Data obtained from POEA, shown in Table 2C, revealed that the top ten economies that absorbed OFWs for the years 2005 and 2006 are Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Hong Kong, Kuwait, Qatar, Chinese Taipei, Singapore, Italy, United Kingdom, and Korea.

TABLE 2B
Deployment of Land Based OFWs in the Middle East from 1998 to 2006

Territory	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Total*	279,767	287,076	283,291	297,533	306,939	285,564	352,314	394,419	462,545
Saudi Arabia	193,698	198,556	184,724	190,732	193,157	169,011	188,107	194,350	223,459
United Arab Emirates	35,485	39,633	43,045	44,631	50,796	49,164	68,386	82,039	99,212
Kuwait	17,372	17,628	21,490	21,956	25,894	26,225	36,591	40,306	47,917
Qatar	10,734	7,950	8,679	10,769	11,516	14,344	21,360	31,421	45,795
Bahrain	5,180	5,592	5,498	5,861	6,034	6,406	8,257	9,968	11,736
Israel	2,022	3,488	4,429	5,562	5,049	5,094	5,639	5,121	5,053
Libya	7,084	5,937	5,962	5,489	6,114	5,083	5,728	5,328	5,165
Oman	5,199	5,089	4,739	4,512	3,303	3,652	4,279	5,308	7,071
Lebanon	1,342	1,674	2,783	3,350	3,046	2,786	7,795	14,970	9,596
Iraq	10	23	42	86	50	1,490	3,252	-	-
Jordan	551	456	541	560	701	812	1,166	3,844	5,720
Yemen	591	582	589	1,140	553	629	651	681	792
Egypt	358	334	487	539	421	490	385	257	302
Iran	18	24	132	641	112	240	3,252	-	-
Syria	99	109	151	1,705	193	138	142	139	108
Unspecified	24	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Source: Philippine Overseas Employment Administration

TABLE 2C
Deployment of Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs)
By Top 10 Destinations (New Hires and Rehires) for 2005 and 2006

Destination		OFW Deployment (New Hires) for 2005	Percentage Share to Total	OFW Deployment (New Hires) for 2006	Percentage Share to Total
1	Saudi Arabia	194,350	26.2	223,459	28.4
2	United Arab Emirates	82,039	11.1	99,212	12.6
3	Hong Kong	98,693	13.3	96,929	12.3
4	Kuwait	40,306	5.4	47,917	6.1
5	Qatar	31,421	4.2	45,795	5.8
6	Chinese Taipei	46,737	6.3	39,025	5.0
7	Singapore	28,152	3.8	28,369	3.6
8	Italy	21,267	2.9	25,413	3.2
9	United Kingdom	16,930	2.3	16,926	2.1
10	Korea	9,975	1.3	13,984	1.8
11	Others	170,762	23.1	151,041	19.2
Land-based Total		740,632	100.0	788,070	100.0

Source: Philippine Overseas Employment Administration

TABLE 2D
Deployment of Overseas Filipino Workers for 2005 and 2006

Category	OFW Deployment for 2005	Percentage Share to Total	OFW Deployment for 2006	Percentage Share to Total
Land Based	740,632	74.92	788,070	74.17
New Hires	289,981	29.33	317,680	29.90
Rehires	450,651	45.58	470,390	44.27
Sea Based	247,983	25.08	274,497	25.83
Total Deployed	988,615	100.00	1,062,567	100.00
<i>Daily Deployment Average</i>	2,709		2,903	

Source: Philippine Overseas Employment Administration

Also, in 2006 from Table 2D, the total number of sea-based workers deployed reached 274 thousand up from 248 thousand deployed in 2005. Even if the number of sea-based workers deployed overseas has been increasing over the years, its share to the total OFW deployment has remained at 25 percent. The top 10 flag registry of deployed seafarers is shown in Table 2E.

TABLE 2E
Deployment of Seafarers by Flag of Registry for the Year 2006

Flag of Registry	Number of Seafarers	% Share
Panama	55,016	23.92
Bahamas	29,457	12.81
Liberia	22,210	9.66
Marshall Island	9,993	4.34
Singapore	9,362	4.07
United Kingdom	7,824	3.40
Malta	7,803	3.39
Norway	7,260	3.16
Cyprus	7,255	3.15
Netherlands	6,653	2.89
Others	67,189	29.21
TOTAL	230,022	100.00

Based on the profile of 230,022 deployed seafarers

Source: Philippine Overseas Employment Administration

Generally, Filipino workers are in demand abroad because of their relative proficiency in the English language, their exposure and training in Western standards of education. In addition, their industry, resourcefulness, adaptability, patience, and enthusiasm that makes them productive workers (Macaraeg, 2005).

OCCUPATIONAL, EDUCATIONAL AND OTHER CHARACTERISTICS OF OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKERS

The Philippines is one of the largest suppliers of a variety of workers for overseas employment. The economy deploys professionals and technical worker including doctors, engineers, nurses, teachers, and IT specialists all over the world. On the other hand, semi-skilled workers are also deployed including technicians, production workers, caregivers, entertainers, domestic workers, and many others. Inadequate domestic employment opportunities as well as the higher compensation package abroad exert a pull on many of educated workers to seek overseas employment (Macaraeg, 2005).

Shown in Table 2F are the major skills categories of OFWs for selected years. Over these years, the top three occupational groups have invariably been production workers,

service workers and professional workers. In 2006, production workers accounted for 35 percent of the total while service workers and professional workers constituted 48 percent and 12 percent respectively.

TABLE 2F
Deployment of Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs)
By Skill Category for Selected Years

Major Occupational Groups (By Skill)	1992	1995	2000	2005	2006
Administrative and Managerial Workers	289	339	284	490	817
Agricultural, Animal Husbandry and Forestry Workers, Fishermen, and Hunters	2,023	981	526	350	807
Clerical and Related Workers	5,369	3,441	2,367	5,538	7,912
Production and Related Workers, Transport Equipment Operators and Laborers	95,062	82,508	57,807	74,802	103,584
Professional Technical and Related Workers	72,881	43,901	78,685	63,941	35,809
Sales Workers	2,701	1,990	2,083	4,261	5,517
Service Workers	82,267	81,028	91,206	133,907	144,320
Others Not Elsewhere Classified	0	0	7,662	1	0

Source: Philippine Overseas Employment Administration

As shown in Table 2G, the household and related workers category comprise the largest major occupational group in 2006 accounting for almost 30 percent of the total deployed land-based newly hires with some 91,451 domestic helpers deployed. Factory and related workers, construction workers, building caretakers and related workers, hotel and restaurant related workers, caregivers and caretakers, medical related workers, engineers and related workers, dressmakers, tailors, and related workers, and performing artists have also significant number being deployed for overseas employment.

In terms of sea-based workers, in 2006, based on the profile of 230,022 deployed seafarers retrieved from POEA, majority or 136,579 of them were in rating category, while 52,757 and 38,508 were deployed as officers and passenger ship/liner personnel, respectively.

In terms of educational qualification, there has been a decline in the deployment of high school graduates for overseas employment while an increasing trend of college graduates being deployed abroad has been observed as shown in Table 2H. This trend may be a consequence of the international labor market becoming highly competitive that demands laborers with higher educational achievement. Even production workers in the world's leading manufacturers demand workers with higher education and skills.

TABLE 2G
Deployment of New Hires Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs)
Major Occupational Groups by Gender
For the year 2006

Occupational Group	Male	Female	Total	% Share to Total
Household and Related Workers	1,590	89,861	91,451	29.7
Factory and Related Workers	30,544	12,690	43,234	14.0
Construction Workers	40,178	2,862	43,040	14.0
Medical Related Workers	2,650	15,081	17,731	5.8
Hotel and Restaurant Related Workers	6,210	9,483	15,693	5.1
Caregivers and Caretakers	842	13,570	14,412	4.7
Building Caretakers and Related Workers	2,103	10,191	12,294	4.0
Engineers and Related Workers	10,754	415	11,169	3.6
Dressmakers, Tailors and Related Workers	375	7,456	7,831	2.5
Overseas Performing Artists	709	6,722	7,431	2.4
Total Deployment of New Hires	123,688	184,454	308,142	100

Source: Philippine Overseas Employment Administration

TABLE 2H
OFW Highest Educational Attainment by Both Sexes 2000 to 2002

Highest Grade Completed	Since 2000	2001	2002
Total	992,397	1,029	1,056
No grade completed	-	1	1
Elementary Undergraduate	16,521	16	12
Elementary Graduate	1,295	46	35
High School Undergraduate	190,530	56	54
High School Graduate	290,171	277	264
Post Secondary	145,608	23	31
College Undergraduate	187,878	249	279
College Graduate	121,836	360	381
Not Reported	29,886	1	-

Source: National Statistics Office

As a consequence of this global trend many Filipino degree holders are attracted to go abroad as shown in Table 2I because they could earn higher compensation and get better employment benefits overseas, although such trend may result to the problem of brain drain. College undergraduates and those with lower educational attainment, on the other hand, still manage to migrate and find jobs abroad but has to settle for lower paying jobs as domestic helpers, factory workers, construction workers, entertainers and other occupations that does not require specific and highly technical background.

Table 2I shows the annual flows of deployed OFWs who have finished college degrees. Notice from the figures that the bulk of OFWs have business related courses. The figures for nursing and engineering graduates are also significant and close to each other. Nursing professionals are highly demanded in developed economies with ageing population as in Japan as well as those with insufficient labor supply to sustain their economic activities as in the United States and Europe. Many doctors are said to be undergoing special courses for them to take the licensure examination in nursing (Manalansan, 2003). Likewise, there is a high demand for various types of engineers in developing and developed economies embarking on massive developmental projects particularly in Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates.

Because of shortages of teachers in developed economies particularly the United States there is an increasing trend in the departure of Filipino teachers observed in more recent years as shown in Table 2I. According to the POEA an average of 73 teachers per year migrate to teach in schools in the United States. They now consist of more than 10,000 foreign teachers being recruited yearly to fill the United States' demand for teachers

especially in crucial subjects such as special education, science and math. The higher compensation is the main reason that attracts teachers to the United States as teachers in the Philippines get an average salary of \$300 per month while in the United States they can receive from \$3,000 to \$4,000 per month (The Manila Mail, 2007). Most of the Filipino teachers who are recruited for overseas employment are the better ones with at least 10 years of teaching experience and units or degrees in graduate studies.

TABLE 2I
Annual Deployment of OFWs by Major/Highly Demanded
Educational Degree Programs from 1992 to 2006

Year	Education Science and Teacher Training	Accountancy	Business Administration And Related	Information Technology	Nursing	Engineering and Technology
1992	112	648	11,276	513	6,078	9,449
1993	130	502	9,461	646	7,308	8,846
1994	166	553	8,283	569	7,171	7,575
1995	119	465	7,501	681	7,954	6,668
1996	114	468	7,744	704	5,477	6,964
1997	166	422	9,001	955	5,245	8,446
1998	132	325	8,260	1,073	5,399	8,363
1999	128	291	6,757	808	5,972	7,269
2000	241	271	5,562	470	8,341	5,951
2001	147	330	5,342	533	7,602	6,918
2002	623	318	8,895	340	12,290	6,566
2003	463	274	8,410	225	8,288	5,677
2004	517	429	10,833	203	8,879	6,536
2005	789	317	10,289	204	11,392	6,400
2006	890	586	14,246	325	8,528	10,685

Figures were computed by the authors from the figures from POEA datasets

Source: Philippine Overseas Employment Administration

To make sure that the economy meets the standards of foreign employers, Technical Education Skills Development Authority (TESDA) has forged partnership with developed economies that seek to raise the quality of education of Filipino professionals. This serves as a facilitating and motivational factor for OFWs to migrate to other economies because they could now possess skills that would enable them to compete in the global labor market.

The emigration of Filipino professionals is exacting a toll on the economy's already inferior service sector (Manalansan, 2003). The shortage of nurses can paralyze the operations of public and private hospitals because many of their nursing staffs are applying in hordes, neglectful of the work they will vacate. A report by the Alliance of Health Workers (AHW) reveals that over the last two years, 17% of nurses in 11 hospitals went abroad implying that there would come a point where "operating rooms are staffed with novice nurses, and experienced ones often work double shifts" (Manalansan, 2003).

EXTENT OF PERMANENT MIGRATION

Table 2J shows that the United States has been the favorite destination of Filipinos seeking permanent residence abroad. Canada, Australia and Japan, are the next sought after destinations. Based on recent estimates shown in Table 2K, there are around 3.5 million Filipinos who are permanently residing in various parts of the world. Of the more than 8.2 million Filipinos who are overseas in 2006 close to 50 percent are temporary workers and almost 900 thousand have irregular immigration status in their host economies. Tourists and students are not included in the figures for they carry diverse visas when they migrate. Tourists who turned into irregular migrants were projected at the Philippine consulates and embassies in various territories.

TABLE 2J
Number of Registered Filipino Emigrants
By Destination for Selected Years

Year	United States	Canada	Australia	Japan	United Kingdom	Germany	New Zealand	Others	Total
1981	40,307	5,226	2,752	254	88	45	12	183	48,867
1985	38,653	2,097	3,458	126	276	213	52	394	45,269
1990	43,781	8,400	5,847	3,569	291	334	50	877	63,149
1995	34,614	11,288	2,966	4,883	151	661	579	1,100	56,242
2000	31,324	8,245	2,298	6,468	174	552	261	1,709	51,031
2001	31,287	9,737	1,965	6,021	176	507	284	2,077	52,054
2002	36,557	8,795	2,603	5,734	271	518	624	2,618	57,720
2003	33,916	9,521	2,223	5,929	225	445	382	2,496	55,137
2004	42,350	10,108	2,647	5,993	309	393	131	2,993	64,924
2005	40,280	13,598	3,027	7,062	478	367	394	3,822	69,028
2006	49,522	13,230	3,735	9,742	556	457	1,973	3,752	82,967

Note: United States includes Insular Area (American Samoa, Guam, Commonwealth of the Mariana Islands, US Virgin Islands, Republic of Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of Palau, and Commonwealth of Puerto Rico)

Source: Commission on Filipinos Overseas

Table 2K: Stock Estimate of Overseas Filipino Workers
As of December 2006

REGION / TERRITORY	PERMANENT	TEMPORARY	IRREGULAR	TOTAL
WORLD TOTAL	3,556,035	3,802,345	874,792	8,233,172
AFRICA	553	71,503	17,742	89,798
Nigeria	18	13,428	700	14,146
Libya	75	9,475	680	10,230
Others / Unspecified	460	48,600	16,362	65,422
ASIA, East and South	196,968	789,110	237,600	1,223,678
Japan	124,722	103,555	30,700	258,977
Malaysia	26,001	88,372	125,000	239,373
Others / Unspecified	46,245	597,183	81,900	725,328
ASIA, West	3,523	1,723,911	112,250	1,839,684
Saudi Arabia	247	1,001,330	18,000	1,019,577
Kuwait	94	133,361	11,500	144,955
Others / Unspecified	3,182	589,220	82,750	675,152
EUROPE	229,132	534,748	124,380	888,260
United Kingdom	62,606	93,358	9,600	165,564
Italy	23,108	84,972	20,000	128,080
Others / Unspecified	143,418	356,418	94,780	594,616
AMERICAS and TRUST TERRITORIES	2,887,129	333,763	356,400	3,577,292
United States of America	2,443,269	128,440	156,500	2,728,209
Canada	396,054	38,886	3,000	437,940
Others / Unspecified	47,806	166,437	196,900	411,143

OCEANIA	238,730	74,813	26,420	339,963
Australia	218,425	15,100	3,000	236,525
New Zealand	19,549	742	120	20,411
Others / Unspecified	756	58,971	23,300	83,027
SEABASED WORKERS	0	274,497	0	274,497

Notes: Prepared by the Commission on Filipinos Overseas from CFO, DFA, POEA and other sources covering 193 economies.

Permanent - Immigrants or legal permanent residents abroad whose stay do not depend on work contracts.

Temporary - Persons whose stay overseas is employment related, and who are expected to return at the end of their work contracts.

Irregular - Those not properly documented or without valid residence or work permits, or who are overstaying in a foreign economy.

Source: Philippine Overseas Employment Administration

SCOPE OF COOPERATION ON LABOR MIGRATION

In the Asian region, the Philippine government has been the most successful among the labor-sending economies in its attempts to negotiate labor agreements with other economies (Go, 2007). However, the number of bilateral labor and social security agreements that the Philippine government has successfully concluded over the last thirty years attests to the difficulties of such undertakings. Since 1974 the Philippines has been able to successfully established bilateral labor agreements with only 13 economies. However, the economy has not been able to enter into such agreements with the largest labor receiving economies of OFWs such as Singapore, Japan and Saudi Arabia.

The bilateral labor agreements between the Philippines and other economies may be classified into two broad categories, the labor recruitment and special hiring agreements, on the one hand, and the labor, employment, and manpower development agreements on the other hand (Go, 2007).

The labor recruitment agreements focus on the terms and conditions concerning overseas employment and the exchange of trainees. The bilateral agreements with Norway,

the United Kingdom, Papua New Guinea, Chinese Taipei, and Switzerland are largely recruitment agreements. The agreements with Norway and the United Kingdom specify the terms and conditions regulating the recruitment of Filipino health professionals while the agreement with Sweden specifies the terms and conditions for the exchange of Filipino professional and technical trainees. The agreement with Papua New Guinea details the terms and conditions for the employment of Filipino workers under a non-citizen employment contract. The Memorandum of Understanding between the Philippines and Chinese Taipei implements a special hiring facility that allows employers in Chinese Taipei to directly hire Filipino workers without the intervention of manpower agencies. This special hiring facility provides employers in Chinese Taipei an alternative option to the hiring of workers through manpower agencies. The agreement also includes the commitment of both parties to advance the interest not only of the employers but also of the Filipino workers.

On the other hand, the labor, employment and manpower agreements with Libya, Jordan, Qatar, Iraq, Kuwait, and the Commonwealth of Northern Marianas Islands (CNMI) contain the following essential features:

1. Promotion and strengthening of areas of cooperation in the field of labor, employment, and manpower development;
2. Exchange of information on relevant research, technical expertise, and other matters that would enhance employment promotion and labor administration in both the Philippines and the labor-receiving economy
3. Enhancement of the welfare and protection of the rights of Filipino workers in accordance with the labor laws of the receiving economy

4. Establishment of a Joint Committee composed of members from both the Philippines and the receiving economy to do a periodic review of the agreement and its implementation

Since 1974, most of the efforts of the Philippine government have been directed towards pursuing bilateral labor agreements with labor-receiving economies. A significant development in 2003 is the signing of a bilateral labor agreement between the Philippines and another labor-sending economy, Indonesia. This agreement is significant because it is the first successful attempt by the Philippines to try to consolidate the efforts of other labor sending economies in the region towards promoting the welfare of migrant workers and protecting their rights. The agreement identifies the following as priorities for joint initiative and cooperation:

1. Promotion and protection of the welfare and rights of migrant workers of both economies
2. Training and certification of migrant workers
3. Provision of legal aid for the protection of the rights of migrant workers

The agreement includes various forms of cooperation such as the exchange information, materials and experience, and the exchange of experts and staff. It also includes the development of collaborative training, joint research and development, joint efforts to promote and protect the welfare and rights of workers, and joint efforts to provide legal assistance for the protection of the rights of workers.

There is also a migration dimension in the still un-ratified Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement (JPEPA). The movement of natural persons is considered

as one of the most important areas of the JPEPA. Philippine negotiators have been vocal about the government's keen interest in opening the Japanese labor market to Filipino workers, particularly in healthcare services and information technology.

As one of the world's fastest aging societies, Japan is already facing a shortage of nurses and other medical personnel, especially in rural areas. The Japanese government, however, is conscious of public concerns that entry of foreign workers could put Japanese people out of jobs. Because of this, the Japanese government demands that certain conditions be met including ability to communicate in Japanese and meet local qualification standards before Filipino health professionals are allowed to work in Japan.

Recently, the Canadian province of British Columbia has signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Philippines to help fill its need for 350,000 skilled workers over the next 12 years. This two-year MOU will help strengthen relations between British Columbia employers and Philippine recruiters by providing more effective access to foreign workers, particularly those needed for temporary work in the tourism and hospitality, retail, and construction industries. Although the MOU's focus is on temporary workers, it does not prevent workers from being recruited on a permanent basis. The agreement also does not apply to live-in caregivers (Uy, 2008a).

At the start of 2008, there is a report that France would like to ease labor migration rules for Filipinos especially those who are in the electronic, information technology, and health care industries. However, this is still in the process of discussion with the Philippine government. The French government is interested in forging an agreement with Manila to address the needs of its labor market. Part of the proposal is for skilled Filipino workers and

professionals to return to the Philippines after several years of employment in France. Those who will be invited are those who can be useful to France and willing to be trained and useful to the Philippines when they come back. The policy is to address the problem of brain drain by enticing competent Filipinos to work in France for six, nine, 10 years and then they go back to the Philippines. (Uy, 2008b)

In addition to the bilateral labor agreements mentioned above, the Philippines also engages in international treaties that would protect the welfare of OFWs. In 2006, the Philippine Senate ratified two international labor conventions to provide basic legal protection among Filipino workers (Asia Pulse, 2006).

One of the treaties ratified is the International Labor Organization (ILO) Convention standards that called for the suppression of underground movements of migrants, including the prosecution of those responsible for manpower and trafficking. The ILO Convention 143 reaffirms the duty of host states to promote equality of opportunity and treatment between migrant workers and national workers in respect of employment and occupation, of social security, of trade union and cultural rights of individual and collective freedoms.

The second treaty ratified is the ILO Convention 97, or the Migration for Employment Convention that covers the conditions governing the orderly recruit of migrant workers. It laid down the principle of equal treatment of migrant workers and national workers as regards working conditions, trade union membership and the practice of collective bargaining, accommodation, social security, employment taxes and legal proceedings relating to matters referred to in Convention.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES AND POLICIES IN THE PHILIPPINES

CHANGES IN POPULATION

The population of the Philippines covering several years is shown in Table 3A. It can be inferred from the table that the population of the economy is increasing very fast. It has increased fourfold in the last 50 years, from about 20 million in 1950 to today's more than 80 million Filipinos (Arenas, 2006). As a consequence, rapid population growth has put an increasing pressure on the government to continuously expand the resources for housing, schools, hospitals and other social services as well as for the generation of employment opportunities to an increasing labor force. But given the limited government budget and its inability to raise significant revenues for these purposes, what result is an under investment in most basic social services. If the growth trend continues, it is estimated that by the end of 2010, the Filipinos would total more than 90 million.

The rapid population growth in the economy can be attributed primarily to its very high birth rates shown in Table 3B. Although the economy birth rates have been decreasing from around 3 percent during the 1970s down to around 2 percent in the 2000s these rates are still high compared with the economies in the region. Improvement in the level of income, higher educational attainment of women, increasing participation rate of women have been cited some of the major reasons for the decline in the birth rates. On the other hand, mortality rate has been stable at 0.6 percent during the 1980s and then declined to 0.4 percent in the 1990s to 2000s.

TABLE 3A
Philippine Population for Selected Years (In Millions)

Year	Population Level
1950	19.996
1955	23.222
1960	27.054
1965	31.567
1969	35.518
1970	36.551
1975	42.019
1980	48.088
1985	54.266
1990	61.104
1995	68.396
2000	75.766
2005	83.055
2006	86.000

Source: National Statistics Office (NSO)

TABLE 3B
Birth Rates and Mortality Rates of the Philippines
for Selected Years (per 1000)

Year	Birth Rate	Mortality Rate
1976	30.3	6.9
1980	30.3	6.2
1985	26.3	6.1
1990	26.3	5.1
1995	24.1	4.8
2000	23.0	4.8
2001	21.8	4.9
2002	20.8	4.9
2003	20.4	4.8

Source: National Statistics Office (NSO)

The population growth rates of the Philippines for selected years are shown in Table 3C. Although the Philippine population growth rate has declined from 3 percent in the 1960s to 2.3 percent in the 1990s, it is still considered high relative to neighboring economies such as Thailand at 1.4 percent and Indonesia at 1.6 percent. With this, Arenas (2006) claimed that over 1.8 million Filipinos are born yearly. Therefore, there are over 28 million more people today in the Philippines than in South Korea and 15 million more than in Thailand, when in 1965 these economies had about the same population size.

TABLE 3C
Annual Population Growth Rate of the Philippines
for Selected Years (in %)

Year	Annual Growth Rate
1950	1.66
1955	3.08
1960	3.13
1965	3.09
1970	2.91
1975	2.80
1980	2.62
1985	2.41
1990	2.37
1995	2.20
2000	1.98
2005	1.76
2006	3.55

Source: National Statistics Office (NSO)

KEY DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

The Philippines has a very young population as shown in the age structure of the population in Table 3D. The data suggest that the population has a slow structural aging since almost 70 percent of the population is between 1 to 34 years old with the highest concentration under bracket 5 to 9 years old (12.7 percent). Another indicator of the high incidence of young population is the median age which was estimated at 19.7 in 1990, 21.0 in 2000, and projected to be 26.5 in 2015 and 28.4 by 2020 based on the medium series projections of National Statistics Office (NSO). Although the proportion of people under age 15 is declining their absolute number continues to increase but a reversal is projected after 2010. Furthermore, older adults in the age bracket of 30 to 59 are continuing to increase in number and proportion. What is observed is that the economy continues to experience a surge in its young population associated with significant increases of the middle-aged population (Gultiano and Xenos, 2004).

TABLE 3D
Age Structure of the Philippine Population (1990 and 2000)

Age Group	2000	Percentage Share to Total	1990	Percentage Share to Total
Philippines	76,504,077	-	60,599,116	-
Under 1 year	1,917,431	2.51	1,817,270	3.00
1 – 4	7,752,071	10.13	6,649,703	10.97
5 – 9	9,694,781	12.67	8,061,008	13.30
10 – 14	8,949,614	11.70	7,465,732	12.32
15 – 19	8,017,298	10.48	6,640,651	10.96
20 – 24	7,069,403	9.24	5,768,325	9.52
25 – 29	6,071,089	7.94	4,945,251	8.16
30 – 34	5,546,294	7.25	4,201,026	6.93
35 – 39	4,901,023	6.41	3,501,621	5.78
40 – 44	4,163,494	5.44	2,753,843	4.54
45 – 49	3,330,054	4.35	2,221,488	3.67
50 – 54	2,622,316	3.43	1,905,828	3.14
55 – 59	1,903,649	2.49	1,439,403	2.38
60 – 64	1,633,150	2.13	1,127,881	1.86
65 – 69	1,138,842	1.49	807,620	1.33
70 – 74	797,972	1.04	565,339	0.93
75 – 79	505,356	0.66	687,127	1.13
80 to 84	490,240	0.64		
85 and over				

Source: National Statistics Office (NSO)

Another important demographic characteristic is population density which is shown in Table 3E for 1980, 1990, 1995, and 2000. According to census data in 2000, the economy has a population density of 225 people per square kilometer which has risen from 141 registered in the 1980 census. Although this national population density is not as high compared with other economies in the region, there is wide and significant variation across the regions in the economy. The National Capital Region (NCR), for example, remains the most densely populated region in the economy with 16,302 persons occupying a square kilometer of land. This man-land ratio is 61 times the national figure since the NCR is the smallest region with a land area of 619.50 square kilometers, or only 0.2 percent of the total land area. Since the NCR is the political, economic and cultural center of the Philippines, problems of traffic, squatting, congestion, unemployment, pollution, and inadequate social services usually abound that accompany an area with a high population density. On the other hand, the Cordillera Administrative

Region (CAR) recorded the lowest population density in 2000 with 70 per square kilometer respectively.

TABLE 3E
Philippine Population Density by Region (1980 to 2000)

	Density (persons/sq km)				
	Land area ^b (sq km)	2000 (May 1)	1995 (Sep 1)	1990 (May 1)	1980 (May 1)
Philippines	340,574.7	225	201	178	141
National Capital Region	619.5	16,032	15,260	12,830	9,565
Cordillera Administrative Region	19,392.9	70	65	59	47
1 Ilocos Region	13,012.6	323	292	273	225
2 Cagayan Valley	28,228.8	100	90	83	68
3 Central Luzon	21,548.1	381	329	294	228
4a CALABARZON ^c	16,611.9	561	467	382	277
4b MIMAROPA ^c	29,620.9	78	69	60	48
5 Bicol Region	18,130.4	258	239	216	192
6 Western Visayas	20,625.9	301	280	261	219
7 Central Visayas	15,886.0	359	316	289	238
8 Eastern Visayas	23,231.4	155	145	131	121
9 Zamboanga Peninzula ^d	17,046.6	162	147	130	104
10 Northern Mindanao	20,372.1	172	157	138	109
11 Davao Region ^d	20,417.8	180	161	144	108
12 SOCSARGEN ^d	22,481.6	143	127	107	77
13 Caraga	21,470.8	98	90	82	64
Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao	31,877.4	90	76	68	51
Consulates and missions abroad	...	...	...	...	...
Homeless population	...	...	...	...	...

^a In 2000, the population of disputed areas was reported in the next higher geographical level. For example, the population of Province A claimed by both Province A and Province B will be reflected in the region, but not in Province A or Province B. This explains the discrepancy when one sums up the province details, which is less than the regional totals.

^b Land area is based on the 2005 Estimated Land Area certified by the Lands Management Bureau.

^c Created under Executive Order No. 103 dated May 17, 2002, dividing Region IV into Region IV-A (CALABARZON) and Region IV-B (MIMAROPA) and transferring the province of Aurora to Region III.

^d Created under Executive Order No. 36 dated September 19, 2001, providing for the reorganization of the administrative regions in Mindanao and for other purposes.

Sources: National Statistics Office (NSO) and Lands Management Bureau (LMB)

The dependency ratio is another demographic characteristic since it shows the proportion of people who are dependent on potentially working population. Table 3F shows various estimates of dependency ratio in selected years. What is observed is that the dependency ratio has been decreasing since the 1980s. This is consistent with the trend of majority of developing economies in the globe where lower dependency ratio has been

prevalent. The declining dependency ratio could be attributed to the declining fertility rate that results in a significant change in age structures and distribution, gradual reduction of proportion of the population under age 15 and enlarged proportion over age 65. As developing nations move through the demographic transition, facing first a period of increasing child dependency ratios, then of decreasing child and old age dependency ratios as a larger proportion of the population moves through the working ages, and finally of increasing old – age dependency ratios (Lustig, 1998).

TABLE 3F
Dependency Ratio of the Philippines

Year	1980	1990	1992	2000	2020*
Dependency Ratio	84.7	76.8	72.7	68.5	53.6

Dependency Ratio = (0 to 14 years + 65 years and over)/Total of 15 to 64 years

* Projected

Source: National Statistics Office (NSO)

POPULATION POLICY

There is no separate national policy addressing reproductive health in the Philippines. However, the constitution provides that “the state shall defend the right of spouses to establish a family in accordance with their religious convictions and the demands of responsible parenthood.” Reproductive health is being addressed in the Medium – Term Philippine Development Plan 2004 to 2010. Among various goals relating to social justice and basic needs the plan calls for an emphasis on maternal health, women’s health, nutrition, and responsible parenthood (Center for Reproductive Rights, 2005).

There are measures to establish legislation that would reinforce the reproductive health program through the implementation of a comprehensive and formal legal approach to reproductive health. In line with this, the Reproductive Health Care Act of 2002 was

introduced allowing choice in making decisions in accordance with religious convictions, culture and the demands of responsible parenthood (Center for Reproductive Rights, 2005).

The Philippines is aware of its very rapid population growth and the government also enforces family planning methods to control population growth. The National Family Planning Policy of 2001 and the Philippine Population Management Program (PPMP) Directional Plan (2001 to 2004) also comprise the national policy framework on family planning. The aim of these policy and plan is to help couples and individuals achieve their desired family size within the context of responsible parenthood and improve their reproductive health towards the attainment of sustainable development.

In line with contraception use, contraceptive prevalence rates have increased substantially over the past decades due to the Presidential Decree No. 79 for Revising the Population Act of 1971 that mandated the Commission on Population (POPCOM) to make available all acceptable methods of contraception, except abortion, to all Filipino citizens limiting or preventing pregnancies. This coexists with stringent laws regulating the licensing, sale, and distribution of contraceptives (The Center for Reproductive Rights, 2005).

EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT

The Philippine labor force for selected years are shown in Table 3G. The labor force has grown from 8.5 million in 1960 to 33.2 million in 2006. Although the labor force is growing over time with increased population and participation rates, the level of unemployment is likewise increasing. While the employment rate was estimated at 92.7 percent in 2006 the highest employment rate was registered at 96.1 percent in 1975. On the other hand unemployment rate was estimated at 7.3 percent in 2006 and reached its peak in 1985 at 11.1 percent.

TABLE 3G
Labor Force for Selected Years

Year	Labor Force Participation Rate (%)	Total Labor Force (in '000)	Employed (%)	Unemployed (%)
1960	-	08,539	93.7	6.3
1965	-	10,322	92.8	7.2
1970	-	11,358	92.4	7.6
1975	-	14,142	96.1	3.9
1980	-	15,900	92.1	7.9
1985	63.4	21,329	88.9	11.1
1990	64.5	24,525	91.9	8.1
1995	65.6	28,040	91.6	8.4
2000	64.3	30,908	89.9	10.1
2001	67.5	33,361	90.2	9.8
2002	66.2	33,674	89.8	10.2
2003	67.1	35,120	89.8	10.2
2004	66.5	35,629	89.1	10.9
2005	64.8	35,494	92.6	7.4
2006	64.0	33,185	92.7	7.3

Source: National Statistics Office

Recent increases in the overall employment level came mostly from the services sector as the number of employed persons in this sector increased by 5.6 percent, from 15.5 million in 2005 to 16.4 million in 2006. On the other hand, the number of employed persons in the industry sector increased by only 0.2 percent. Furthermore, the employment level in the agriculture sector has been decreasing but it still absorbs a significant portion of the labor force.

Although the labor force has been increasing over time, the annual growth rates in more recent years registered negative rates as shown in Table 3H. With increasing population and increasing labor force participation rate these decreases in the labor force may be attributed to external employment. Laborers that are not absorbed in the domestic labor market sought employment opportunities in the international labor market.

TABLE 3H
Philippine Labor Force Growth Rate for Selected Years

Year	Labor Force Growth Rate (%)
1960	-1.92

1965	-2.36
1970	1.09
1975	1.85
1980	12.43
1985	2.76
1990	2.79
1995	2.03
2000	-3.41
2005	-0.38
2006	-6.96

Source: National Statistics Office

With this, overseas employment absorbed a significant amount of the Philippine labor force. From the late 1940s through the 1970s, migrants were largely Filipino members of the armed services, professionals, and relatives of those who had previously migrated. After the liberalization of the United States Immigration and Nationality Act in October 1965, the number of United States immigrant visas issued to Filipinos increased significantly from approximately 2,500 in 1965 to more than 25,000 in 1970. Most of those emigrating were professionals and their families. By the 1990s Filipino-Americans numbered 1.4 million, making them the largest Asian community in the United States (Dolan, 1991). In the 1970s and 1980s, quite a different flow of migration developed. Most emigrants were workers engaged in contract work in the Middle East because of their massive developmental projects. To date approximately 3000 workers leave the economy to work abroad. A million workers deployed for overseas employment on an annual basis can put a dent on the economy's labor force as well mitigate the economy's unemployment problem.

MANAGEMENT OF TEMPORARY LABOR MIGRATION IN THE PHILIPPINES

Philippine temporary labor migration management is considered a model in terms of best practices by other labor-exporting economies. However, the government has been ambivalent in integrating overseas labor migration as part of its overall development strategy. As a matter of policy, the Philippine government seeks to manage overseas employment as consistent as possible with national development objectives. The advancement of the rights, welfare, and interests of overseas Filipinos continue to be a major thrust of the economy's foreign policy.

The Medium Term Development Plan (MTDP) 1998-2004 states that “overseas employment remains to be a legitimate option for the economy's work force. As such, government shall fully respect labor mobility, including the preference of workers for overseas employment. Protection shall be provided to Filipinos who choose to work abroad and programs to effectively reintegrate them into the domestic economy upon their return shall be put up. Better employment opportunities and modes of engagement in overseas labor markets shall be actively explored and developed, consistent with regional and international commitments and agreements.”

While Filipino overseas workers contribute significantly to the stability of the economy through their remittances, “the State does not promote overseas employment as a means to sustain economic growth and achieve national development. The existence of the overseas employment program rests solely on the assurance that the dignity and fundamental human rights and freedoms of the Filipino citizens shall not, at any time, be compromised or

violated. The State, therefore, shall continuously create local employment opportunities and promote the equitable distribution of wealth and the benefits of development. The State shall deploy overseas Filipino workers only in territories where the rights of Filipino migrant workers are protected.”

In the MTDP 2004-2010 aside from protection, there is also a stress on productivity enhancement for laborers seeking overseas employment. Specifically, the Labor and Employment Action Plan includes the following objectives: improvement of OFWs’ competency, productivity and work values, enhance worker-employer relationship and improve labor welfare abroad, facilitate Filipino workers’ access to overseas labor markets, and promote flexible work and employment arrangements.

What started as a temporary relief from the burden of unemployment in the 1970s turned out to be the biggest contributor to the gross national income and the stabilization of the economy. Overseas employment has been growing over the past years. For many years, the number of Filipino workers deployed overseas has exceeded the increase in local employment.

As an overall policy, the government shall: (a) provide mechanism to protect the rights of overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) to fair and equitable recruitment and employment practices and ensure their welfare under a deregulated condition; (b) develop programs to ensure quality employment for OFWs; and (c) provide a provident fund for OFWs (POEA, 2005).

Migration management in the Philippines is guided by Republic Act (R.A.) 8042 or otherwise known as Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipino Act of 1995. In its declaration of policies, the act upholds the dignity of workers whether in the domestic economy or overseas. This legislation has been the basis for the government's role in licensing and regulation of recruitment agencies for overseas employment. The Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) grants licenses to recruitment agencies, regulates and monitors their performance, and prosecutes illegal recruiters.

The Philippine migration management program covers documentation, protection, social services, and human resources development involving fourteen government agencies including the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA), Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA).

For documentation, skilled and professional workers are required various documents including original and photocopy of employment contract duly signed by the employer and worker, work permit, visa or equivalent document; photocopy of valid passport.

For the protection of temporary workers, mandatory life and personal accident protection are provided to all departing OWWA-registered and documented OFWs on a per contract basis. OWWA members are entitled to life insurance, disability and dismemberment benefits, total disability benefit and burial benefit. Repatriation programs provided by OWWA cover scholarship programs, skills for employment, education for development, and seafarers' upgrading program.

Consistent with the spirit of R.A. 8042, reforms and trends in recent years focused on promoting welfare of overseas Filipino workers. The government has been forging bilateral agreements not just to secure the labor market but to ensure welfare of workers.

As discussed in the previous section bilateral agreements have concluded with other economies pertaining to the protection and welfare land-based overseas workers. Other features of these bilateral agreements include observance of terms and conditions of the employment contracts, as well as provisions for further enhancement of the said agreements.

The Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipino Act of 1995 (RA 9422) also paved the way for the protection of OFWs' rights by sending them to economies with labor agreements with the Philippines. According to POEA, the Philippines has bilateral labor agreements with only 13 out of the 197 economies hosting OFWs. In order to ensure that the rights and welfare of the migrant workers will not be sacrificed in foreign lands, the POEA shall deploy only trained and competent Filipino workers to economies where the Philippines has concluded bilateral labor arrangements (Gorgonio, 2007).

Such bilateral agreements include that with South Korea wherein they have increased the yearly quota of Filipino workers from 10,000 to 12,000 under its Employment Permit System agreement with the Philippines. Recently, a bilateral labor agreement with the United Arab Emirates was signed calling for the employment of thousands of Filipino workers. The POEA has a similar job agreement with Chinese Taipei under which thousands of Filipinos are now working there. The pending Japan - Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement (JPEPA), if ratified by the Senate, offers bright prospects for the employment of thousands more of medical and technical workers in Japan.

These bilateral agreements, however, are being opposed by private fee-charging recruitment agencies since they view these agreements as attempts of government to take over their business. They pointed out that the POEA, as the regulatory agency in the overseas employment industry, should not compete with the private firms.

As a matter of policy, the Philippine government seeks to manage overseas employment, in consistency with national development objectives. The advancement of the rights, welfare, and interests of overseas Filipinos continue to be a major thrust of the economy's foreign policy in recent years. As such, government actions in overseas employment that seek to promote recognition of the basic rights and freedom of migrant workers, expedite extension of assistance in securing redress of grievances through bilateral, regional, and multilateral fora, are continuously being pursued to uphold the dignity of OFWs (Tullao & Cortez 2004).

BENEFITS AND COSTS OF TEMPORARY LABOR MIGRATION

As an investment carried by the household to improve their economic status, migration has both costs and benefits. The huge amount of remittances sent regularly has stabilized the currency and contributed significantly to the growth of the national economy aside from enhancing households' welfare. On the other hand, overseas employment has substantial opportunity costs including brain drain, changes in the structure of production and redirecting the economy's comparative advantage (Tullao & Cortez 2003).

According to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP), one economic benefit of overseas employment is the remittance sent by OFWs which a major source of foreign exchange for the economy. Dollar remittances grew from USD 4.9 billion in 1998 to almost USD13 billion in 2006. As a percentage of Gross National Product (GNP), remittances increased to 10 percent currently from 7.2 percent in 1998. During the Asian crisis in 1997 to 1998, the economy escaped a negative growth in 1998 as dollar inflows from overseas workers propped up domestic demand (Tullao, Cortez, and See 2005).

The economic standing of many Filipinos households has improved because the head of the family and other members have earned salaries overseas many times over what they could have earned in the Philippines. Over the years, a significant proportion of Filipino families have relied on foreign remittances or income from abroad as a main source or income. In 1997 the Family Income and Expenditures Survey revealed that 6.2% of Filipino families derived their main source of income from remittances. This share of external remittance income has increased to 8.6 percent in 2000. There were regions, however, where

the share of external remittances income to total income reached 15.63 percent in 2000 (Tullao, Cortez, and See, 2005).

Migrant families use remittance income primarily for: (1) basic household necessities (2) payments of debts contracted to underwrite migration expenses (3) education of children (4) medical expenses or emergencies (5) purchase of land, or home construction or improvement (6) purchase of appliances or other durables and (7) savings and investments in micro-enterprises.

Overseas employment, however, has its costs on social structures and value systems. Working in a different society affects the individual worker's value system. Many of the Filipino entertainers in Japan, domestic helpers, trainees and other workers in some parts of the world have been subjected to abuse and exploitation. The worker's absence from his family for long periods also affects the family and marital life. Cases of abuse have destroyed lives of workers and their families. Hence, the generation of domestic employment remains the major priority.

Another drawback of external migration is the phenomenon of brain drain. Brain drain occurs when an economy loses its talented and skilled labor force and its ability to replenish those who leave the economy is threatened. With globalization, as the economy prepares local professionals for global competition, investments in human capital entail some social costs. The increase in the human capital value of professionals from these training and educational expenditures may push many of them to work overseas which may lead to the problem of brain drain (Tullao & Cortez, 2006b).

When the more productive human talents are employed abroad, the less qualified and inexperienced are left domestically. Inefficiencies of these young and inexperienced service providers contribute to increases in labor costs. In the case of the Philippines, it has to spend more to produce the same caliber of professionals that will in time leave the economy.

Aside from the real loss of manpower due to brain drain, the loss of the economy's comparative advantage can be viewed from the impact of remittance. The remittances sent by workers overseas can cause the appreciation of the real exchange rate by increasing the price of non-tradable relative to tradable goods. This appreciation of the real exchange has a resource allocation effect by attracting resources to the non-tradable sector away from the tradable or export and import-competing industries (Tullao, 2007a).

LABOR MIGRATION OF HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

As mentioned in the introduction, temporary labor migration can be viewed as a response to the demographic and labor asymmetries across nations. This may also be the reason why an increasing number of Filipino health professionals particularly nurses are leaving the economy in recent years. Table 6A shows the number of medical and related worker migrants from 1992 to 2006.

Currently, healthcare is the fastest growing industry in developed economies in Europe, North America and some parts of Asia mainly due to the increase of the aging population. As the industry grows, hospitals and medical centers have started to decrease patient stays. Simultaneously, there has been a shortage of nurses that has created the need to import foreign-trained nurses. The Philippines, on the other hand, is a major supplier of highly qualified nurses to these developed economies since Filipino nurses are considered as skilled, educated, talented, hardworking, have good command of the English language, sincere, independent, uncomplaining, warm, friendly, naturally caring, and family – oriented (Saporta, 2004).

TABLE 6A
Medical and Related Workers Migrants from 1992 to 2006

Medical and Related Workers	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Dental Assistants	84	152	75	73	83	124	172	193
Dentists	27	22	40	50	36	53	32	56
Dietitians and Public Health Nutritionist	105	128	61	82	40	72	98	66
Doctors Medical	84	71	57	63	38	60	55	59
Medical Assistants	8	9	39	15	40	5	7	3
Midwifery Personnel (NEC)	5	4	4	4	8	31	57	49
Midwives Professional	246	297	126	161	142	113	149	66
Nurses Professional	5,747	6,744	6,699	7,584	4,734	4,242	4,591	5,413
Nursing Personnel (NEC)	331	564	472	370	743	1,003	808	559
Optometrists and Opticians	36	42	32	63	36	53	68	96

Pharmaceutical Assistants	52	117	32	35	58	65	37	51
Pharmacists	52	33	32	54	57	42	47	55
Physiotherapists and Occupational Therapists	519	576	618	566	415	269	317	147
Technicians Medical X-Ray	347	325	319	318	273	368	409	249

MEDICAL AND RELATED WORKERS	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Dental Assistants	171	600	341	240	255	344	414
Dentists	33	57	62	40	88	70	71
Dietitians and Public Health Nutritionist	45	64	98	134	143	75	100
Doctors Medical	27	61	129	112	91	97	171
Medical Assistants	1	57	41	8	5	11	27
Midwifery Personnel (NEC)	96	81	172	46	25	49	18
Midwives Professional	55	190	312	276	252	230	367
Nurses Professional	7,683	13,536	11,867	8,968	8,556	10,718	8,076
Nursing Personnel (NEC)	658	286	423	302	323	674	452
Optometrists and Opticians	80	83	123	58	54	57	117
Pharmaceutical Assistants	99	169	112	106	91	95	95
Pharmacists	30	64	57	74	70	99	80
Physiotherapists and Occupational Therapists	235	330	517	371	468	421	716
Technicians Medical X-Ray	223	285	359	384	403	524	469

Source: Philippine Overseas Employment Administration

Because of the huge demand for nursing globally, many qualified and well-trained nurses from developing economies are encouraged to migrate in developed economies. Aside from increasing the training costs of inexperienced nurses, this significant exodus of nurses can threaten the viability and productivity of the health care sector in the sending economy. For example, the health care sector in the Philippines may face an impending crisis in the near future because of the loss of health professionals as a consequence of heavy migration of nurses. Moreover, the outflow of nurses has also attracted doctors and other non-nursing health professionals to go back to school and study nursing. This re-allocation impact can also reduce the stock of other health professionals. To sum, the following factors may contribute to the realization of the crisis: (a) lost of better and qualified nurses to hospitals abroad, (b) local hospitals are left with inexperienced nurses; (c) local hospitals are losing medical doctors because of shifting profession and the decline in medical enrollment (Tullao, 2007b).

Because of the intensity of the global demand for nurses, even nursing instructors and qualified teachers are attracted to migrate. This may even have serious and long-term implications on the quality of health service in the economy as the ability of the economy to produce competent nurses is severely threatened because even clinical instructors are migrating abroad.

As it is the current huge demand for nursing education in the Philippines is intended to respond to the growing needs for nursing services in developed economies instead of answering the needs of the economy particularly in the rural areas where there are critical shortages of nurses. The possibility of overseas employment and the high compensation to such employment opportunities may increase the rate of return and demand for nursing education. However, such huge demand for nursing education may not reflect the human resource requirements of the economy. Worse, even if this enhanced demand for nursing education does reflect the manpower requirements of the domestic economy, graduates from these programs may not be attracted to the domestic economy and local employment but to overseas market (Tullao, 2007b).

BUSINESS IMPLICATIONS OF TEMPORARY LABOR MIGRATION

The effects of migration prospects on human capital formation have been the focus of several studies suggesting that such prospects may in fact foster human capital formation and growth in sending economies. If the return to education is higher abroad than at home, the possibility of migration increases the expected return to human capital, thereby enhancing domestic enrolment in education. More people, therefore, invest in human capital as a result of increased migration opportunities. This acquisition can contribute to the dynamism in the educational sector.

This impact on demand for education has been empirically verified based on the Family Income and Expenditure Survey (FIES) for 1988, 1994, and 2000. The expenditure share of education in households with remittance is greater as compared to expenditure shares of households without remittance income. In Table 7A we have the share of education in total family expenditure for all families, families without remittance income and families with remittance income for all income groups.

The allocation of budget for education spending, moreover, is increasing with income. In other words, all things being equal, households with remittance income invest more in education as their income level increases. They invest more especially in high quality education specifically from good schools that charge high tuition fees and sometimes in courses that will yield higher compensation in the future such as nursing, which require more resources in the completion process (Tullao, Cortez, and See, 2005).

TABLE 7A
Share of Education Expenditures to Total Family Expenditures (in %)
2000

Income Decile	Full Sample	Without Remittances	With Remittances
First	1.1	1.1	1.3
Second	1.6	1.6	1.5
Third	2.0	1.9	2.5
Fourth	2.4	2.3	2.7
Fifth	2.7	2.6	3.1
Sixth	3.0	2.9	3.5
Seventh	3.6	3.3	4.4
Eight	4.0	3.8	4.6
Ninth	5.1	4.7	6.0
Tenth	6.5	6.3	6.8

Source: Tullao, Cortez, and See (2005)

TABLE 7B
Estimated Expenditure Elasticity for Education for 2000

Income Decile	Full Sample	Without Remittances	With Remittances
First	1.75	1.74	1.67
Second	2.26	2.31	0.90
Third	2.46	2.42	3.20
Fourth	2.07	2.11	1.62
Fifth	2.30	2.27	2.26
Sixth	2.32	2.30	2.51
Seventh	1.91	1.97	1.44
Eight	2.19	2.21	1.98
Ninth	3.16	2.15	2.19
Tenth	1.55	1.62	1.40

Source: Tullao, Cortez, and See (2005)

This enhanced demand for education has been answered by the ability of the private educational institutions to respond to the changes in the international labor market by opening new nursing programs or expanding existing ones. As the demand for education increases rapidly as a result of external migration, the need for more teachers and educational inputs becomes more pronounced to sustain the increased demand in education.

Shown in Table 7C is the level of enrollment for medical and allied courses from academic years 1998 to 1999 up to 2004 to 2005. It can be observed that there is a growing trend of enrollees in medical related courses. The increased enrollment will ultimately result to an increased level of graduates as shown in Table 7D. For the academic year 2004 to 2005,

enrollees and graduates account for approximately 20% and 10% of the total enrollment and graduates across all degrees respectively. What is observed in this data is that majority of the enrollees and graduates are coming from the nursing programs.

The increasing demand for medical and allied courses specifically in nursing as shown in Table 7E and inevitable labor migration of health professional has opened opportunities to some sectors. Firstly, due to the high level of demand for nurses abroad, nursing schools in the Philippines has been emerging incessantly. Ronda (2008) cited that the problem is the proliferation of nursing “diploma mills” or schools offering poor quality nursing education. This has the potential of damaging the status of the Philippines as the leading producer and exporter of high-quality nurses in the international labor market. This fear is not unfounded as shown by the unsatisfactory passing rate in the licensure examination for nurses. The Commission on Audit (COA) reported that from 2001 to 2005, only 42.2 percent of the nursing schools across the Philippines managed to have at least 50 percent of their graduates pass the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) licensure exams, with 7.22 percent of these schools failing to have even a single passer.

In addition, the large demand for Filipino nurses abroad entices illegal recruiters. The study by AcademyHealth zeroes in on the unethical practices on the recruitment of Filipino nurses that result to lower salary and substandard living conditions for Filipino recruits. Some unfortunate Filipino nurses hired under unethical recruitment practices receive lower compensation than what was promised them. Besides, Filipino nurses are treated as “second-class citizens” and are not permitted to socialize because there would be instances wherein they would be plucked out of their day off for another day of hard work (Esguerra, 2008).

Aside from these problems, illegal fee extorted by the recruiters is also prevalent, which is unethical according to Esguerra (2008) because these recruiters have already received payments from the hospitals. Selling of contracts is also rampant as well as the breach of contract by the employers wherein Filipino nurses abroad were strained into working under staffing agencies or doing a job entirely different from the one stipulated in the contract (Esguerra, 2008).

Esguerra (2008) recommended that the government of economies absorbing Filipino professionals and skilled workers such as the United States should have a broad national policy against illegal and unethical recruiters as well as abuses on foreign immigrant workers.

TABLE 7C
Enrolment for Medical and Allied Courses from
Academic Year 1998 to 1999 up to Academic Year 2004 to 2005

Academic Year	Medical and Allied Courses	Total Enrolment
1998 to 1999	155,868	2,279,314
1999 to 2000	150,634	2,373,486
2000 to 2001	141,771	2,430,842
2001 to 2002	164,000	2,466,056
2002 to 2003	220,195	2,426,976
2003 to 2004	321,571	2,431,378
2004 to 2005	445,729	2,402,315

Source: Commission on Higher Education

TABLE 7D
Graduates for Medical and Allied Courses from
Academic Year 1998 to 1999 up to Academic Year 2004 to 2005

Academic Year	Medical and Allied Courses	Total Graduates
1998 to 1999	34,218	334,564
1999 to 2000	30,053	350,807
2000 to 2001	27,296	363,640
2001 to 2002	26,474	383,839
2002 to 2003	33,547	405,716
2003 to 2004	41,688	386,920
2004 to 2005	34,218	334,564

Source: Commission on Higher Education

Table 7E
Enrolled and Graduates by Selected Medical Courses for
Academic Year 2001 to 2002 up to Academic Year 2004 to 2005

	Nursing		Dentistry		Medicine		Others	
	Enrolled	Graduates	Enrolled	Graduates	Enrolled	Graduates	Enrolled	Graduates
AY 98-99	25,256	11,097	9,500	1,239	12,824	2,171	108,288	19,711
AY 99-00	25,388	8,097	9,595	1,460	14,545	2,496	101,106	18,000
AY 00-01	27,142	5,483	8,840	1,259	15,176	2,214	90,613	18,340
AY 01-02	48,221	4,183	1,031	110	13,838	2,723	100,910	19,458
AY 02-03	92,106	5,425	7,112	1,260	15,148	2,802	105,829	24,060
AY 03-04	178,626	8,477	6,617	1,286	11,511	2,420	124,817	29,505
AY 04-05	293,626	14,334	5,343	1,133	11,197	2,721	135,563	16,030

Source: Commission on Higher Education

Another important business implication of temporary labor migration is the utilization of remittances coming from OFWs. The amount of annual OFW remittances is at least 5 times higher than the combined value of ODA and foreign direct investments that the economy receives. This huge magnitude of OFW remittances has several implications on the balance of payments, the real value of the currency and in mitigating the social and economic cost of securing ODA and FDI to finance international payments.

Given the importance of mobilizing resources for developing communities, it is now the tasks of various sectors including the financial institutions, local government units (LGUs) and non-government organizations (NGOs) to convince OFWs and their families on the value of savings by re-channeling their expenditures from current consumption towards financial investment and savings.

One way of addressing this loss in comparative advantage is to channel the remittance income towards the production of non-tradable goods which can stabilize the relative prices of non-tradable goods. One important effect of price stability is to mitigate the resource re-allocation effect of the appreciation of the real exchange rate as a result of the inflows of OFWs' remittances. One avenue where remittances can be channeled is through the various

instruments offered by the formal financial intermediaries. Tullao (2007a) suggested possible options that non-government organizations like cooperatives can pursue. Remittances can be used to finance local government projects, finance micro enterprises, provide credit that will compete with the informal financial intermediaries, finance migration expenses, finance human capital investment of community members, and finance consumption expenditures of dependent households.

AREAS FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION

In the light of increasing forces of globalization and the regional economic and demographic asymmetries the movement of workers across the Asia and the Pacific region will persist in the future. If the economies in the region are going to harness the positive benefits of temporary labor migration and mitigate its negative effects on both the sending and host economies there is a need to discuss avenues for regional cooperation. There are three main areas that can be discussed and explored for possible regional cooperation in the movement of laborers: access, protection and impact.

Access refers to a host of issues on how to ease the intra-regional flows of workers. These issues include the immigration policies and domestic regulatory framework of labor-importing economies that may restrict the entry and employment of foreign workers. Aside from institutional and regulatory restrictions there are also cultural barriers to cross border movement of workers. Language is one of the main barriers in the region there being no common regional language. Funding is likewise an access issue since migration is a costly investment in human capital. In the Philippines many of those who are able to reap the benefits of overseas employment are the more educated and those coming from middle and high income brackets. Limited financial capability and no access to credit may prevent the poorer segment of society to seek employment overseas.

Given these issues on access, there are possible measures that can be implemented to address these. For regulatory measures, liberalization of immigration policies to allow ease in the movement of workers can be explored at the regional level. Technical barriers such as

language and cultural barrier can be addressed through technical assistance coming from host economies to sending economies on the funding and provision of language training programs and inter-cultural seminars. Another area for consideration and regional cooperation is the convergence of regulatory measures in the region through mutual recognition arrangements. This will allow recognition of educational qualifications, training, work experience and licensure examinations so that professionals can easily work within the region. In addition, there should also be a discussion on limiting the levies imposed on foreign workers. There are economies that charge higher levies on less skilled workers making it costlier and difficult for the poorer segment of society to participate in reaping the benefits of overseas employment.

The issue of protection refers to the working conditions in host economies so that foreign workers are not exposed unduly to exploitation, abuse and maltreatment. Filipino entertainers, for example, working in Japan are not considered part of the labor force and therefore not covered by the legally mandated benefits and protection enjoyed by local workers. They receive their payment usually at the end of a long contract instead of a regular payment scheme (Tullao & Cortez, 2004). In addition, many Filipinos working as trainees in developed economies in the region are exploited to a certain extent because they are treated as regular workers without the appropriate compensation. Many Filipino domestic helpers complain that their passports and other travel documents are confiscated by their employers for security measures during the duration of their employment. Although these issues on protection are addressed bilaterally, the region through the initiative of the ASEAN+3 and the International labor Organization (ILO) can discuss the establishment of a framework agreement towards the protection of foreign workers given the magnitude of foreign workers and the high incidence of abuse.

The issue of impact refers to the negative consequences that temporary labor migration may bring to the family, community, and the sending as well as the receiving economies. This may result to brain drain, overexpansion of education, and the appreciation of the real exchange rate due to the remittances sent to the sending economy. On the other hand, receiving economies are also experiencing the social impact of entry of foreign workers in terms of stress on the social services and inter-cultural conflicts.

For the re-allocation effect of the appreciation of the real exchange rate, sending economies may adopt measures to mitigate the impact of remittances on the real exchange rate. Re-channeling expenditures towards investments and the increasing the production of non-tradable goods including education and health may mitigate the inflationary impact of appreciation of the real exchange rate on the non-tradable sector. As a consequence it can also minimize the displacement of industries that may lose their comparative advantage due to the appreciation of the real exchange rate.

For the problem of brain drain and loss of skilled professionals, sending economies may be compensated for the loss in human power. Receiving economies can provide assistance particularly in enhancing the education sector of the sending economies. Compensation is needed for sending economies that are losing health professionals due to migration on several grounds. Sending economies are the ones that trained these professionals and spent huge amount of resources. If the training costs in the sending economy are substantially lower than in the receiving economy, this can result to a reverse transfer of technology. Fairness demands that poor labor sending economies should be compensated for implicitly subsidizing the education of health professionals in developed economies. Moreover, with the loss of these health professionals, the health sector of the

sending economy is imperiled and therefore should be given assistance.

Economists have attempted to deal with the international “brain drain” problem. Bhagwati and Partington (1976) proposed a variety of tax-transfer schemes but the welfare implications of labor mobility between nations are unclear because the individual and state objectives may conflict. However, a coordinated international response to address this issue never materialized. The issue of a brain drain tax should be an issue that can be tackled at regional or global level to compensate the sending economy.

Another area for cooperation is in the area of human resource development. Since movement of workers is based on the quality of human capital, there is a need to assist the sending economies to maintain, if not improve, their quality of education. If there is cost differential in the training, receiving economies should assist in the educational system because well educated individuals in other economies are potential productive workers domestically and regionally in the future.

What to do with returning migrants is another potent area for cooperation. Although this is the problem of the sending economy, the receiving economy can also assist the migrant worker to learn technical and other employable skills that migrant worker can utilize upon return to the economy of origin. This will facilitate re-entry and may solve the problem of overstaying and seeking permanent residence in the host economy that may draw greater social costs. There should be a discussion on how to make return migration an attractive option for temporary foreign worker. For example, they can given an attractive retirement/social security benefits that they can use if they return to their home economies. This may encourage return migration since there is a spatial differential in the cost of living.

CONCLUSION

It has been documented in many studies that indeed temporary international labor migration has contributed significantly to the dynamism of the Asia Pacific region. The deployment of domestic workers to more vibrant economies like Hong Kong, Singapore, and Chinese Taipei has contributed to the rapid growth of these economies not only through the direct employment of these workers but also indirectly as women were released from household chores and entered and further expanded the labor force. The economic prosperity that Singapore, Malaysia, South Korea, Chinese Taipei, Hong Kong and Japan are currently enjoying will not be possible without the migrant workers from Southeast Asia that augmented their shortages in the labor force.

Sending economies have also enjoyed the benefits of temporary labor migration. It has received substantial remittances from workers and contributed positively to the stability and growth of their economies. On the other hand, receiving economies are apprehensive about the growth of foreign workers with its impact on the social infrastructure as well as in undermining society's cultural homogeneity.

There is a need to discuss these issues and harness the potential contributions of international migration on both sending and receiving economies and mitigate its negative impact. The issues of access, protection, and impact pertaining to the temporary international labor migration should be the focal points in any regional discussion on this contemporary phenomenon. Some of the areas for regional cooperation should include liberalization of immigration policies, convergence of domestic policies pertaining to the employment of

foreign workers, decreasing the cost of migration, human resource development, brain drain tax, increasing the incentive for return migration and protection of migrant workers, among others. The resolution of these issues will enhance the benefits already enjoyed from temporary migration and mitigate its negative consequences.

However, the proposed regional discussions of issues are meant primarily to respond to the economic and demographic asymmetries in the region. By removing these kinks we can harness the potentials of economic and demographic complementation towards an increase and ease in the movement of human resources. But resolution of these issues is premised on a view that existing regional asymmetries will and should persist in the future. However, if the objective is to move towards enhanced regional integration and not simply to exploit opportunities of the unevenness of economy and demography, then what is needed is regional cooperation meant to address the economic and demographic gaps. But if such perspective is going to be pursued; once the gaps are narrowed down it is possible that movement of workers inter-regionally will not be as massive as today. Movement of workers across the region will no longer be based on economic and demographic imbalances but based on the workers preferences and attraction of destination in terms of working conditions and living environment. However, narrowing economic and demographic gaps is a long-term objective. For now, we have to contend with harnessing the opportunities offered by economic and demographic asymmetries in the region.

In an era of increasing globalization and trade liberalization, the one significant exception to free markets today has been the free movement of people. Few bilateral and multilateral agreements exist for international migration and for many migrant workers, Filipinos included, the absence of any protection under the law has led to exploitation and

abuse. While many receiving economies claim a belief in free markets, including labor markets, they use highly restrictive and bureaucratic regulations to control cross-border labor migration, particularly of unskilled workers.

In view of the difficulty of successfully negotiating formal bilateral agreements, alternative mechanisms have been employed by some sending economies to protect their workers. Go (2007) enumerated the following. First, a joint liability between local employment agency and foreign employer could be implemented. RA 8042 stipulates joint liability between the local employment agency and the foreign employer for violations of the foreign employer. Second, there should be selective deployment ban to economies that are violating workers' rights. Third, there should be a formulated standard model of employment contracts. Fourth, there should be a ratification of migrant worker instruments. Note that the Philippines is the model in Asia, having ratified all three international migrant worker conventions namely 2 ILO Conventions and 1 UN Convention. Fifth, governments should push migrants' rights and migrant protection standards in international forums such as in the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC). Sixth, a steering committee, composed of senior officials of both partner economies must be established which will meet at least once a year to review the memorandum of understanding and to coordinate the implementation of programs. In line with this, joint working groups must also be established in receiving economies through the respective embassies or labor offices to promote and protect the welfare and rights of their migrant workers. These joint working groups are to meet regularly and are to pursue programs on site in close coordination with the steering committee.

Consequently, the implementation of agreements in accordance with its scope between the Philippines and its partner economies will be interesting to monitor since it can

serve as a test case for the viability and the effectiveness of collaborative efforts by receiving economies to gain leverage and to consolidate their strengths toward protecting the welfare and rights of their migrant workers.

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