

Labour migration from a human rights perspective: The story of migrant domestic workers in The Netherlands

Feminist
Participatory
Action
Research



**RESPECT Netherlands, TRUSTED Migrants and
Commission for Filipino Migrant Workers**



Women know their lives best! They know their strengths. They know what they want changed. In Feminist Participatory Action Research (FPAR), women research the issues that affect their own lives in order to bring about needed change. As a community, they analyse their stories and talk about what actions they will take and what needs to be changed. As opposed to traditional research, women are active participants in the research process; they are not ‘researched on’.

FPAR requires a certain attitude - one that believes women can steer change; one that embraces and values the complexity of women’s lived experiences; and one that highlights the strength and resourcefulness of women in the face of disempowering and discriminatory circumstances.

This FPAR initiative follows an FPAR process facilitated by the Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women (GAATW) in 1999 and 2000 which worked with several groups to explore what trafficking was and how it manifests in women’s lives. Ten years on, GAATW and like-minded anti-trafficking advocates have come to the FPAR process again, this time looking at how trafficking is connected to broader parts of women’s lives - to their experiences of gender, migration and their work.

GAATW conducted a methodology learning workshop with NGOs and Self-Organised Groups (or groups led by members of the target group themselves) in the Americas, Africa, Europe and Asia in 2009. Researchers went back to their communities, or to the communities they work with, and acted as catalysts for the FPAR process. Research groups included: the **Federation of Women Lawyers in Kenya (FIDA-Kenya)**; **Legal Resources Center - Untul Keadilan Jender Dan Hak Asasi Manusia (LRC-KJHAM)** in Indonesia; **Asosiasi Tenaga Kerja Indonesia-Jakarta** or the **Association of Indonesian Migrant Workers (ATKI-Jakarta)**; **Self-Empowerment Program for Migrant Women (SEPOM)** in Thailand; **RESPECT Netherlands** together with **TRUSTED Migrants** and the **Commission for Filipino Migrant Workers** in the Netherlands; **Researchers Noushin K and Fereshteh** in Canada; **Akina Dada wa Africa (AkiDWA)** in Ireland, **La Strada Moldova**; **Movimiento De Mujeres Unidas (Modemu)** in the Dominican Republic; **Sociedade De Defesa Dos Direitos Sexuais Na Amazônia (Sodireitos)** in Brazil; and **Centro de Apoyo Aquelarre (CEAPA)** in the Dominican Republic.

At the end of this FPAR process one Self-Organised Group said: ‘This is a feminist process’. The anti-trafficking sector has often been accused of determining what’s best for women ‘for their own good’. This initiative seeks to counteract that idea by documenting how women are steering change in their communities. We are proud to share their knowledge and their stories of resilience, hope and strength.

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ACRONYM GLOSSARY

CBO	Community-based organisation
CFMW	Commission for Filipino Migrant Workers
CO	Community organising
CSO	Civil society organisation
EU	European Union
FPAR	Feminist participatory action research
GAATW	Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women
GFMD	Global Forum on Migration and Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
IND	Dutch Immigration and Naturalization Service
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
ODA	Official development assistance
RESPECT	Rights Equality Solidarity Power Europe Cooperation Today
TRUSTED	Towards Respect United Strength Total Emancipation Development
UN	United Nations

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This paper aims to address the following research questions:

1. In what ways are women experiencing power relations and exercising power and autonomy to claim rights?
2. What is the context which impacts on the ability of women to make decisions in their lives (social, economic and political)?
3. What are the main advantages and disadvantages of migration and work for women?
4. What are the official or formal processes for migration and labour, and are women choosing to use these? If they are choosing informal processes, what are they, and why are women choosing them?

INTRODUCTION

This research report by RESPECT¹ Netherlands is drawn from feminist participatory action research (FPAR) that aims to analyse the situation of low-skill migrant workers in Europe as an entry point to link labour migration to a human rights perspective. At a more concrete level, RESPECT describes and analyses its regularisation campaign that migrant domestic workers in the Netherlands have participated in, and discusses resulting issues of leadership and local development among the different actors.

The FPAR process has been facilitated by the Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women (GAATW) based in Thailand, which oversaw the development of working papers exploring the linkages between trafficking to other themes: migration, gender, labour, security, trade and globalisation. As the working papers explore these themes, RESPECT's research is part of a group of FPAR reports discussing the lived realities of women in relation to these themes, and what women are doing to improve their situation.

A number of actors are presented here: migrant community-based organisations (CBOs) in the Netherlands (TRUSTED² Migrants, Koop Natin³), support organisations such as NGOs (Commission for Filipino Migrant Workers in Amsterdam, Unlad Kabayan⁴ Migrant Services Foundation in the Philippines) and Dutch trade unions (Abvakabo FNV and FNV Bondgenoten) as well as regional networks (the Europe-wide RESPECT). As is often the case in civil society, there are multiple memberships across organizations: a large number of Filipino members in TRUSTED Migrants are also members of Koop Natin, CFMW program officers are also members of Koop Natin, and all the above mentioned organisations (with the exception of the trade unions and Unlad Kabayan) are members of RESPECT, a network of migrant domestic workers and support organisations in Europe.

With this FPAR, we aim to present our initiatives, our perspective, our analysis, that of the migrant women we are working with, and where we want these efforts to lead us.

¹ Rights Equality Solidarity Power Europe Cooperation Today

² Towards Respect United Strength Total Emancipation Development

³ Koop Natin is Filipino for 'Our Cooperative'

⁴ Unlad Kabayan is Filipino for 'Progress for Filipinos'

Research participants

TRUSTED Migrants, a transnational self-organised group formed in 2002, seeks to improve the situation of migrant domestic workers in the host society. Koop Natin, a credit cooperative with around 35 Filipino members, was started in 2004 to assist undocumented migrants not allowed to open bank accounts in the Netherlands. CFMW, established in 1979, is a Filipino NGO based in Amsterdam that focuses on self-organising, education and campaigning for migrant rights and welfare. RESPECT, facilitated by CFMW, is a Europe-wide network of migrant domestic workers and support organisations established in 1998. Unlad Kabayan is an entrepreneurial NGO established in the Philippines in 1996 that mobilises migrant workers and their resources, and the assets of local communities.

FPAR guiding principles

Some principles of FPAR that guided our research process were: 'valuing women's lived realities and taking political action' (Weiner, 2004, in Frisby et al., 2009: 15), and 'linking local knowledge to existing theoretical frameworks' (Frisby et al, 2009: 15). As the lead researcher of CFMW is also a member of Koop Natin and a supporter of RESPECT Netherlands, there were conscious efforts of relating with the FPAR participants without hierarchy (since they were also network members), and without a sense that someone was the 'researcher' and someone else was being 'researched'. The attitude that guided our process was that collectively we were involved in generating knowledge and formulating plans of action.

Using the FPAR methodology as much as possible was important in our context because of the close working relationship and long history of the NGOs and CBOs involved, and that both are predominantly composed of migrant women sharing mutual lived realities in the host society. There were limitations in maintaining the FPAR process when the lead researcher related with migrant women who were outside of the network (the members of the church choir who responded to the questionnaire). In this case, there were clearer lines between 'researcher' and 'researched'.

That said, migrant women and the advocates they work with are still a heterogeneous group. There are markers of difference such as race, class, level of education and residency status, and these bear on how members of the group relate with each other. Also, working with a mobile population such as (mostly undocumented) migrant domestic workers, who typically shape their own work schedules, has led us to deviate from some FPAR principles. Writing and presenting this FPAR report became the responsibility of CFMW as the migrant domestic workers from TRUSTED and Koop Natin could not be expected to do this. The next strategic meetings of RESPECT Netherlands with regard to the campaign are still to come. As of this writing, it has not been possible for us to bring back the generated knowledge (i.e., this FPAR report) to the migrant domestic workers. While they have access to the minutes of the RESPECT Netherlands meetings that helped shape this report, and they helped formulate the plans of action, it was not feasible for them to become major decision-makers in finalising this report.

FPAR process

This FPAR involves a community with similar interests: Filipina migrant domestic workers in The Netherlands. It is an example of FPAR facilitated in a country of destination by NGO advocates and researchers who are themselves Filipino women migrants in the Netherlands who share in mutual experiences of discrimination.

It builds on priorities expressed by the community: changing the situation of migrant domestic workers in the host society by campaigning for their rights and welfare, achieved through self-organisation, networking and leadership by community members. Previously, in 1998, NGOs that later initiated the RESPECT network in Europe facilitated consultations with migrant domestic workers of various nationalities in six countries (France, Greece, Italy, The Netherlands, Spain and United Kingdom). Some of the women from the 1998 consultations are migrant leaders of TRUSTED Migrants and Koop Natin today whom we involved as FPAR participants. Other FPAR participants are CBO leaders and members who later joined the RESPECT regularisation campaign. This FPAR focuses on two programs of action that aim to address the priorities: the regularisation campaign for migrant domestic workers that RESPECT has been engaged in since 1998, and the local development initiatives that the migrant community is involved in to support the country of origin.

At present, we are in the process of revisiting the campaign and re-strategising. We facilitated meetings for RESPECT Netherlands together with TRUSTED Migrants and CFMW in January and February 2010 to collectively analyse the challenges surrounding our priorities, and plan for 2010-2011 with improved approaches and strategies. Our aim is to address challenges in leadership and organising, raise awareness on human rights and gender in relation to their lived realities as women migrant domestic workers, and help empower their actions. The hoped for outcome of this FPAR is to revitalise the process of developing new leaders, increasing ownership of the community in the programs of action, and mainstreaming gender awareness in our plans, activities and strategies.

Field research

For our field research, participant observation began in May 2009. Our lead researcher from CFMW participated in meetings of the migrant women where they expressed their priorities and helped strategise for collective action. These include events in Amsterdam such as the RESPECT general assembly in May 2009, the Koop Natin general assembly in June 2009, the consultation on the ILO Convention on Domestic Work in August 2009, as well as informal meetings. A focus group discussion with six Filipino migrant women was conducted in The Hague in August 2009. A follow-up informal discussion took place with the same participants in December 2009, and planning activities took place with the community in January and February 2010.

In September 2009, two types of semi-structured questionnaires were used. The first questionnaire was for members of TRUSTED Migrants and Koop Natin, while the second was for members of other Filipino organisations in the Netherlands. The objective was to compare the experiences of both clusters, as well as generate qualitative data on their work and living conditions, practice in collective action, and willingness and capacity to support local development in the Philippines. Among the participants, seven were Koop Natin members, nine were choir members of a Catholic church in The Hague, and two were from TRUSTED Migrants in Rotterdam. The total number of participants in our field research (focus group and questionnaire) is 24, while a larger number took part in informal discussions and planning activities.

The reception from the two clusters was markedly different. It was much easier to encourage participation from TRUSTED/Koop Natin as they are part of the RESPECT network and we have been in partnership for many years. We periodically facilitate consultations with them together with other actors to inform our programs and actions in major events in the political calendar. While acquaintances facilitated our meeting with the members of the church choir, the level of trust was low and it was understood that follow-up meetings with them to inform this research would be unlikely. Nevertheless, TRUSTED Migrants remained as the focus of the research.

THE ACTORS

Organisational beginnings

CFMW was established as a foundation in 1979 by concerned Filipino migrants and religious missionaries from various cities across Europe, including Dutch missionaries who had spent a number of decades working in the Philippines. It developed programs and services in response to major concerns confronting the Filipino community in Europe at the time: the threat of deportation and the 'compulsory remittances' required by Executive Order 508 of the dictator Marcos (Hacbang and Jusay, 2007: 108-109). After initial programs in Rome and London, the organisation linked up with Filipino organizations in Rotterdam, Madrid, Stockholm, and other cities to consolidate advocacies and campaigns for migrants' rights.

The current campaign for the rights of migrant domestic workers (arguably one of the more vulnerable sectors in the migrant community in Europe) builds on CFMW's earlier work. It was one of the initiators of RESPECT, and at present, facilitates the network. As one of the initiators of the network, it facilitated consultations with migrant domestic workers of various nationalities in six countries (France, Greece, Italy, The Netherlands, Spain and United Kingdom) to develop the Charter for the Rights of Migrant Domestic Workers. The Charter encapsulates the campaign in three demands: the recognition of domestic work in the private household as proper work; the recognition and protection of the rights of migrant domestic workers; and the right of migrant domestic workers to an immigration status independent of employers. In 1998, the Europe-wide RESPECT Network was established, made up of migrant domestic workers' self-organised groups, migrant support organisations and concerned individuals such as those from NGOs, trade unions and the academe.

Gains in the campaign

Some gains for the network include the regularisation of migrant domestic workers in some European countries (Greece in 1997 and UK in 1998). Most recently, Belgium⁵ regularised its migrants as well. There have been continuing policy dialogues with the UN Human Rights Council's Committee on Migrant Workers, among other international human rights bodies. Members of the network had been working on migrant issues since the late 1970s, and sharing lessons and country experiences on the regularisation campaign helped drive the collective effort. However, the regularisation process has been critiqued for being subject to unrealistic conditionalities, and that the European Union does not have a coherent strategy on immigration and domestic work despite the growing demand (RESPECT, 2009: 4).

In 2002, CFMW facilitated the setting up of TRUSTED Migrants, a transnational organisation of migrant domestic workers with over 130 members from the Philippines, Ghana, Nigeria, Bolivia, Columbia and Mexico. From Amsterdam, smaller chapters of TRUSTED Migrants were started in Rotterdam and The Hague. In June 2006, after five years of engagement and campaigning by the RESPECT network and its allies, the Dutch trade union Abvakabo FNV opened its doors to both documented and undocumented migrant domestic workers, of whom there are 300 members in the trade union (CFMW, 2008).

Though criticised as self-serving in the sense that membership-based organisations are responsible for protecting and promoting its members' interests, as global actors in the

⁵ <http://globalnation.inquirer.net/news/breakingnews/view/20090724-217048/Belgium-to-regularize-undocumented-migrants> [Accessed 20 October 2009]

social movement, labour and trade unions cooperate with NGOs because of ideological principles, areas of common concern, and because both actors 'simply cannot function in an environment where human and democratic rights are not safeguarded' (Spooner, 2005: 13). These unions are seen as allies and fellow advocates for workers' rights, and forming alliances with them can be an advantage as they are recognized by Parliament because of their level of organization in large numbers.

Challenges in relating to trade unions

When the Dutch trade union Abvakabo FNV was unable to guarantee social protection for members who were migrant domestic workers, TRUSTED Migrants was moved in December 2008 to FNV Bondgenoten, the largest Dutch trade union with over 470,000⁶ members. In May 2009, the Filipina chair of TRUSTED Migrants was voted into FNV Bondgenoten's board of cleaners to represent migrant domestic workers.

'The trade unions tell us that they are not the solution. They also need to be educated. Can't CFMW and RESPECT compromise a little on its strategies to move the discussion forward? Can it engage at a higher level with the trade union to help the migrant domestic workers?'

(Filipina chair of TRUSTED, RESPECT Netherlands strategic meeting, January 2010)

There is space for educating the trade union, others answered,

'But it should not just be one-way. We can have different strategies from the trade unions, to meet where we have mutual campaigns, and part ways when there is no common ground.'

At present, the engagement with trade unions continues to be a steep climb for members within TRUSTED Migrants and its allies in RESPECT. For instance, the tripartite governance structure of the International Labour Organisation (governments, employers' and workers' groups) implies that migrants and support organisations have to team up with trade unions in the regularisation campaign for migrant domestic workers, if it would like its demands to influence social protection mechanisms such as the proposed ILO Convention on Domestic Work. While trade unions see eye to eye with RESPECT on its first two demands (the recognition of domestic work in the private household as proper work, and the recognition and protection of the rights of migrant domestic workers), this is not the case for the third demand on the right of migrant domestic workers to an immigration status.

Local development initiatives

Parallel to this campaign, collective action is being done through microfinance to support varied local development initiatives in the Philippines. Koop Natin, a credit cooperative established in 2004, is composed of an estimated 35 Filipino migrants in the Netherlands, most of whom are members of TRUSTED Migrants. The organisation, set up initially to assist undocumented migrants not allowed to open bank accounts in the Netherlands, estimates that around 95% of its members are undocumented. With the increased circulation of financial remittances from the cooperative, Koop Natin members are more able to ensure that their families have better access to social services in the origin community, and are perceived to be relatively insulated in times of shock since financial remittances are supposedly less prone to local risks.

⁶ <http://www.fnvbondgenoten.nl/fnvbondgenoten/english/> [Accessed 9 November 2009]

Koop Natin members are also able to support local development initiatives in the Philippines, usually microenterprises in the merchandising and manufacturing sectors (mini-groceries, bakeries, restaurants) and village public transport services. Apart from investing in these individual initiatives, a pioneering group of five women members invested in the credit fund of Unlad Kabayan in 2007, which provides loans to small-scale entrepreneurs in target communities in the Philippines. Other women members of TRUSTED Migrants and Koop Natin also invested in Unlad Kabayan's credit fund in 2008 and 2009.

The credit cooperative is not without its problems, however. In our field research findings, while majority (seven out of nine members) of the participants said they did not experience problems, one credit officer answered that loans were not being paid on time, while one new member said there was irregular communication and lack of information among members as a whole.

Leadership issues

At present, as TRUSTED Migrants becomes more active as an organisation, there have also been growing pains. The workload understandably increases: a few hours each week are needed to attend meetings and prepare for activities with the trade union and within the organisation and its partners. Being migrants predominantly in irregular domestic work, the leaders are fluid: mobile in various cities in the Netherlands, or dependent on situations needing domestic work, which bears on their collective action.

Understaffing is becoming a problem; there is disappointment with the results achieved by joining an alliance with the trade union. At the RESPECT Netherlands strategic meeting in January 2010, there were conflicting ideas about how to continue involvement in this alliance. *'TRUSTED Migrants has a dual identity,'* said other members of RESPECT to members of TRUSTED. *'With RESPECT, and with the trade union.'* The combination of growing pains and organisational change has taken its toll on the motivation of the current leaders to maintain the needed level of involvement in the organisation. The leaders are exhausted; some want to stop their involvement and be replaced, while others wish to continue but need extra people joining them and sharing the workload. *'The campaign is not so active anymore,'* some TRUSTED members have said. *'How can each organisation come together and go forward?'* Others in RESPECT replied that the network still has to stick to the goals drawn in 1998 from the consultations with migrant domestic workers: *'We cannot compromise that.'* Others in TRUSTED think that having achievable goals in the short term will help sustain the campaign in the long run: *'If we just keep doing this [campaign] and nothing's happening, people will get tired and lose hope. We have to work together to get other things done.'*

RESPECT believes that the challenge of motivating present leaders and recruiting new ones stems from a number of reasons: the financial crisis, which resulted in increased debts and ad hoc expenses among migrants and their families in the origin country; the societal climate, where restrictive immigration policies have translated into increased raids and police checks in migrant communities; the divided community, where the dynamic among organisations and self-organised groups in the Netherlands reflect political realities and divisions in the social movement in the Philippines; and compounding challenges in organising, wherein the lack of motivation among current leaders leads to challenges in motivating and developing new potential leaders to support the campaign.

FIELD RESEARCH FINDINGS

To protect the identity of the participants, their names in this paper have been changed. The findings are presented with the understanding that the 24 participants in our field research may not represent all migrant domestic workers in the Netherlands, and with the objective of presenting a profile of the participants that would contextualise their emerging identities and motivations.

Among the members of TRUSTED/Koop Natin, 11 participants (73 percent) were undocumented, while four (27 percent) were documented. The numbers from the church choir were distributed more evenly: out of nine participants, five (56 percent) were documented while four (44 percent) were undocumented. Most of the participants were core members comprised of a majority of migrant CBO leaders, with a minority of NGO program officers and CBO members. Both clusters showed some evidence of relay migration (Arizpe, 1981, in de Haas, 2008: 22) as there were family ties among the members. The participants were predominantly women; there was only one male out of the 24 total participants.

The relationship between capacity-building, diversity of economic activities and expressed interest to support local development becomes apparent upon comparing the responses of the two clusters when asked if they have received training in managing their income and supporting economic initiatives in the Philippines, and if not, if they needed such training. It is logical that TRUSTED/Koop Natin responded more positively because of its activities and interests. Unlad Kabayan has been in partnership with CFMW since the late 1990s in providing capacity-building to migrants and promoting savings and investment to support local development in the Philippines. Koop Natin, started in 2004, encourages its members to increase their economic activities; opportunities to support local development are likely to increase as well. As a faith-based social group, the church choir in The Hague has different activities and interests, and savings and investment among its members would most likely occur according to their own initiative.

The diversity of economic activities being undertaken by participants from TRUSTED/Koop Natin is striking. Out of 13 participants in the cluster, five (38 percent) leased housing, five (38 percent) had made investments, four (31 percent) owned land, two (15 percent) owned a shop, two (15 percent) owned public transport, and two (15 percent) had savings. Out of nine participants in the church choir, five (56 percent) owned land, three (33 percent) leased housing, and two (22 percent) owned a small shop. Members in this cluster did not articulate if they also owned public transport services or if they similarly had savings and investment.

The investments reflected in the TRUSTED/Koop Natin findings are related to the concept of collective action for local development. Three out of the five participants with investments were part of the pioneering group of five women who invested in the credit fund of Unlad Kabayan in 2007. The pioneering group of migrant investors, whose ages range from early 40s to early 60s, articulated mixed motivations for investing in the credit fund. To some, it was an investment that mixed profit with social value (since their investment would be used as loans supporting the microenterprises of Filipino families). For Fiona, 62 years old, it was about shared benefits: 'It helps migrants to save, and at the same time family members can be employed in the enterprises'. To others, it was a process of learning by doing and preparing for their own future. Loida, 50 years old, plans to retire in the Philippines within five years' time: 'I want to start my own credit cooperative for returned migrants' in her hometown north of the Philippines. For Myrna, 42 years old and married to a Dutch national, the investment seems to be one of several

other projects, including a feeding program for out-of-school youth that she recently started in her hometown south of the Philippines, which operates on small donations she has mobilised in her network in the Netherlands ('I just ask them to give small amounts, like five or ten euro. It's easier for them to give that way.'). Like Loida, she is also thinking of starting her own credit cooperative in her hometown.

It comes as no surprise that when asked what would motivate them to invest in local development projects in the Philippines, profit (or the financial stability of the enterprise and investment growth) was the biggest factor, followed by sustainability of the project and that it helps Filipino families and communities. Other factors (preference for the project location to be in the migrant's home province, regular information and updates sent to migrant investors, that people and organisations known and trusted by the migrant are also investors in the project) were secondary.

Filipina migrants as heroes and victims

Filipino migrant workers have been called 'heroes' of national development. In 1988, former Philippine President Corazon Aquino first coined the term 'national heroes' while speaking to a group of domestic workers in Hong Kong. This view of Filipinos in vulnerable, low-skill work through the lens of nationalism is 'symptomatic of the Republic of the Philippines' implication in a national labour export policy' (Gibson, Law and McKay, 2001: 367). Today, deployment of migrant workers is still a national strategy for economic development in the Philippines. As of 2007, financial remittances to the Philippines reached US \$14.5 billion, the highest it has been since the 1980s (Bayangos and Jansen, 2009: 13).

They have also been called 'victims' of capitalist development. The state has used the strategy of commodifying the Philippine workforce to access foreign exchange through migrant workers' financial remittances, prompting CSOs to note that state policy has become 'migration instead of development' (Rother, 2009: 96). The Philippine government continues to prioritise repayment of loans to the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank over social security, the economy and land reform. NGOs in Hong Kong, Canada and the Philippines argue that 'Filipina contract migrants are exploited victims in a global economy that is dominated by foreign agendas. In an analysis shared by many NGOs, the exploitation of these...women reproduces prior colonial and neo-colonial relations' (Gibson, Law and McKay, 2001: 370).

We present the stories of Jane and Amy, two of the six Filipino migrant workers based in The Hague who took part in our focus group discussion in August 2009. These examples of multifaceted migration experiences subvert the discourse that, as Gibson, Law and McKay (2001: 372) argue, 'exists to contain and "manage" [Filipina migrants]' with the representation that migrant women are either heroes or victims.

Jane's story⁷

Jane, 36 years old, completed a computer secretarial course in the Philippines, and is a mother of two. Her ex-husband takes care of the children back home. She came to the Netherlands in 2005 on a tourist visa upon the invitation of her sister and aunt, both Dutch passport-holders in The Hague. Jane had paid 3,000 euro to her aunt (a Dutch passport-holder) for the sponsorship to come to the Netherlands, where she worked as a stay-in dog-sitter for a year. She worked Mondays to Saturdays from 13.00 until 17.00, received

⁷ Story put together based on focus group discussion

500 euro a month, and was free to engage in part-time domestic work in other households during her spare time.

At first, I planned to work here for just five years. I met my targets: I built an apartment for rent [back home], I bought three plots of land. But there was an emergency in the family, I had to spend for my ex-husband's cancer treatment. I was forced to sell my land. Now all I have is the apartment. It was painful for me to sell the property I had worked so hard for. Five years is not enough. Now I'm giving it another five years. Even if my husband and I are no longer together, he's still the father of my kids.

I spend for the education of my kids, but my ex-husband is in charge of day-to-day needs. I've sent him money for two tricycles and a multi-cab [village public transport], I've built the apartment. Whatever I earn now is mine to keep. I have a policy of not sending money every month to my siblings. I've sent them money for start-up capital for a small store, and that's it. It's up to them to make the money grow, that would be their contribution. If they spend the money for nothing, that's their problem. If you teach them to become lazy, they will be a burden to you for life.

I keep my savings in my sister's bank account [in the Netherlands], also in a joint account with my ex-husband back home. If they're both gone, then I'm gone as well. I also have an investment that both of them don't know about. I invested in a rice delivery service for office employees in the Philippines managed by a friend who is my business partner. I monitor the account [which is in the friend's name] but the money is with my friend. I invested Php 30,000 (equivalent of 425.65 euro at 1 euro = Php 70.48) and my friend just adds more money into the account. The business has been going on now for two years.

Amy's story⁸

Amy, 36 years old, completed a Bachelor's degree in marketing in the Philippines. In 1998, she came to the Netherlands as a tourist sponsored by her mother and Dutch stepfather. In 2000, her stepfather passed away, and in 2006, with her papers 'still not in order', the IND (Dutch Immigration) denied her permit to stay upon deciding that her mother could not afford to sponsor her (as the mother lived through her husband's pension). Amy says that under the old law she would have been permitted to stay. Initially she performed domestic work for four employers; now she works for 10.

I should be done with cleaning houses before I turn 40. I don't want to be 50 years old still cleaning houses, by that age I should be secure in my life already. When I was growing up, even when my mom taught me to do household chores, we had our own household help. I had no idea I would be doing the same thing [in the Netherlands]. By 40 or 45 years old, hopefully my situation together with my mom would be sorted out. You can't wait around for a man [Dutch citizen] so you can have papers. Of course, I would like it [to be so], but you can't rely on this to happen, you have to improve the situation yourself.

I can say that my outlook in life has changed. Back home I was just waiting to receive my salary, but here the amount you earn depends on your own initiative, like how many households you can work for. [Given the lack of security in domestic

⁸ Story put together based on focus group discussion

work, there are exceptions.] I have the keys to my employer's apartment, so I can do extra work when they are away. Some of them I have worked with for 11 years, so there's trust. I know the security code of the house of another employer. I get paid half [vacation pay] when they are away.

I was brought to the Netherlands because I was broke. My mom had left me a business but I didn't manage it well. For three months my mom boycotted me [did not send money]. That's why I was forced to work by making spaghetti sauce [at an Italian restaurant in the Philippines]. I had applied to sell insurance and also at Easycall [mobile pager company], but nothing came of it. It's hard to find work back home when you don't have connections. I finished [with a degree] in marketing but I was working in the kitchen.

My mom was doing 'white' work in the Netherlands. She was a fish-cleaner in the market. But she was also a domestic worker. I never realised how difficult it could be. But I'm already saving - one part of my income goes to my expenses here, another part for emergencies, another part for the future. I bought two plots of land, one for a future business and one for selling again. I bought property near the beach and had an apartment built there. I'm thinking of renting it out to tourists. Yes, our employers recognise our work. But after that, what? We have to think and act for ourselves. Can we allow ourselves to grow old with nothing?

ANALYSIS

Agency

From these stories, we can observe how migrant domestic workers like Jane and Amy challenge the recurring migrant victim representation. It can be viewed as a demonstration of agency by migrant women motivated by poverty in the origin country. Jane shows her agency by setting limits on how much and how often she sends financial remittances to her ex-husband and siblings. She articulates and negotiates her own development visions by setting herself apart from the typical Filipina migrant who regularly sends financial remittances to address the needs of both immediate and extended family members, thus 'contest[ing] local practices directly' (Dannecker, 2009: 124). Jane was also able to negotiate with her first employer so that she could perform domestic work in other households during her spare time. Amy's ability to reduce the risks in her work by gaining the trust of her employers to get more work hours for herself, similar to the case study of Luz discussed by Gibson, Law and McKay (2001: 377), 'illustrates a level of ingenuity and agency that ill befits the "victim" representation'.

Gender inequalities and awareness

As expected, given that migrant women are a heterogeneous group, the research participants shared stories that illustrated how being conscious of markers of difference (cf. Frisby et al., 2009) such as race and class could help reveal gender inequalities that might be considered normal occurrences in daily life. Given that those who migrate tend to be the more resourceful and better-off (Zachariah et al., 2001, in de Haas, 2008: 29), some forms of exploitation may still occur among migrant women. From Jane's story, we saw how her aunt, a resident of the Netherlands, overcharged a fee of 3,000 euro for Jane's sponsorship. For many would-be migrants, it is a typical practice to pay extremely high amounts to get to the country of destination.

Once there, the participants in the focus group talked about the desire to generate savings for oneself and not send all earnings to the family back home. The topic of having a Dutch partner also came up.

'We want to inspire ourselves and set aside savings so there will be something to fall on back home,' Amy said. 'Others expect to be saved - to marry a Dutch man to get their papers. I mean, it's good to have a partner for real, not just for convenience to get papers, especially since their culture is different. We need to be self-reliant and know our capacity as a person, not rely on a partner so much. They might die or they might leave.'

While the participants expressed themselves as actors of change (through campaigns and economic activities towards the Philippines), in some instances there seemed to be different levels of gender awareness and understanding of what we advocate for in RESPECT. A member of TRUSTED Migrants recently set up a dating website to connect Filipinas back home and in the Netherlands with Dutch men. Seeing the announcement promoting the website, a Filipina RESPECT ally who was an NGO advocate in Germany was shocked. 'We are trying to improve the image of Filipino women! Doesn't she know dating websites can be a subtle form of trafficking?' However, it can be tricky to confront the member who set up the website as we wish to negotiate tensions without isolating research participants (cf. Yoshihama and Carr, 2002, in Frisby et al., 2009: 17).

Migrants and local development in the origin country

The practice of engaging migrants in local development in the origin country, particularly the partnership of Unlad Kabayan, CFMW, TRUSTED Migrants and Koop Natin (keeping in mind the precarious situation of migrant domestic workers in the Netherlands), can be considered a method of pooling of risks within a transnational network. In Jane's story, one striking feature is her choice not to inform her ex-husband and siblings of her small investment in her friend's rice delivery business. Was she not afraid of losing her investment, considering the geographic distance of her friend/business partner, and the business itself? Drawing on findings from previous migrant interviews, Mazzucato (2003, in Mazzucato, 2009: 1112) explains that 'migrants have more *sanctioning power over a friend* who misbehaves than over a family member, since custom makes it difficult to sever relationships with kin' (emphasis in the original). Similarly, Unlad Kabayan acts as a mediating network member linking migrants to local development in the Philippines.

De Haas points out that early on, Heinemeijer et al. (1977, in de Haas, 2008: 47) already made the observation that 'development in migrant-sending regions is a *prerequisite* for return and/or investment rather than a consequence of migration' (emphasis in the original). Individual migrants are said to have 'real but fundamentally limited ability... to overcome structural constraints'. De Haas warns against overly positive discourse on migration and development that has come out in recent years, and puts emphasis on the more general development context, which determines 'the extent to which the development *potential* of migration can be realised' (emphasis in the original).

This brings to mind an anecdote related previously by the executive director of Unlad Kabayan. While this response related to De Haas's argument does not come directly from the participants of our research, it was brought up by previous Filipino migrant communities that Unlad Kabayan worked with. Soon after the organisation was established in the Philippines in 1996, it went through its own learning process. Even as the NGO conducted studies among origin communities to establish potential local development projects that migrants could invest in, hinting at the uneasy trust for the scheme at the time, only two founding savings and investment groups entrusted their savings for investment purposes. The rest stuck to the savings schemes that primarily earned interest. It was not enough that potential projects and the role of migrants as development actors were being discussed. For the rest of the migrant savers, to see was to believe; they were waiting to see if Unlad Kabayan's projects could happen on the ground.

Taking ownership of development

We believe that these life stories and quotations demonstrate how migrant domestic workers are taking ownership of development. They possess a fundamental set of capabilities that contribute to human security. Their financial remittances are typically used to address basic human security needs of family members in the origin country (housing, food, education, microenterprises, etc.). This has potential as a form of grassroots development separate from official development assistance (ODA) in that the visions and needs of the recipients are reflected in the assistance provided by the migrant women.

One reflection contributed by a colleague from CFMW was that in the destination country, there is a typical assumption that possibilities are not being grabbed by migrants because the poor (i.e., the migrants) have no capabilities. In the case of this research, Dutch citizens are perceived as finding it difficult to accept that poor people do take the initiative to improve their situation. However, despite their contributions to human security, migrant domestic workers are not typically perceived as taking ownership of their development, that they are claiming responsibility for their own development and

they express this by migrating. To a large extent, those who migrate have economic motivations: they want to improve their lives, to be an actor in development, and not to be criminalised for this. It is just that they were born in a country that was not well-managed.

With this in mind, contradictions become evident when we consider how the law in the host society applies to its citizens and to migrants. The colleague related how a Dutch law was passed in 2002 stating that it is one's own responsibility to be successful in society. But the law appears to be selective. In our experience, Dutch society typically does not seem to accept that migrant domestic workers are there because of a local demand for their labour. Despite the demand, the fact that domestic work is not accepted as an immigration status in The Netherlands has led to slavery-like conditions, abuse, violence, exploitation, inequality, and discrimination against women and domestic workers. There has been stigmatisation and criminalisation of migrant domestic workers, as well as racial and ethnic discrimination. These conditions exist for migrant domestic workers while they are in the process of taking responsibility of their own development, and in effect contributing to society.

BROADER CONTEXT

Transnational migration⁹ has emerged as a strategy by individuals and households to meet the global demand for low-skill work, increasing their contribution to initiatives that can range from raising families to raising capital for microenterprises. It is a hotly debated topic in Europe. On one hand, the European Union has a rapidly aging population and high unemployment levels in many EU states, compounded by the lack of both professional experts and people willing to take on low-wage and low-status work. Migration is said to be a tool to overcome at least some of these problems in the short term. On the other hand, there have been fears that open borders would create labour market distortions, collapse of social security systems, security risks, and erosion of national identities. Thus, policymaking in this field is slow and painstaking, as indicated by debates on a common European migration and asylum policy.

Today, around half of all migrant workers¹⁰ are women, with more women migrating independently and as main income-earners (Martin, 2005, in IOM, 2008: 10). While women work in all professions, female labour migration is concentrated in occupations associated with traditional gender roles, illustrated by the increased demand for care services in low-skill jobs, such as domestic work and caring for children, the elderly and disabled persons.

In discussing the lobby work, campaigns and local development initiatives that have emerged from practices of transnational networks and migrant actors, Gibson (2002: 77) argues that these have helped reshape the migrant domestic worker's 'economic subjectivity, dis-identifying with the subject position of feudal serf or domestic servant and re-identifying with the possibility of a role as manager or cooperator in a community enterprise. The pathway is untrodden and the unfolding story is one that calls for support'.

In Europe, two prominent metaphors have emerged in the discourse on migration policy: 'Europe without borders' and 'Fortress Europe'. For the former, it means the European Union (EU) has created opportunities for its citizens to move without restrictions from one Member State to another. But removing national borders has not overly increased migration within Europe. For the latter, the EU is described as 'Fortress Europe' with regard to control, security and monitoring of its external borders.

Seeing policy realities through human rights lens

Pecoud and De Guchteneire (2007: 6) note that borders in reality are symbols rather than structures that produce actual results: 'border controls are policies that generate visibility but few results and enable governments to develop a pro-control (or even anti-immigration) rhetoric while maintaining access to a foreign labour force'. A self-sustaining process may be the outcome: border controls aggravate or produce problems such as human trafficking and trespassing, which, according to some policymakers' logic, make it necessary to put more controls in place. In the context of Europe, countries that are common destinations of undocumented migration, such as Italy and Spain, are obliged to show its citizens and other EU members that the situation is being dealt with.

⁹ Defined as 'international migration movement whereby an individual develops ties in more than one country, and engages economically, socially, politically and culturally, in both his/her country of origin and residence' (THP/UNESCO, 2008: 34).

¹⁰ Defined as 'a person who is to be engaged, is engaged or has been engaged in a remunerated activity in a state of which he or she is not a national' (UN, in THP/UNESCO, 2008: 13).

Contradictions in migration policy become glaring when analysed through the lens of the human rights provisions relating to it. In the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 13-2 states that 'Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country'¹¹. But Pecoud and De Guchteneire (2007: 8) point out that while emigration is recognized as a human right, immigration is not. Obviously there is 'a fundamental contradiction between the notion that emigration is widely regarded as a matter of human rights while immigration is regarded as a matter of national sovereignty' (ibid, citing Weiner, 1996: 171). We agree with the authors that having the right to leave one's country has no meaning as long as one cannot enter another country.

Following this line of analysis, Battistella (in Pecoud and De Guchteneire, 2007: 11) observes that 'undocumented migration can be interpreted not only as a consequence of inadequate migration policies, but also as the expression of people's claim to their right to migrate'. Before claiming this right, the women in our focus group said they still exhausted all possibilities to work in the Philippines. 'There were money problems, and I had to help my family. Believe me, I tried to find work back home before coming here. But it's hard if you don't have connections in the office [that you're applying to] and if they can't match your skills. You just have to lie low [or keep a low profile] here if you have no papers.'

Domestic work in the Netherlands

In the Netherlands, domestic work in the private household is not recognized as proper work, and therefore is not an accepted immigration status and is exempt from labour laws. Obviously, as a place of work, the private household is not typically accessible to labour unions.

Because of their status, undocumented migrants tend to engage in unregistered domestic work, or what is commonly referred to as 'black' work. Studies by Bayanihan Foundation have revealed how it was common for Filipino domestic workers to have a range of 5 to 11 employers at any one time (Padilla, 2007). Most are concentrated in Amsterdam, The Hague, Rotterdam, Utrecht and other big cities. Anecdotal evidence indicates that their hard work, level of education and ability to communicate in English make Filipino domestic workers a favorite among the diplomatic corps.

A trend in child care over the past decade or so in the Netherlands is the hiring of nannies from South countries. While officially they are called au pairs (French for 'on a par' or 'on equal footing' with other family members, presumably like a guest), Bayanihan Foundation reports that 'in reality they are nannies and domestic workers blended into one, working day and night' (Oosterbeek-Latoza, 2007: 184).

Oosterbeek-Latoza further describes the au pair system as an internationally recognised educational program through which young people learn a new language and culture by living with a host family. In exchange for the hospitality, the young person helps in the household by performing light chores, such as babysitting and dishwashing. Although there is an agreement signed by the au pair and the host family, the contract is not a labour contract, and neither is the au pair hired as a domestic worker.

Whether visiting tourist, seafarer or au pair, migrants who have become undocumented are mostly those whose visas had already expired, but opted to stay to earn a higher income. However, comprehensive legal protection is not guaranteed for those who engage in domestic work. Written contracts; agreed wages, hours of work and rest; health

¹¹ <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml#a13> [Accessed 14 October 2009]

insurance; freedom of mobility and the option to join organisations and trade unions, if not dependent on the employer's goodwill, remain largely hoped for but lacking.

Despite being invisible as far as legal protection is concerned, the presence of migrant domestic workers in the Netherlands has become increasingly visible. One reason for the growing demand for domestic work in many Dutch households has to do with the increased participation of Dutch women in the labour market, or the productive economy. Hiring migrant labour, especially that of undocumented workers, is much cheaper than hiring local labour. In this regard, 'the transnational, globalised economy is brought into the private home, not just in goods consumed there, but at its very core in the organising and delivery of reproductive labour' (Anderson et al., 2006, in RESPECT, 2009).

Migrant collective action and the GFMD

Generally, representatives of Philippine civil society, particularly NGOs, 'no longer exist on society's margins' (Constantino-David, 1995: 154). The same holds for migrant civil society to some extent. It is consistent in claiming its position in international spaces such as the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) and has been a constant critical voice, whether as invited participants to the official civil society forum preceding the inter-governmental meeting, or as part of the international CSO parallel processes. These parallel processes, which have expanded in recent years, have monitored and critiqued the official process even prior to the UN dialogue in New York City in 2006 and the first GFMD in Brussels in 2007. One such parallel process to GFMD in Manila in 2008, the week-long Peoples' Global Action on Migration, Development and Human Rights, drew almost 4,000¹² delegates from NGOs, CBOs, migrant families, labour unions, the academe and faith-based organizations, among other groups, from the Philippines and other parts of the world.

Constantino-David characterises Philippine community organising work as different from the 'Alinsky-type CO in the West'. With the expansion of the progressive movement in the early 1970s as a reaction to the Marcos dictatorship, Philippine CO became more political and ideological in character. It responded to a major shortcoming of community organising: 'its lack of a concrete vision beyond the resolution of localised issues'. However, as the author (1995: 157-158) explains, this political and ideological character also caused internal quarrels, until growing tensions led to divisions 'drawn politically as each group attempted to balance CO as an essentially localist and issue-based approach with the demands of a growing national movement and the necessity for structural change'.

The political lines that were drawn in the Philippine NGO terrain in the 1970s are still evident in the parallel processes surrounding the GFMD today. In Manila in 2008, Rother (2009: 97) observed how two international CSO clusters organized separate parallel actions to the main inter-governmental forum. The Peoples' Global Action chose a multi-stakeholder, 'inside-outside' strategy by being part of the official civil society preparations and forum and also organising a week-long series of parallel events and demonstrations. Meanwhile, the International Assembly of Migrants and Refugees opted for an 'outsiders by choice' position: it condemned the GFMD process as a whole and organised its own forum and demonstrations separate from the Peoples' Global Action.

While it is evident that migrant civil society, despite the limitations, successfully puts up resistance in the face of dominance in this case, there are limits to the participation of some members such as CBOs and the migrants themselves, particularly if they are tied to

¹² Estimated figure from Migrant Forum in Asia, <http://www.mfasia.org/peoplesglobalaction/PGAMDHR.html> [Accessed 14 October 2009]

their work in the destination country or if undocumented and therefore constrained by lack of mobility. A colleague from RESPECT related how they wanted other delegates in Manila to visualize this during a Peoples' Global Action workshop. An empty chair, with an apron draped over it, was placed next to the resource persons at the front of the room. When a male domestic worker based in Hong Kong¹³ tried to remove the chair (because it 'didn't look nice'), the NGO colleague explained that it symbolised the migrant domestic workers in Europe who were unable to come and speak for themselves.

Experience tells us that it is typical for migrant civil society to organise country or regional consultations to bring the network's agreed agenda to major events in the political calendar such as the GFMD. Both documented and undocumented migrants use this space to share experiences and perspectives in policy development debates. However, the structural constraints that undocumented migrants have to overcome are multiplied: their visibility and possibilities for collective action are subject to serious limitations owing to their work and living status being invisible to the law. Migrant experiences and policy recommendations tend to be brought to the table by a core group of migrant representatives (documented, engaged in recognised work, spouse of citizen in the destination country, or first- or second-generation immigrant), if not by NGOs and other allies in the network. So while the GFMD structure is critiqued for effectively pushing civil society perspectives to the margins, the character, dynamics and overall plurality of migrant civil society remind us that the voices of a large part of its population similarly go unheard; perspectives tend to be articulated instead by a core group of NGOs and CBO leaders.

During a women and gender workshop at the Peoples' Global Action in Athens in November 2009, a RESPECT colleague relayed to the group how we had planned to address this constraint. 'We actually had this idea of bringing a video message from one of our migrant leaders [chair of TRUSTED Migrants]. We're very much aware that they can't come here on their own and speak for themselves. But for lack of time and resources, we weren't able to.' Still, this is one way of bringing migrants' perspectives forward (so to speak) in future consultations.

¹³ Hong Kong is a country that issues work and residence permits to migrant domestic workers. Its law recognises their right to peaceful assembly and association, which sets it apart from other destination countries in Asia such as Singapore and Taiwan.

CONCLUSION

While the RESPECT FPAR report did not set out to explore the linkages between trafficking and related issues such as migration, gender, labour, security, trade and globalisation, the stories and reflections we presented do demonstrate the connections among some of the concepts, particularly migration, gender, and labour, which we aimed to analyse through a human rights perspective. In the course of doing this 'bigger picture' analysis, we have presented the lived realities of migrant domestic workers as an opportunity for development.

At present, trends in managing migration primarily lie in skilled work. But in managing low-skill work in migration (i.e., domestic work), the discourse uses frames of trafficking and security, as opposed to claiming one's right to development and human security. The priorities of migrant domestic workers that we have discussed address the gaps in both the origin and destination country: local development projects in the communities of origin, and the regularisation campaign in the host society. This acknowledges that the rights of migrants are abused, but also suggests that this occurs because the possibilities of migrating to live life according to one's aspirations are inadequate.

Trafficking did not come out explicitly in our research. Since migrant domestic workers typically are driven by economic motivations, and relay-migration usually occurs in this case of undocumented work, the migrant women already have an idea of the situation that awaits them in the destination country. But because most migrant domestic workers are vulnerable and exposed to discrimination and inequality, what usually occurs is the abuse of their rights and not specifically trafficking.

Working with a mobile population such as undocumented migrant domestic workers has led us to adapt the FPAR methodology to the context of a destination country. We adhered to principles of group involvement, collective generating of knowledge and lack of hierarchy, but deviated from collective decision-making and returning the generated information to the participants. We hope to address this limitation when we resume our strategic meetings in the network. In the meantime, we continue to work towards the action component (regularisation campaign, local development initiatives) to help improve the living situation of migrant domestic workers in The Netherlands.

As a tool, FPAR respects the rights of those who are vulnerable and oppressed, and encourages us to confront ethical issues in research. We have experienced its transformative aim, and believe there is a need for more migrants and advocates to use this methodology in countries of destination.

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APPENDIX A:

Migrants' views towards local development and reintegration - A focus group discussion

Introduction

'Migrants' views towards local development and reintegration' is a focus group discussion that explores the views of undocumented migrant domestic workers in the Netherlands towards the idea of preparing to come home for good to the Philippines.

Context

Studies conducted in the early 1990s among migrant communities in Hong Kong, Malaysia and the Philippines suggested that 'the way for migrants to return to their countries voluntarily is when they could find the option of returning home more attractive than staying abroad' (Villalba, 2008: 1). However, preparing to come home for good proved to be a process that was not so easily achieved. While migrant workers are generally motivated to work abroad because of economic reasons (Atikha, in Mavrincac et al., 2008; Villalba, 2007), results of more recent studies suggest that a significant portion of migrants' income goes to 'basic family maintenance' while 'productive savings...prove to be a hoped for, but for most, unrealized outcome of the migration experience' (Mavrincac et al., 2008: 2).

This focus group will explore if the earlier experience among migrant communities in Hong Kong, Malaysia and the Philippines is still being reflected at present among those in the Netherlands. This focus group can provide insight on the issue of reintegration for migrant domestic workers, inform the development of reintegration programs and be used to complement other research tools being used to explore the issue, such as interview checklists for semi-structured interviews or questionnaires for structured interviews.

Objectives

1. To explore the mixed motivations of migrants in the transnational migration experience, and draw experiences on supporting local development and potentials and challenges to 'coming home for good'
2. To find out how framing the reintegration debate through local development (i.e., setting up a means of livelihood that migrants can return to) can convince or compel the participants to prepare for their reintegration
3. To determine if there is an emerging 'profile' among migrants that is more inclined to find currency in and support local development and reintegration (gender, age, work and residence status, etc.)

Requirements

Time: 1.5 hours

Needed

- 5-8 participants
- 1 facilitator
- 1 note-taker/time-keeper
- Venue that is familiar and accessible to participants, conducive to recording, with good lighting
- Chairs for participants and facilitator formed in a semi-circle, facing a wall or sheet where the images will be projected

- Chair and desk for note-taker/time-keeper to one side nearby
- Overhead projector
- Laptop or desktop computer
- 5-7 presentation slides with photos relevant to the topic (images of Filipino would-be migrants queuing at the airport, workplace abroad, Dutch families, family back home, income, savings and remittances, forms of communication such as laptop, mobile phone, etc., returned migrant entrepreneurs managing microenterprises back home)
- Copies of the focus group guide
- List of participants
- Name tags for participants
- Voice recorder with extra batteries
- Notepads and pens for facilitator and note-taker/time-keeper
- Light refreshments

Focus group guide

Time	Activity	Objective	Description	Materials	Suggested questions for discussion
0-0.10	Opening	<p>Introductions among participants, facilitator and note-taker</p> <p>To generate data that would inform Objective 3</p>	<p>The facilitator thanks everyone for coming to the focus group. Gives brief self-introduction, introduces the note-taker, and explains that the latter is there to jot down issues and highlights during the session.</p> <p>The facilitator explains the general purpose of the research (to explore the views of migrants towards local development and reintegration). If necessary, explains what local development and reintegration mean. Also assures participants that their identities will not be revealed, and that the data generated from</p>	<p>Voice recorder (all throughout)</p> <p>Notepads and pens to jot down issues and highlights (all throughout)</p>	

			<p>the focus group will be treated as confidential</p> <p>The facilitator asks each participant in the circle to introduce themselves, and to state how long they have been in the Netherlands, their age, occupation, marital status and level of education in the Philippines.</p>		
0.10-0.20	Images from the migration and reintegration experience	To use quick 'visual prompts' that would serve as a background on the topic	The facilitator asks the members of the group to share what they think the images are about.	Overhead projector Laptop or desktop computer 5-7 presentation slides with photos related to migration, local development and reintegration	
0.20-0.40	The reality of being a migrant	<p>To 'ground' the participants in 'reality', to assure them that the topic is familiar to them and that their experience is valued, and to ensure that all participants speak out at the onset</p> <p>To generate data that would inform Objective 1</p>	<p>The facilitator asks all the group members to describe their experiences on the topic.</p> <p>The facilitator 'shifts the discussion from experiences to generalisations and back again, and inquires into both abstract principles and practical actions' (3302 slide presentation on focus groups, 2009: slide 11).</p>		<p>Why did you leave the Philippines?</p> <p>Why did you choose to come to the Netherlands?</p> <p>What is it like to be a Filipino migrant in the Netherlands?</p> <p>Where do you see yourself 5 years from now? 10 years from now?</p> <p>What are your thoughts about home?</p>

0.40-0.55	Preparing for the journey back home	<p>To generate data that would inform Objective 2</p> <p>To explore the link between income, savings and remittances to opportunities for reintegration</p>			<p>Are you preparing for your eventual return to the Philippines? (If no, why not? If yes, how?) Are there constraints keeping you from going back to the Philippines?</p> <p>What would convince you to go back to the Philippines?</p>
0.55-0.60	Closing	<p>To summarise the main points of the discussion, and to ask for feedback from the group members</p> <p>To thank the group members for participating in the discussion</p>	<p>The facilitator draws the discussion to a close on a positive note (acknowledging that the members have contributed much to the discussion).</p> <p>The facilitator gives the main points that arose in the discussion, and asks group members if they have any reflections or would like to say anything more.</p> <p>The facilitator thanks group members for participating, and discusses briefly about the outcome of the focus group and what it will be used for, and whether subsequent meetings will be necessary (ibid: slide 12).</p>		<p>(After acknowledging the contributions of the group members to the discussion, and summarising the main points)</p> <p>Would anyone like to add something that has not been mentioned?</p>

APPENDIX 2:

Questionnaire to members of TRUSTED Migrants/Koop Natin and their potential role in supporting local development in the Philippines

This questionnaire seeks data from members of TRUSTED Migrants/Koop Natin for use in writing a research paper. The information you provide here will only be used for research, and your identity and other details will be kept confidential.

A. Basic information

1. Gender
 - a. Male
 - b. Female

2. Age:

3. Education:

4. Marital status:

5. Spouse and children (*if any*)
 - a. In Philippines
 - b. In NL
 - c. Other:

6. Province or city in Philippines:

7. Type of work in NL:

8. How many employers do you work for in NL?

9. Is it a stable job?

10. Work / residence status in NL:

11. How long have you lived in NL?

12. How did you migrate to NL?
 - a. Au pair
 - b. Tourist visa (invited by family or friends)
 - c. Tourist visa (invited by employer)
 - d. Student / scholar
 - e. Church worker
 - f. Work permit

- Other

13. Why did you migrate?
.....
.....

B. Income, savings and expenses

14. Monthly income (in euro):
15. Every month I spend euro for my own expenses in NL (estimate)
16. Monthly savings, if any (in euro):
17. Where do you keep your savings (*NL account, safe place at home in NL, account in Philippines, etc.*)?
18. Every month I send home euro to my family in Philippines (estimate)
19. This remittance is used for (You can choose more than one, as long as it applies to you):
- a. Education of children
 - My own children
 - Children of other family members
 - b. Build or improve house
 - c. Everyday expenses of immediate family (*food, electricity, water, etc.*)
 - d. To help other family members or friends (*relatives, etc.*)
 - e. Family emergencies (*death, hospitalisation, etc.*)
 - f. Savings for capital of future business
 - g. Small family business (*already set up and 'running'*)

What kind of business?

Other:

C. Future plans

20. What are your plans to prepare for the future?
- a. Go back home to Philippines within 5 years
 - b. Go back home to Philippines, but not sure when
 - c. Stay in NL, visit Philippines occasionally
 - d. Stay in NL, retire in Philippines eventually
21. Are you making progress on your future plans?
- a. Yes
How?
 - b. No
Why?
22. If you had steady income and security in the Philippines, would you still work in NL?
- a. Yes
 - b. No

D. How TRUSTED Migrants/Koop Natin empower me and help me support local development in the Philippines

23. When did you join TRUSTED Migrants/Koop Natin?
24. Are you a member or officer?
25. Why did you join, and what were your expectations in joining?

26. What to you are the main achievements of TRUSTED Migrants/Koop Natin?
.....
.....

27. Has being part of TRUSTED Migrants/Koop Natin empowered you as a Filipino in NL?

a. Yes

How?.....

b. No

28. If you had steady income and security, would you still be a member of TRUSTED Migrants/Koop Natin?
.....

29. Principal amount invested in Koop Natin:

30. How much did you earn (dividends, rebates, etc.) in Koop Natin last year?
.....

31. For what purpose do you use your added income from Koop Natin?
.....
.....

32. Have you experienced problems in being a member of Koop Natin?

a. Yes

Please specify:

b. No

33. Do you want to see changes or improvements in Koop Natin (better management of funds, more options to invest in Philippines, etc.)?

a. Yes

How?

.....

b. No

34. Do you have other sources of additional income, aside from your main work income and Koop Natin?

a. Yes

Please specify:

b. No

35. Has TRUSTED Migrants/Koop Natin given you training on how to manage your income and/or support economic initiatives in the Philippines?

a. Yes

b. No

• No, but I need this kind of training

• No, I don't need this kind of training

36. If yes, please specify (*You can choose more than one*):

a. Instilled awareness on your role in local development in Philippines

b. Training on how to save your income and preparing for the future

c. Education for your family in Philippines on managing remittances

d. Information and advice on business opportunities in Philippines

e. Training on starting and managing a business

Other:

37. What will convince you to invest in local development projects in the Philippines?
(You can choose more than one)

- a. If project is financially stable and will make my investment grow
- b. If project helps Filipino families and communities in a sustainable way (provides jobs, environmentally friendly, managed competently and transparently, etc.)
- c. If project is located in my home province or region
- d. If information and updates on the project and my investment will be sent to me regularly
- e. If people/organisations I know and trust are involved in the project (fellow migrants are also investors, NGO partners promote the project, etc.)

Other:

.....

APPENDIX 3:

Questionnaire for Filipino migrants in the Netherlands and their potential role in supporting local development in the Philippines

This questionnaire seeks data on Filipino migrants in the Netherlands for use in writing a research paper. The information you provide here will only be used for research, and your identity and other personal details will be kept confidential.

A. Basic information

1. Gender
 - a. Male
 - b. Female

2. Age:

3. Education:

4. Marital status:

5. Spouse and children (*if any*)
 - a. In Philippines
 - b. In NL
 - c. Other:

6. Province or city in Philippines:

7. Type of work in NL:

8. How many employers do you work for in NL?

9. Is it a stable job?

10. Work / residence status in NL:

11. How long have you lived in NL?

12. How did you migrate to NL?
 - a. Au pair
 - b. Tourist visa (invited by family or friends)
 - c. Tourist visa (invited by employer)
 - d. Student / scholar
 - e. Church worker
 - f. Work permit

- Other

13. Why did you migrate?

-

B. Income, savings and expenses

14. Monthly income (in euro):

15. Every month I spend euro for my own expenses in NL (estimate)

16. Monthly savings, if any (in euro):

17. Where do you keep your savings (*NL account, safe place at home in NL, account in Philippines, etc.*)?

18. Every month I send home euro to my family in Philippines (estimate)

19. This remittance is used for (You can choose more than one, as long as it applies to you):

- a. Education of children
 - My own children
 - Children of other family members
- b. Build or improve house
- c. Everyday expenses of immediate family (*food, electricity, water, etc.*)
- d. To help other family members or friends (*relatives, etc.*)
- e. Family emergencies (*death, hospitalisation, etc.*)
- f. Savings for capital of future business
- g. Small family business (*already set up and 'running'*)

What kind of business?

Other:

C. Future Plans

20. What are your plans to prepare for the future?

- a. Go back home to Philippines within 5 years
- b. Go back home to Philippines, but not sure when
- c. Stay in NL, visit Philippines occasionally
- d. Stay in NL, retire in Philippines eventually

21. Are you making progress on your future plans?

- a. Yes
How?
- b. No
Why?

22. If you had steady income and security in the Philippines, would you still work in NL?

- a. Yes
- b. No

D. Being a member of your organization

23. When did you join (name of organisation)?

24. Why did you join, and what were your expectations in joining?

.....

25. What to you are the main achievements of (name of organisation)?

.....

.....

26. Has being part of (name of organization) empowered you as a Filipino in NL?

- a. Yes
How?
- b. No

27. If you had enough money and security, would you still be a member of (name of organisation)? Why?

.....
.....

E. Your potential role in supporting local development in the Philippines

28. Do you support enterprises to help create jobs for your family or community in the Philippines (*send money home for small enterprise capital, invest part of income in enterprises, etc.*)?

- a. Yes
Please specify

.....

b. No

29. Has any organisation provided you with training on how to manage your income and/or support economic initiatives in the Philippines?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- No, but I need this kind of training
- No, I don't need this kind of training

30. If yes, please specify (*You can choose more than one*):

- a. Instilled awareness on your role in local economic development in Philippines
- b. Training on how to save your income and preparing for the future
- c. Education for your family in Philippines on managing remittances
- d. Information and advice on business opportunities in Philippines
- e. Training on starting and managing a business

Other:

.....

31. Are you willing to support economic initiatives to help create jobs for your family or community in the Philippines?

- a. Yes
- b. No

32. What will convince you to invest in local development projects in the Philippines? (*You can choose more than one*)

- a. If project is financially stable and will make my investment grow, so I will earn more
- b. If project helps Filipino families and communities in a sustainable way (provides jobs, environmentally friendly, managed competently and transparently, etc.)
- c. If project is located in my home province or region
- d. If information and updates on the project and my investment will be sent to me regularly
- e. If people/organisations I know and trust are involved in the project (fellow migrants are also investors, church or NGO partners promote the project, etc.)

Other:

