



Public Services International

Decent Work and Social Protection for Migrant Workers in the Public Services

Philippines Project Monitoring and Stakeholder Meetings

**13-16 July 2015
Manila, Philippines**

CONCEPT NOTE

I. Background

The Philippines ranks among the top ten “labour deploying” countries in the world. With an estimated population of 98 million within the country, and an overseas population of around 10.5 million, labour migration remains as an important employment strategy by the government, thereby relieving unemployment pressures and generating remittances that keep the economy afloat. While labour migration has its economic benefits, it also has a profound impact on social development and on the quality of public service delivery in the country.

The Philippines faces a human resources for health crisis, marked by inadequate staffing levels, a misdistribution of resources and services between rural and urban areas and a growth of precarious work in the public services sector, particularly in health services. Migration has a major impact on depleting the pool of skilled and experienced health workers. For instance, the Philippines loses trained and skilled nurses faster than they can be replaced. Between 2000 and 2008, over 100,000 nurses left the country to work overseas. Low investment in health, high nurse/midwife to patient ratios and a failure to implement key health reforms and the Magna Carta for Public Health Workers, are some of the challenges impacting the delivery of quality healthcare. Deteriorating and poor quality healthcare facilities prevail, as facilities are not upgraded and are inadequate to meet the needs of a growing population. At the same time, migration and international recruitment of Filipino nurses and care workers continues, with unscrupulous agents capitalizing on an immensely growing recruitment industry, where public services, such as health, social care and education, were no exception.

In 2010-2012, PSI implemented a Project on Women and International Migration in the Health and Social Care Services. PSI affiliates in the Philippines participated in the project which resulted to building the capacity of the unions to push for policy changes, completing a mapping and participatory research in the health sector, publication of a National Report and preparation of a Pre-Decision Kit for migrant workers. PSI unions engaged in dialogue with government and built alliances with civil society on the issue of labour migration and development. Furthermore, the unions carried out outreach, information drives and organising of migrant workers.

However, low union density remains a challenge, along with low funding of public services, growth of precarious work, poor pay and deteriorating working conditions. With government’s reliance on labour migration as a development strategy, it is crucial for affiliates to continue to engage in

influencing policies, defending migrant workers' rights, supporting union development and establishing union partnerships between origin and destination countries in order to share knowledge and to enhance what the project has achieved in the previous phase. Thus, in 2013, following a successful PSI Stocktaking Seminar on Migration at its 2012 World Congress, affiliates began formulating the next phase of the migration project, this time expanding to all sectors of public services and focusing on decent work and social protection for migrant workers in the public services.

Also in 2013, the Philippine government entered into a bilateral labour agreement with the German government for the deployment of skilled Filipino health professionals to Germany. Like many developed economies facing the demographic challenge of an ageing population, Germany is predicted to have a shortfall of two million skilled workers by 2020 (New York Times, 4/02/2011). According to the German Federal Statistics Office, the number of people 65 years and older will increase by about half until the end of the 2030's, therefore highlighting the urgent need for health and care workers to deliver the population's care needs. It is estimated that by 2030, Germany will need about half a million full-time nurses and overall, about one million more people, to look after the elderly.

With the entry into force of the Philippines-Germany Bilateral Agreement, a Joint Monitoring Committee was established in order to monitor its implementation. PSI's German trade union affiliate, Ver.di, with its 2.3 million members and the largest trade union organization in the world, along with PSI's Philippine trade union affiliate PSLINK, were invited to be part of the Joint Monitoring Committee. This government agreement, by far, is considered as a best practice due to its strong provisions on equality of treatment, workers' rights, ethical recruitment and trade union involvement.

Moreover, with the support of the ILO Decent Work Across Borders Project funded by the European Union, PSI and the ILO DWAB Project recently completed a series of information materials intended to inform health workers intending to work in Germany and other European countries. PSI will be launching these materials in July together with its affiliates and partners in the Philippines, government agencies, professional associations and civil society organizations.

II. The Project

The Project on “**Decent Work and Social Protection for Migrant Workers in the Public Services (2014-2016)**” is a global project of the PSI involving the pilot countries, namely: Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Philippines and Sri Lanka. The project is co-funded by the PSI, FNV, FNV Mondiaal, IMPACT and ILO ACTRAV.

The project's **development objective** is to contribute to achieving decent work and social protection for migrant workers while promoting quality public services for all.

The project's **specific objective** is to promote access to decent work and social protection for migrant workers in the public services.

The project aims to achieve the following results:

Expected Results:

1. Migrant workers in public services have access to decent work and social protection with the support of the unions.

2. Unions contribute to reforming the labour recruitment industry through the promotion of ethical recruitment and compliance with UN and ILO standards.
3. Unions embark on innovative ways to reach out to and organise migrant workers.
4. Unions contribute to improving the global governance of labour migration by promoting rights-based labour migration policies, decent work and access to quality public services for all.

III. Objectives and Agenda of the Meeting

The **Philippines Project Monitoring and Stakeholder Meetings within the PSI's Decent Work and Social Protection for Migrant Workers in the Public Services Project** will bring together PSI affiliates in the Philippines, Germany and Finland, other trade union partners, government agencies, policy makers, ethical recruiters, civil society organizations and migrant associations in order to tackle the challenges to decent work and social protection for migrant workers. There will be held a series of dialogues, workshops and a symposium aimed at the following objectives:

1. Organize a national and global launch of the PSI-ILO Decent Work Across Borders Project Information Kits for Migrant Workers:
 - Philippines Pre-Decision Booklet on Labour Migration for Health Workers
 - Return and Reintegration to the Philippines: An Information Guide for Migrant Filipino Health Workers
 - India Pre-Decision Booklet
 - Working in Germany: Pre-Departure Information for Filipino and Indian Migrant Health Workers Bound for Germany
 - Working in Finland: Pre-Departure Information for Filipino and Indian Migrant Health Workers Bound for Finland
 - Working in Denmark: Pre-Departure Information for Filipino and Indian Migrant Health Workers Bound for Denmark
 - Working in Norway: Pre-Departure Information for Filipino and Indian Migrant Health Workers Bound for Norway
2. Organize dialogues with key government agencies, policymakers, advocacy groups and the media, highlighting progress as well as challenges in the implementation of the Germany-Philippines Bilateral Labour Agreement for the Deployment of Filipino Health Professionals to Germany.
3. Look at other challenges in the recruitment of nurses, e.g. recruitment of Filipino nurses to Finland and other destination countries.
4. Examine the progress made in the ASEAN Integration process, in particular on labour migration in the public services sectors such as health and social care services.
5. Conduct a project monitoring workshop for the national working group (NWG) members of the PSI Project on Decent Work and Social Protection for Migrant Workers in the Public Services.

IV. Participants

- Members of the PSI Migration Project National Working Group
- Members of PSI Affiliated unions in the Philippines: PSLINK, CIU, AFW, AGWWAS, MWEU, MWSA, PGEA, NECU, PIPSEA
- PSI German affiliate Ver.di
- PSI Finnish affiliate Tehy
- Government agencies: POEA, OWWA, DOH, DFA

- ILO Manila Office
- Representatives from Senate and Congress
- Partylist representatives
- Non-governmental organizations and migrant associations
- Trade Union Solidarity of Finland SASK
- Ethical Recruiters
- Other invited guests

V. Programme

Day 1 – Monday 13 July

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| 9:30-13:00 | <p>Stakeholders Meeting focusing on: Germany-Philippines Bilateral Labour Agreement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members of the Joint Monitoring Committee • Triple Win Project • Ver.di • Tehy • NWG Members • Others invited participants <p>Venue: Philippine Overseas Employment Agency (POEA)</p> |
| 13:00-14:30 | <p>Lunch</p> |
| 14:30-17:30 | <p>Stakeholders Meeting focusing on: Recruitment of Filipino Nurses to Finland</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • POEA, DOH • Tehy • Ver.di • NWG Members • Other invited participants <p>Venue: POEA</p> |

Day 2 – Tuesday 14 July

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| 9:30-13:00 | <p>Symposium: Decent Work and Social Protection for Migrant Workers in the Public Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Germany-Philippines Bilateral Labour Agreement • Launch of the PSI-ILO DWAB Project Migrant Information Kits <p>Venue: Astoria Plaza Hotel (http://www.astoriaplaza.com/)</p> |
| 13:00-14:00 | <p>Lunch</p> |
| 14:00-17:30 | <p>Symposium: Precarious Work in the Public Services and Labour Mobility through Regional Integration in the ASEAN Process</p> |

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| | Venue: Astoria Plaza Hotel |
| 18:30 | Dinner & Social Event for National Working Group and Guests Venue: Astoria Plaza Hotel |

Day 3 – Wednesday 15 July

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| 9:30 - 17:00 | PSI Migration Project National Working Group Project Planning and Monitoring Workshop Venue: Astoria Plaza Hotel |
| 9:30 – 13:00 | Tehy Meeting with Project Partners: PSI Precarious Work in the Health Sector Project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building Synergies, enhancing cooperation with partners and stakeholders Venue: Astoria Plaza Hotel |
| 13:00-14:00 | Lunch |
| 14:00-17:00 | Other follow-up meetings for Tehy (E.g. Visit to Congress, Health Facilities, OPTTEAM Philippine office, ATENDO Philippine Office) Venue: To be determined |

Day 4 – Thursday 16 July

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| 9:30-12:00 | PSI Migration Project National Working Group Project Planning and Monitoring Workshop Venue: Astoria Plaza Hotel |
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