
Working Paper on the Millennium Development Goals, Migration in the Philippines and the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals¹

Center for Migrant Advocacy (CMA)
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Introduction

The millennium development goals were enacted in 2000 following the Millennium Summit of the United Nations. The adoption of the United Nations Millennium Declaration advocates for the accomplishment of eight goals by 2015 which include: (1) to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; (2) to achieve universal primary education; (3) to promote gender equality and empower women; (4) to reduce child mortality; (5) to improve maternal health; (6) to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; (7) to ensure environmental sustainability; and, (8) to develop a global partnership for development. Under each goal are specific targets to be reached by certain dates. While some countries and regions have made significant progress in reaching these goals, others have not, and progress on the MDGs is not uniform globally.

As of mid-2014 the Philippines had been successful in achieving targets under some of the MDGs, such as: a reduced child mortality rate, prevalence and death associated with malaria, detection and treatment of tuberculosis under the DOTS (Directly Observed Treatment Short-course) program, a control strategy recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO), and safe access to drinking water.

While some progress has been made in the achievement of the MDGs, some goals remain where achievement appears to be unfeasible by 2015. It does not seem likely that the Philippines will accomplish MDG 2 on universal primary education, MDG 5 on improving maternal health, and, MDG 6 on combating HIV and AIDS (Philippine Civil Society, n.d, p.5).

The MDGs will come to an end in December 2015, however this does not mark the end of global development efforts. Post-2015 goals will be developed in order to build onto the MDGs and the progress that has already been made. The post-2015 agenda will place a large emphasis on sustainable growth and will be known as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Migration is a global phenomenon in today's world. Currently, over 232 million of the world's population migrates. As of December 2012, the Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO) estimated approximately 10.5 million Filipinos to be living and working overseas (Commission on Filipinos Overseas [CFO], 2012). This is more or less ten percent of the country's population. While migration must not be used as a strategy for development, it must be taken into consideration when developing goals and targets for the post-2015 SDGs. Migration and development are interrelated concepts, where the success of one is intertwined with the other. In order for the Philippines to pursue sustainable development it is essential to incorporate goals and targets relating to migrants and migration in the post-2015 SDGs.

During the 2014 Global Forum on Migration and Development in Stockholm, Sweden, civil society organizations developed an agenda outlining objectives similar to those developed for the MDGs. These goals emphasized targets that pertained to migrants and migration. The eight point agenda seeks to “address not only the contributions that migrants make to development in countries of origin and destination, but also the possibilities for better policy planning and coherence that can make migration more genuinely a choice and not a necessity, and a gain than drain” (United Nations High Level Society Civil Dialogue [UN HLD Civil Society], 2013). Migration has the potential to benefit both countries of origin and destination, and in order for migration in the Philippines to be a choice rather than a necessity, it is imperative to encompass targets for migration in the post-2015 development agenda (UN HLD Civil Society, 2013).

This working paper will break the MDGs and SDGS down into six categories that include poverty, education, health, gender, environment, and additional considerations. This paper will explore the Philippines current progress for each category of the MDGs as it relates to migration within the country which will be followed by the

translation of the Stockholm agenda into the context of migration in the Philippines, thus advocating for the integration of migrants and migration into the national Philippine post-2015 development agenda.

MDG Goals Under Poverty:

GOAL 1. Eradicate Extreme Hunger and Poverty

- **Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than a dollar a day**
- **Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people**
- **Reduce by half the proportion of people who suffer from hunger**

The first goal under the MDGs was to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger. Targets under this goal included: reduction of half the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day; achievement of full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people; and the reduction of the proportion of people who suffer from hunger by half.

Currently, the Philippines has not met the target of reducing the proportion of the population that falls below the poverty line and has not yet achieved full and productive employment for all. The Philippines faces large challenges such as a lack of inadequate employment opportunities. In 2012, underemployment reached a new high of 22.7 percent, the worst since 2006. Unemployment in 2012 was 17 percent for 17-24 year olds, and at 7 percent overall (Philippine Civil Society Position, n.d., pp.4-5). As of April 2014 unemployment was reported to be 7 percent, however this fails to include Leyte after Typhoon Yolanda and the subsequent displacement of households. Thus, unemployment in 2014 is estimated to be closer to the 2013 figure of 7.6 percent (Philippines Statistics Authority, 2014). Moreover, while the number of jobs increased in 2012, this is due to an increase in part-time employment. Industrial businesses in the Philippines are continuing to close which concludes in job loss, income erosion, and decreased revenues (Philippine Civil Society Position, n.d., p.5). Despite the deprivation of the industry, the economic growth rate was 5.7 percent in the first quarter of 2014 (Trading Economics, 2014). While reports indicate that unemployment is decreasing in the Philippines, the increase in economic growth rate is much larger than the reduction in unemployment. Over one quarter of the population in the Philippines, or 23 million Filipinos, live on less than US\$1.35 per day (United Nations & National Economic and Development Authority [UN & NEDA], 2014, p.11).

Income inequality in the Philippines has intensified. The Gini coefficient measures the distribution of income among a country's population. A Gini coefficient of zero expresses perfect income equality while a Gini coefficient of one hundred demonstrates the greatest income inequality. In the Philippines, from 1985 to 2009, the Gini coefficient moved from .447 to .448. Development is not even across the Philippines; poverty is the most prevalent in rural areas and among certain populations (Philippine Civil Society Position, n.d., p.5).

Unemployment in the Philippines is higher for young people. Scholars refer to the loss of young people due to unemployment or due to educational opportunities abroad as a loss of "human capital." In the last couple of years labor productivity has fallen in the Philippines. A study undertaken in two schools in Quezon City and Baguio explored the influence of education on the decision to migrate. The study found that the decision to migrate is largely dependent on what is available in the domestic labor market. Primarily, 70 percent of students choose their field of study based on what was available in the labor market in the Philippines. However, out of the same students 60 percent also chose their field of study based on what type of employment was available overseas. While most students wanted to stay within the Philippines if there were relevant job opportunities, students also chose their degree on the opportunities outside of the country with migration in mind as

an alternative. Based on this, it appears that the majority of migration is not currently a choice, even for highly-skilled professionals, but rather more of a necessity due to a lack of employment prospects. The ILO highlights that the most skilled workers characterize the permanent outflow of workers from the Philippines (Mendoza, Yap II, & Navarro, 2013, p.12).

Due to unemployment and underemployment there is a large emigration of Filipino nursing professionals outside of the country. Nurses that migrate out of the country are often specialized in the ER, OR, or ICU and have between one and ten years of experience (Lorenzo, Galvez-Tan, Icamina & Javier, 2007). 15,655 nurses left the Philippines for overseas work as new hires in 2012 (Philippine Overseas Employment Administration, 2013). As it is easier to find work abroad as a nurse, there is an increasing number of Filipino doctors that obtain nursing degrees in order to migrate out of the country for work overseas. Doctors that migrate as nurses typically have more than ten years of experience and are specialists in an area of health care. It was cited that the following influenced the decision to migrate: poor working conditions, low salaries, political instability, corruption, as well as potential career advancement, job opportunities, and economic stability in the destination country (Lorenzo et al., 2007). Due to the lack of employment prospects within the country, the Philippines is losing their experienced working professionals. Therefore it is essential that the Philippines focus their education programs on the needs of their own health care professionals.

Post-2015: Incorporating Poverty and Migration through the Stockholm Agenda

GOAL 1. Create jobs, sustainable livelihoods and equitable growth

- **Create and preserve decent work opportunities in countries of origin which make migration and re-migration an option instead of a necessity and mitigate brain drain**
- **Ensure that migrants enjoy decent working conditions and social protection that conform to international human rights and labor standards**

GOAL 2. End poverty

- **Reduce costs of labor migration, with priority to abolishing debt bondage and recruitment charges to migrant workers**
- **Reduce the cost of sending remittances**
- **Protect and promote the private use of remittances for family and community development**

GOAL 7. Ensure stable and peaceful societies

- **Increase public awareness of cultural, social and economic contributions of migrants and diaspora**
- **Institutionalize mechanisms that embrace and integrate or reintegrate migrants and their families into their countries of origin, heritage and destination**

Under the Stockholm Agenda, Goals 1, 2, and 7 can be linked to poverty. These goals advocate for sustainable jobs, livelihood and growth, along with an end to poverty, and the creation of stable, peaceful societies. Targets under these goals emphasize the creation of decent job opportunities, working conditions, mitigation of brain drain, as well as, emphasizing the abolishment of recruitment charges, sending remittances, and promotion of long-term investment. Finally, these targets emphasize the contribution of the diaspora and reintegration methods. Addressing these targets from a migration perspective will help to alleviate poverty in the Philippines and

continue to make migration a choice rather than a necessity.

Decent Job Opportunities and Working Conditions

In order to make migration a choice, jobs need to be created within the country. Currently, Filipinos are not provided with promising job prospects or wages and benefits that are competitive on the global level, thereby creating the desire to seek work outside of the country. An increase of 1.5 million of working Filipinos is expected between 2010 and 2020 (UN & NEDA, 2014, p.6). If there are currently not enough employment prospects, migration will not decline if the national job market becomes more competitive. Furthermore, salaries in the Philippines must be increased to living wages. Many nurses choose to go abroad in order to earn higher wages. In 2003, it was estimated that nurses earned approximately USD 170 per month in urban areas in the Philippines and USD 75-95 per month in rural areas in the Philippines. This is in comparison to USD 3000-4000 per month abroad (Martin, 2013, p.78). Thus, it is not only jobs that need to be created, but minimum salaries need to be increased in order for Filipinos to earn living wages.

Mitigation of Brain Drain and Filipino Migrant Workers

Migrant workers have the potential to facilitate the transfer of skills, knowledge, and technology to a migrants country of origin. While migrant workers leave the country to work abroad, migrants can help to develop new markets in their country of origin in the future. Studies show that skilled professionals will often reinvest in their country of origin and contribute to the creation of new trade links. This is also beneficial for the destination country as this results in new global connections. Moreover, professionals may return home after upgrading their skills and contribute to a larger base of knowledge and the transmission of new skills within their profession (Usher, 2005, pp.17-18).

The age group, twenty-five to forty-four represents the largest proportion of Filipinos working abroad. This age range is considered to be the most productive in terms of work, and most people abroad attained a bachelors degree or higher. There are more professionals leaving the country than there are being added to current professions in the country. In 1995, research studies indicated that 44 percent of Filipino OFWs held degrees and 40 percent of Filipino emigrants held degrees. This is in comparison to twenty percent of workers that are degree holders who remain in the Philippines (Opiniano & Castro, 2006, pp.75-78).

The Transfer of Knowledge Through Expatriate Nationals (TOKTEN) is a global program through UNDP that provides expatriates with an opportunity to reinvest in their country of origin. Through the TOKTEN program in the Philippines contributions have been made through expatriates that involve the development and implementation of water irrigation systems during droughts, along with the development of cancer test kits for shrimp and tilapia in the fishing industry, and the transfer of knowledge from expatriate professionals (Opiniano & Castro, 2006, p.83). The TOKTEN program provides an avenue in which Filipino migrant workers have the opportunity to engage in long term development of the country. Programs such as these are extremely beneficial to the country and provide a platform for sustainable development. Still, it must be noted that these programs are only temporary in nature and are not reintegration programs. In order to capture the long term benefits of migration and to create sustainable development it is essential to harness the knowledge and skills of Filipino migrant workers.

Reintegration

Opportunities and programs for re-migration in the Philippines could be strengthened. Out of the three phases of the migration cycle; pre-departure; in-country; and reintegration, reintegration is the least developed phase. Both temporary migrants and permanent migrants have the potential to invest in the country as long as the Philippine government is transparent about reintegration policies and programs. In order to facilitate and encourage the reintegration of Filipino migrants, there must be an emphasis on the expansion of reintegration

programs and an emphasis on the inclusion of all employment sectors. Current reintegration programs include the 2 Billion Reintegration through the National Reintegration Center for OFWs (NRCO) which primarily focuses on entrepreneurship. In addition, there is the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) Livelihood Development Program for OFWs. While workers may be low-skilled or high-skilled, the program has certain requirements that the OFW must fulfill before they are able to participate in the program. For example, they must be an OWWA member and elements such as the feasibility of the proposed business are examined.

In the United Nations Country Consultations on the Philippines Post-2015 Development Agenda there were a number of barriers to reintegration that were highlighted. In particular, some of the major reasons that Filipinos did not intend to return to the Philippines was due to the current state of conflict in specific areas in the country, the high cost of power, the lack of agricultural technology, the lack of investment opportunities and labor market information, along with natural disasters (UN & NEDA, 2014, p.6). As some of these reasons are quite complex, a simple starting point could be the creation of investment opportunities and more access to information regarding the current labor market should be generated in order to encourage the reintegration of overseas Filipinos. Most importantly, would be the creation of a domestic job market in which Filipinos desire to return home for.

Long Term Investment

While migrant workers go overseas in order to earn money to provide for the welfare of their family, some are also able to invest money for the purposes of housing, education and health care. From 2003 to 2006 the number of families living in poverty in the Philippines increased. Remittances often have a smaller impact on lower-income families, whereas they have a larger impact on higher-income families. While remittances provide some poverty relief within a country, this relief is more often than not, short term. When migrant workers send remittances home for basic needs and investments in education they are forced to remain overseas until their children have finished their education. It is not possible to return to the Philippines and continue to provide family members with certain opportunities. Thus, remittances enable the family to feed their families, meet basic social needs, and send their children to school without putting pressure on the government for assistance. In 2012, remittances were the highest recorded in the Philippines at US\$ 23.8 billion. Remittances make up approximately nine percent of GDP in the Philippines, however these are not largely used for investment. Remittances are often used for livelihood and translate to the consumption of goods and services (UN & NEDA, 2014, p.5), however investing in children's education can be seen as a long-term investment. In order for Filipinos to be able to return home and continue to invest in their families, opportunities with living wages must be created.

MDG Goals Under Education:

GOAL 2. ACHIEVE UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION

The second MDG is to achieve universal primary education. The target under this goal was to guarantee that both boys and girls in rural and urban areas have the ability to complete primary school.

In 2000, net enrolment in primary school was at 97 percent. The enrolment rate has since fallen and the Philippines has yet to achieve universal primary education. There are currently several barriers to education in the Philippines, and in 2012 it was estimated that six million youth in the Philippines were not in school. Net participation rates (NPR) for primary school have fallen, whereas the NPR for high school remains at just over 50 percent. Moreover, dropout rates are the highest in primary school, with 6 percent of youth leaving the educational system, where most students are leaving from lower grades (UNDP, 2013b).

As of 2006, Mindanao had 6 out of 10 provinces with the lowest high school graduation rate. Sulu was the lowest with a high school graduation rate of approximately 23 percent and a primary school graduation rate of approximately 78 percent. This can be compared to the 2006 national primary school graduation rate of 83 percent. In addition to this, the Mindanao region has the largest disparity in national test scores, where differences in income are a large factor in the disparity (UN & NEDA, 2014, p.6).

While the region of East Asia spends approximately 3.6 percent of GDP on public education and South Asia spends an average of 3.8 percent on education (Philippine Civil Society Position, n.d., p.6), the Philippines spends less than both of these. In 2009, the Philippines spent 2.7 percent of GDP on education (World Bank, 2014). It is recommended to spend 6 percent of a country's GDP on education (UNESCAP, 2011).

Other barriers include the location of Alternative Learning Systems (ALS). These are schools where out-of-school youth, along with drop-outs, employed Filipinos, and senior citizens among others, can attend non-formal educational programs. Alternative Learning Systems are not located within individual communities in rural areas but rather are located in schools and learning centers in cities and municipalities. Therefore, this remains an obstacle for children who are already denied access to education in rural areas due to the cost and distance of schools. Moreover, this increases the exposure of children, particularly boys, to child labor. Children with disabilities face additional hurdles in accessing education due to transportation, building access, and access to facilities (Philippine Civil Society Position, n.d., p.6).

Post-2015: Incorporating Education and Migration through the Stockholm Agenda

GOAL 4. Provide quality education and lifelong learning

- **Ensure migrants; access to education, particularly for children who are themselves the children of migrants**

The fourth goal of the Stockholm Agenda is to provide quality education and lifelong learning. The target under this goal pertains to ensuring that the children of migrants also have access to education.

In 2000, it was estimated that one out of every ten children in the Philippines had a parent that was a migrant worker (Bryant, 2005, p.2). Remittances often increase the investment a family makes in education and affords better educational opportunities for the children who have a parent that is working overseas. These opportunities can include enrolment in private schools. Studies demonstrate that children of OFWs often do as well as other children in school. However one difference that was highlighted in several studies pertained to children who had a mother working overseas. It was noted that these children performed poorer in school, and had lower physical and emotional health than children who had a family member other than a mother working overseas. It was also highlighted that children with a mother working abroad were more likely to fall behind in school. (Yeoh & Lam, 2007).

The United Nations Philippines Country Consultations highlights that the creation of an environment that includes support mechanisms and policies to emphasize a culture of investment in areas such as education is necessary. Even though this is a priority for most OFW families, there is still room for further emphasis and cultivation. The report continues to highlight that the Philippines must match this with the creation of jobs within the economy in order for the country to “absorb the new human capital resources” (UN & NEDA, 2014, pp.5-6).

MDG Goals Under Health:

GOAL 4. Reduce Child Mortality

- **Reduce by two thirds the mortality rate among children under five**

GOAL 5. Improve Maternal Health

GOAL 6. Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria, and Other Diseases

There are three goals that fall under health in the MDGs. These include Goal 4, 5, and 6. These pertain to the reduction of child mortality, the improvement of maternal health and the eradication of infectious diseases. Targets under these goals include reducing the child mortality rate for children under five by two thirds, reducing the maternal mortality rate by three quarters, achieve universal access to reproductive health, halt and reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS, and to achieve universal access to treatment for HIV/AIDS for those who require it.

Child Mortality

The Philippines has been quite successful in reducing the child mortality rate. In impoverished rural areas where women have limited education the child mortality rate is generally higher.

Maternal Health

While the maternal mortality rate has been reduced from 209 to 162 deaths per 100,000 live births by 2012, it is not likely that the Philippines will meet the MGD goal on maternal mortality of 52 by 2015 (UN & NEDA, 2014, p.3).

Infectious Diseases

As much as migration is temporary and circular, there is a large potential for the spread of infectious and communicable diseases that can afflict both sending and receiving countries. Due to the frequency of their travels, migrants are more exposed to health risks. There have been outbreaks of SARS in Hong Kong, corona mers in the Middle East, the ebola virus in West Africa, as well as cases of HIV/AIDS. As migrant workers are more susceptible to infection a stigma emerges from this and migrant workers are unjustly discriminated against.

An additional challenge that pertains to health and migration is related to the outmigration of health care workers in the country. Two hundred hospitals were closed in the new millennium and eight hundred were partially closed due to a shortage of health care workers. It is estimated that a nurse may have 40 to 60 patients and in 2002 and 2003 it was estimated that seventy percent of deaths in the health care system were unattended (Lorenzo et al., 2007).

Post-2015: Incorporating Migration and Health through the Stockholm Agenda

GOAL 5. Ensure healthy lives

- **Ensure migrants have access to adequate and quality healthcare**

There are numerous issues that relate to health within migration. If properly managed, migration has the potential to promote and reinforce healthy lives and healthy choices. If poorly managed, migration can create many barriers to health services and expedite the spread of disease. Currently, there are many obstacles in accessing health care throughout the migration process for Filipino migrant workers and the potential for health risks throughout the migration cycle remain prevalent. Moreover, access to health services is often connected to the legal status of the migrant and different countries hold different policies regarding health coverage for migrants. Thus, while all migrants face substantial barriers, some are more exposed to risks than others and some face larger barriers in accessing health care.

Exposure to health risks exists on the way to the destination country and often larger health risks exist once the migrant arrives at their destination. The journey to the destination country and their stay in the destination country, pose a greater risk to migrant workers than when they are in their home country (Usher, 2005, p.21). In particular, women, children, undocumented, irregular and migrants in transit are vulnerable and susceptible to health issues (UNFPA, 2005, p.5). While in transit, especially for those who are irregular, migrants are more likely to travel in crowded and unsanitary conditions and are therefore more exposed to health risks. This includes a potential for physical, mental and social risks (Mosca, Rijks & Schultz, 2013 p.96). This explains the importance of intra-state cooperation in regards to the availability and access to health and medical programs and services and is required to provide continued access to health care while the migrant worker is in transit or moving to new locations.

MDG Goals Under Gender:

GOAL 3: Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women

The third goal of the MDGs is to promote gender equality and empower women. The target under this goal is to eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005 and at all levels by 2015.

There are two significant links between gender and migration. Firstly, migration has the potential to empower women and to promote gender equality. On the other hand, migration has the potential to threaten gender equality (Usher, 2005, p.18).

It is more dangerous for females to migrate as they are a vulnerable population. Female migrants are more susceptible to deprivation, hardship, discrimination, sexual, physical, and verbal abuse, as well as exploitation and trafficking during the migration cycle. There are certain types of employment that result in disempowerment and contribute to gender inequality. Employment as domestic workers or entertainers can result in disempowerment and contribute to gender inequality (Usher, 2005, p.18). This can be attributed to the proximity of the work and life spheres, pertaining to domestic workers in particular. For migrants from the Philippines there has been many cases of abuse and exploitation in the Middle East. In 2012, there were 155,831 domestic workers hired as new hires, this does not include domestic workers that were re-hires. (Philippine Overseas Employment Administration, n.d., p.6).

Trafficking in the Philippines is also a large issue of concern for females. As women often work in unprotected sectors they are more susceptible to exploitation, abuse, and trafficking than male migrants. In the Philippines, over 100,000 women are trafficked each year and up to 100,000 children may fall prey to trafficking as well (UNDP, 2013c).

Another large issue pertaining to gender and migration in the Philippines is the de-skilling of female professionals. The majority of female migrants who leave the Philippines are hired for positions that do not correspond with their education. Many women work overseas as domestic workers, entertainers, and factory workers, among other positions. These sectors are often unprotected, and women working in these sectors often lack complete access to social security programs and health care. Additionally, women working in these positions receive lower wages due to the lower skill sets required for the jobs and the perception of these types of employment as “informal”. While almost equal numbers of Filipino men and women work abroad as OFWs, women's remittances only make up 60 percent of what men remit.

While there has been an increase in female membership in decision-making, women only represent 35 percent of positions within the government at the decision-making level. In order to better protect female migrant

workers it would be beneficial to encourage the role of more women to participate in government at the local and national levels. (UNDP, 2013c).

Post-2015 SDGs - Incorporating Migration and Gender

GOAL 3. Empower girls and women and achieve gender equality

- **Provide access to social and legal protection and decent work to migrant women and girls, including domestic workers**

Gender equality is a prerequisite for the achievement of all of the millennium development goals (Usher, 2005). More and more females are migrating and many of them are migrating independently of their families. Several positive things can come of this. As a result of migrating independently, women can gain greater independence and autonomy. Moreover, female migrant workers can acquire additional education , knowledge

and strengthened self-esteem during their time abroad. This can result in the contribution of learned skills and education to Filipino citizens upon their arrival home. Hence, migration can lead to increased gender equality.

While female remittances in the Philippines only total 60 percent of what men remit, studies show that female migrant workers often remit larger percentages than men do (Usher, 2005, p.19). Further studies in the Philippines have demonstrated that families are more likely to send their daughters abroad because there is a perception that females send more remittances back than males (Jolly & Reeves, 2005, p.10). Even though female remittances are not equal to male remittances, the resilient and sustained nature of remittances from women migrants demonstrates the steady demand for domestic work. This demand may even increase if the destination country experiences an economic downturn and both men and women citizens of the destination country are forced to find employment. Domestic workers are hired for the jobs left undone by the women who have now joined the labor force.

Goals Under Environment:

GOAL 7: Ensure Environmental Sustainability

The seventh goal of the MDGs is to ensure environmental sustainability. The targets under this goal includes the integration of sustainable development principles into country policies and programmes to reverse the loss of environmental resources; reduce biodiversity loss; reduce the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation by half and; achieve significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers by 2020.

The Philippines is prone to natural disasters such as typhoons and earthquakes. More than nine million Filipinos were affected by the typhoons, Ondoy and Pepeng, in 2009 (UN & NEDA, 2014, p.3). In 2012, damage to property in the Philippines equaled PhP 50.3 billion. In 2013, Super-typhoon Yolanda hit the Philippines in 2013. The costs of the typhoon totalled an all time high of PhP 571.11 billion (National Economic and Development Authority, n.d.). The current effects of climate change have increased the frequency of floods and droughts in the Philippines even in areas that were not historically affected by these calamities. For example, in 2012 the Mindanao region was hit by Typhoon Bopha, a region that does not typically encountered typhoons due to its proximity to the equator (Ulrike, 2013, p.34). This has resulted in the forced movement and displacement of Filipinos from their homes.

Environmental disasters often affect populations from remote communities, such as coastal communities where it can be difficult to obtain comprehensive data on the effects of the disaster and the number of casualties. In the aftermath of these crises it is difficult to distinguish how many people should be accounted for and who may be dead or alive (Ulrike, 2013, p.36).

Under these circumstances trafficking becomes a large issue. Women and children are especially at risk while moving locations and in evacuation centers in the aftermath of a natural disaster (International Organization for Migration, 2014). The level of vulnerabilities and risk of trafficking increase in displaced populations (Ulrike, 2013).

Climate crises also results in the loss of agricultural land which may further cumulate to rural to urban migration. As climate change continues to happen, and environmental disasters become more common, it is likely that Filipinos will continue to move from rural to urban areas in order to find work and establish livelihood. As Filipinos migrate into urban areas, the economic opportunities and housing are not proportional to the demand for them (UN & NEDA, 2014, p.14). This is another push factor for international migration as a means for livelihood.

Additionally, due to the current climate crises the ability to work the land in rural areas has changed significantly and many women are being forced to find additional sources of income. This often translates into rural to urban migration within the country or even outside of the country. Additionally, this results in women finding secondary jobs within informal spheres (UN & NEDA, 2014, p.4). As aforementioned, domestic work has lower wages, it is often unregulated, thus female workers are more vulnerable.

Post-2015: Incorporating Environment and Migration through the Stockholm Agenda

While there is no specific goal under the Stockholm Agenda that pertains to the environment, migration and the environment are explicitly linked in the Philippines. As the Philippines experiences an average of 19 typhoons each year, with many of them deadly, and as natural disasters such as these are a push factor for migration, more focus needs to be placed on the development of systems to address increased migration during these times. The Country Consultations on the Philippines highlights that the Philippines is the third most vulnerable country in the world in terms of hazardous disasters (UN & NEDA, 2014, p.22), with 237 environmental disasters occurring in the country between 1990 and 2009 (Ulrike, 2013, p.33). The International Organization on Migration (IOM) asserts that poor-land use, poor planning, and significant population growth have intensified and increased the impacts of natural disasters. Between 2008 and 2012, over twelve million Filipinos were forced to move from their homes as a result of environmental crises.

As climate change continues to accelerate and migration becomes a mechanism to ensure livelihood, it is essential to promote advanced planning. The IOM suggests measures such as an exhaustive shelter policy, as well as the establishment of provincial offices in all provinces in anticipation of natural disasters, rather than just focusing on areas that would normally experience natural disasters. Further suggestions include the development of standardized preparedness measures that include early warning systems and information campaigns in order to mitigate the number of people that are severely impacted by natural disasters (Ulrike, 2013, pp.43-44). It is essential to address climate change and the impact it has on the movement of persons in order to mitigate the consequences of natural disasters.

MDG Goals Under Global Partnerships:

GOAL 8. Develop a Global Partnership for Development

The last goal under the MDGs is to develop a global partnership for development. The targets under this goal vary from making the benefits of technology available to extensively addressing the debt problems of developing countries.

The MDGs set under the development of global partnerships mostly pertains to financial aid from organizations instead of emphasizing the development of global partnerships. In order to continue to ensure progress after the end of the MDGs in 2015, it will be important to emphasize the need to develop global, regional, and bilateral relationships in relation to migration. Global partnerships should ensure the further protection of migrant workers, especially vulnerable migrant workers such as domestic workers.

Post-2015: Incorporating Global Partnerships & Migration through the Stockholm

Agenda

GOAL 8. Create a global enabling environment for development with new partnerships

- **Ensure that migrants and diaspora are fully engaged as partners in development**
- **Expand collaboration on and access to migration and development data**

GOAL 9. Enlarge human security and human development benefits of migration

- **Prevent and address international human trafficking and violence**
- **Improve systemic responses to forced migration, including migrants uprooted by crisis and climate change**
- **Facilitate safe, orderly and regular migration, through enhanced international cooperation**
- **Reduce inefficiencies that generate large numbers of migrants lacking proper documentation**

For the post-2015 development agenda, the Philippine government should seek to increase the number of beneficial global partnerships and build onto existing global partnerships within the realm of migration. Recently partnerships at the regional level have been developed that emphasize labor rights and labor mobility, for example the upcoming 2015 Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) economic integration. While the ASEAN economic integration is a step forward that facilitates freer movement of highly skilled workers and professionals, it fails to include low-skilled and irregular migrants. Low-skilled and irregular migrants make up the largest proportion of migrants in the region and a substantial number come from the Philippines (Orbeta, 2013). Currently, there are many undocumented Filipinos in Malaysia and Singapore. Whereas skilled workers are already in a position to negotiate wages and advance their own interests, low-skilled and undocumented workers require government protection and assistance. Steps to include and promote the rights of low-skilled and undocumented migrants workers and ensure their protection in the ASEAN region should be on the national government agenda.

In terms of expanding collaboration and access to migration data, Philippine government agencies that handle information on the should create a centralized data system or the creation of a shared government information system for migration (SGISM). A system such as this would help to develop further programs, such as reintegration programs, to aid the needs of Filipino migrants.

Additional Things to Consider Under the Stockholm Agenda:

GOAL 6. Ensure good governance and effective institutions

- **Ensure that all migrants have access to justice and due process equal to nationals**
- **End policies and practices that criminalize and detain migrants based upon their migration status**
- **Increase participation and contribution of migrants in public policy planning and implementation**
- **Ratify and implement core UN and ILO instruments**

Additionally, access to justice is a largely untouched topic within migration in the Philippines. This topic requires more focus as it pertains to recruitment agencies charging excessive fees, unpaid salaries by employer, contract violations, abuse and exploitation, labor law violations, and debt bondage, among others. All of these issues are regular problems that Filipino migrant workers encounter both in the Philippines and in the destination country. Access to justice for migrant workers remains a challenge and requires more attention.

In order to end policies and practices that criminalize and detain migrants based on their status it is essential that the Philippine government continue to develop bilateral and multilateral agreements with destination countries. This is of extreme importance in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries where the Kafala system is in place.

Another important consideration under the Stockholm Agenda would be the increased involvement of migrants in public policy planning and implementation. Migrant workers possess the most knowledge and direct experience with issues they frequently encounter. In order to continue to create policies that directly impact the well-being of migrant workers it is essential to include their voices in planning and develop strategies for implementation with them.

Lastly, pressure must be increased in destination countries where core UN and ILO instruments have not been ratified. There are many core instruments under both the UN and ILO that promote the protection of migrant workers and their families which many destination countries have yet to ratify.

Integrating the Stockholm Agenda to the Philippine Context

There are strong links between the Millennium Development Goals and migration in the Philippines, thus the need to incorporate migration into the post-2015 development goals. Migration out of the country is a concerning reality in the Philippines and it will continue to be as long as there is widespread unemployment, underemployment, and income disparity within the country, along with environmental pressures. Filipinos make large contributions to the countries of destination they find employment in and there is a massive potential for those that leave the country to make even larger contributions to the development of the Philippines. The contributions that migrant workers make in destination countries must be harnessed within the Philippines and used as an impetus for in-country development. While remittances currently play an important role for the Philippines, it is necessary to promote a holistic development agenda that is sustainable in the long run and results in migration being a choice rather than a necessity.

Recommendations:

Recognize valuable contributions of Filipino migrants for development within the country

1. Integrate the Stockholm Agenda into the national Philippine development agenda.
2. With respect to those aspects of the development agenda which relate to migration, prioritize the protection of migrants instead of just emphasizing remittances.
3. Develop employment opportunities within the country for safe, secure, ethical, and decent work for Filipinos.
4. Further develop industries within the country to address the current unemployment and underemployment situation.
5. Mitigate the loss of highly skilled professionals through job creation with living wages.
6. Enhance reintegration programs that provide an incentive to return home and provide continuous learning and skills training that facilitate the transfer of their skills and tailor these programs to the needs of migrant groups.
7. Emphasize the benefits of long-term investment within the family and the community and highlight the opportunities for development that arise from this.
8. Increase spending on education and provide incentives to complete high school, especially in rural areas, and direct education towards the development of the national economy.
9. Develop intra-state health and medical programs and services that allow for continued access for migrant workers while in their country of origin, destination, and in-transit.
10. Promote the further inclusion of women into decision-making positions and the voice of female migrant workers in civil society.
11. Develop anti-trafficking campaigns and disseminate information in high-risk areas and to high-risk populations.
12. Create and implement early warning systems for environmental disasters and develop livelihood alternatives to migration in the aftermath of such events.
13. Continue to develop bilateral and multilateral relationships that advocate for the rights of migrant workers.
14. Advocate for the inclusion of low-skilled and irregular migrant workers under the 2015 ASEAN economic integration.
15. Urge the ratification of core UN and ILO instruments in destination countries that protects the rights of migrants and promotes their welfare.
16. Provide access to legal support and essential services, and enable access to justice for migrant workers and their families.

Ensure government involvement in long-term public policy planning

17. Continue to link efforts with other Philippine CSOs and migrant CSOs that are actively involved in the achievement of the MDGs.
18. Treat migration as a social protection issue and create social protections within the country.
19. Recognize migrants as a sector of the economy, like workers and farmers, in the development agenda.

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