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Philippine Pre-Decision Booklet on Labour Migration for Health Workers



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Public Services International
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ABOUT PUBLIC SERVICES INTERNATIONAL

Public Services International (PSI) is a global trade union federation representing 20 million working women and men who deliver vital public services in 150 countries. PSI champions human rights, advocates for social justice and promotes universal access to quality public services. PSI works with the United Nations system and in partnership with labour, civil society and other organizations.

PSI runs a Migration Programme through partnerships with its affiliated public service trade unions worldwide in defending the human and trade union rights of migrant workers while promoting equality, access to justice and quality public services for all. Visit www.world-psi.org.

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HOW TO USE THIS MATERIAL

This pre-decision booklet contains basic information about several topics to help Filipino health workers who are considering taking up employment overseas. It seeks to empower health workers to make informed decisions and raise awareness of the issues related to health labour migration and ethical recruitment. This guide does not provide detailed information or advice but indicates the areas requiring further research and reflection by the individual.

In instances where the information is complex or likely to change, links to useful websites have been included. Individuals should use this material as a guide only and ensure the veracity and relevance of any information as much as possible.

As circumstances change, information will also change. It is therefore expected that this booklet will be regularly updated to reflect current realities.

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INTRODUCTION

Many migrant workers have unrealistic expectations and insufficient information about recruitment procedures, employment and living conditions abroad, labour laws, workers' rights in countries of destination and social costs of migration. This lack of information on migration has placed a staggering number of migrant workers in vulnerable and risky economic and social situations. The availability and accessibility of adequate and up-to-date information is therefore crucial for individuals to make informed decisions and avoid fraudulent practices and other pitfalls in the migration process.

This pre-decision booklet is part of a series of migration information materials developed for Filipino health workers under the ILO's *Decent Work Across Borders (DWAB) project*¹. The project seeks to facilitate an approach to migration that benefits the migrant workers, the source and destination countries within a rights-based framework for labour migration management. The migration information materials seek to address information needs of migrant health workers at all the stages of migration -- from pre-decision to return and reintegration. This booklet focuses on information needed by workers prior to making a decision to migrate for work overseas. Some aspiring migrants have opted to abandon plans to move to another country after receiving information on actual living and employment conditions abroad. Pre-decision information is crucial in the fight against illegal recruitment practices.

¹ http://www.ilo.org/manila/info/public/pr/WCMS_173607/lang--en/index.htm

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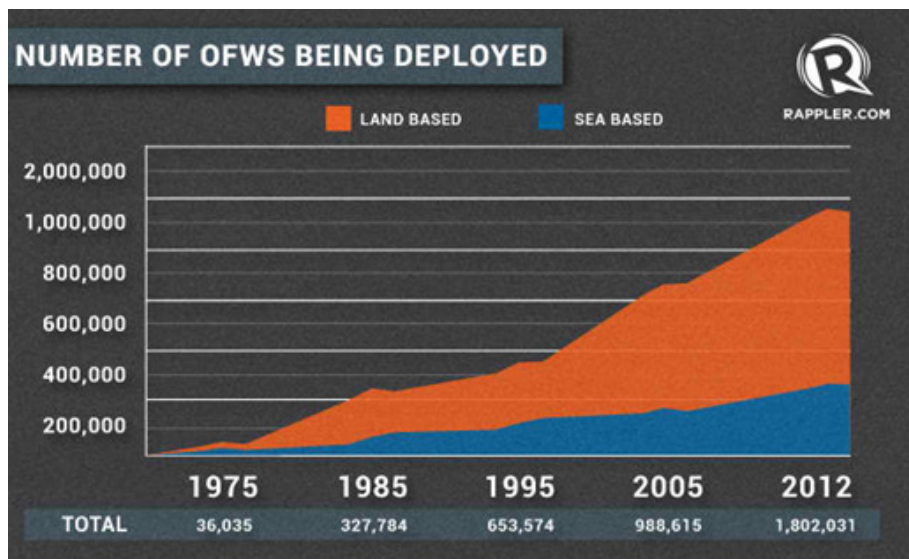
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1. Migration Realities

1.1 Overview of Philippine Labour Migration

The Philippines is known as a major source country of migrant labour in the world. More than 10 million Filipinos are living or working in different parts of the world. Labour migration from the Philippines has grown constantly for the past three decades.

Number of OFWs deployed



(Source: <http://www.rappler.com/nation/32361-ph-migration-report-ofws>, June 2013)

The majority of Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) are deployed in the Middle East countries, and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia remains as the top destination for many Filipino migrant workers.

Top-Ten Destination Countries for OFWs (new hires)

DESTINATION	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
All Destinations - Total	376,973	349,715	341,966	437,720	458,575
1 Saudi Arabia	122,258	126,661	119,379	112,648	115,289
2 United Arab Emirates	76,164	51,805	47,171	73,019	82,085
3 Qatar	45,209	40,713	37,209	45,070	47,078
4 Kuwait	15,935	21,324	27,308	35,074	43,188
5 Hong Kong	19,177	26,669	28,838	38,479	34,310
6 Taiwan	29,698	25,139	27,845	31,961	30,143
7 Singapore	4,488	3,916	6,544	18,068	20,838
8 Malaysia	1,075	1,250	2,794	6,972	12,693
9 Bahrain	5,094	6,038	5,353	7,481	10,528
10 Papua New Guinea	799	501	840	4,337	6,224
Other Destinations	57,076	45,699	38,685	64,611	56,199

(Source: POEA OFW 2012 Statistics, http://www.poea.gov.ph/stats/2012_stats.pdf)

For several years the country has also been one of the largest recipients of remittances in the world. In 2013 alone the country received an estimated \$26 billion in remittances. The other top recipients of officially recorded remittances for the same year were India (\$71 billion), China (\$60 billion), Mexico (\$22 billion), Nigeria (\$21 billion), and Egypt (\$20 billion). The major sources of OFW remittances were the United States, Saudi Arabia, the United Kingdom, United Arab Emirates, Singapore, Canada and Japan.

The majority of OFWs are leaving to render domestic work overseas. A growing number of nurses have also left the country to work abroad and ranks second in the list of top-ten occupations with the highest number of deployed OFW new-hires. Both of these occupations are made up mostly by women, pointing to the increasing feminization of labour migration.

Number of OFWs by Top-Ten Occupational Categories (new-hires)

OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORY	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
All Occupational Categories - Total	376,973	349,715	341,966	437,720	458,575
1 Household Service Workers	50,082	71,557	96,583	142,689	155,831
2 Nurses Professional	11,495	13,014	12,082	17,236	15,655
3 Waiters, Bartenders and Related Workers	13,911	11,977	8,789	12,238	14,892
4 Caregivers and Caretakers	10,109	9,228	9,293	10,101	10,575
5 Wiremen and Electrical Workers	8,893	9,752	8,606	9,826	10,493
6 Plumbers and Pipe Fitters	9,664	7,722	8,407	9,177	9,987
7 Welders and Flame-Cutters	6,777	5,910	5,059	8,026	9,657
8 Laborers/Helpers General	9,711	8,099	7,833	7,010	9,128
9 Charworkers, Cleaners and Related Workers	11,620	10,056	12,133	6,847	8,213
10 Cooks and Related Workers	5,791	5,028	4,399	5,287	6,344
Other Occupational Categories	238,920	197,372	168,782	209,283	207,800

(Source: POEA OFW 2012 Statistics, http://www.poea.gov.ph/stats/2012_stats.pdf)

The country has had a long history of migration, with the first outflow dating back to the Spanish colonial period when Filipino workers migrated to Mexico to work in the ships and dockyards as part of the Manila-Acapulco galleon trade.

Contemporary labour migration traces its roots from the 1970s when President Ferdinand Marcos adopted policies that encouraged outmigration as a way to stimulate the economy and address rising unemployment. These policies were meant to be temporary in nature, but since then, labour migration has increased steadily.

Through the years, the national government has established structures and policies covering the entire migration process. In 1995 the Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Act (Ra No. 8042) was enacted to “institute the policies of overseas employment and establish a higher standard of protection and promotion of the welfare of migrant workers, their families and overseas Filipinos in distress”. It also provides that “the State does not promote overseas employment as a means to sustain economic growth and achieve national development”.

Relevant national legislations on labour migration

Year	Legislation	Description
1974	Labor Code of the Philippines (Presidential Decree No. 442)	Main law governing employment practices and labour relations in the Philippines
1995	Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Act of 1995 (RA NO. 8042)	Institutes policies on overseas employment and establishes standards for the protection and promotion of the welfare of migrant workers, their families and overseas Filipinos in distress
2003	Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003 (Republic Act No. 9208) Overseas Absentee Voting Act of 2003 (Republic Act No. 9189) Citizenship Retention and Re-acquisition Act of 2003 (Republic Act No. 9225)	Establishes policies and institutional mechanisms to provide support to trafficked persons Gives qualified overseas Filipinos the right to vote in national elections Allows for dual citizenship

Year	Legislation	Description
2009	RA No. 10022 amending Republic Act No. 8042	Law amending RA No. 8042
2012	Expanded Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2012 (RA No. 10364), an act expanding RA No. 9208	Law amending RA. No. 9208
2013	Overseas Voting Act of 2013, or Republic Act 10590	Law amending RA. No. 9189 ensuring easier access to voting facilities for OFWs

1.2 Focal government agencies involved in labour migration

The following is a list of key public institutions providing services to OFWS and their families:

Agencies	Mandate
Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) www.poea.gov.ph	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Regulates recruitment of OFWs ➤ Protects migrant workers' rights and ensures fair and equitable labour practices ➤ Provides legal assistance to victims of illegal recruitment ➤ Facilitates the deployment of workers hired through government-to-government arrangements ➤ Supervises the government's programme on anti-illegal recruitment ➤ Conducts pre-employment orientation and anti-illegal recruitment seminars nationwide
Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) www.owwa.gov.ph	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Provides social and welfare services to OFWs including insurance, social work assistance, legal assistance, cultural services, and remittance services ➤ Manages a trust fund pooled from member OFW contributions towards the protection and promotion of the welfare and wellbeing of OFWs and their dependents

Agencies	Mandate
<p>Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO)</p> <p>www.cfo.gov.ph</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develop and implement programmes to promote the interest and well being of Filipino emigrants and Filipino permanent residents in other countries ➤ Provides pre-departure orientation seminars to emigrants ➤ Promotes preservation and enhancement of the social, economic, and cultural ties of Filipinos abroad with the Philippines
<p>National Reintegration Center for Overseas Filipino Workers (NRCO)</p> <p>http://nrco.omdsinc.com</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develops and implements reintegration programmes and services for OFW returnees that will enable them to maximize the gains of overseas employment, mitigate the social costs of migration and cushion the impact of forced repatriation due to unexpected events
<p>Department of Foreign Affairs -- Office of the Undersecretary for Migrant Affairs</p> <p>www.dfa.gov.ph</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Provides legal and consular assistance and services to Filipinos overseas ➤ Assists migrant workers and overseas Filipinos in cases such as detention, unpaid salaries, financial support for next-of-kin and location of whereabouts of missing relatives ➤ Pursues negotiation of bilateral, regional and multi-lateral agreements to provide protection for Filipino migrant workers
<p>Philippine Overseas Labor Offices (POLOs)</p> <p>http://www.dole.gov.ph/pages/view/24 - Directory of POLO offices</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Provides on-site assistance to OFWs ➤ Organizes socio-cultural activities and programmes for OFWs ➤ Facilitates verification of employment documents and job orders
<p>Overseas Absentee Voting Secretariat</p> <p>http://www.dfa-oavs.gov.ph</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Assists in the implementation of the Overseas Voting Act

See the list of resources at the end of this booklet for the contact information of the aforementioned agencies.

1.3 Overview of Health Worker Migration

The international migration of health workers is nothing new, but recent trends have pointed to an alarming increase in the movement of health workers such as doctors and nurses from developing to developed countries.

Globalization, demographic shifts and uneven development have intensified international migration in the health sector. High-income countries have relied on recruitment of foreign health workers to meet their needs instead of developing their domestic health human workforce. Unfortunately, many of the source countries are those that are already suffering from dwindling numbers of health workers and deteriorating health services, and are having difficulties meeting the UN Millennium Development Goals.

Current international migration flows increase the unequal distribution of health personnel globally, weaken health systems and intensify global health inequalities. The World Health Organization (WHO) has already projected that the global shortage of health workers will reach 12.9 million health-care workers by 2035 if the situation remains as it is today.

The Philippines remains as one of the top source countries for health workers, even as it is grappling with high maternal mortality rates, inadequate staffing ratios, and a shortage of doctors and other critical health professionals.

To tackle the health workforce crisis, there is a need to increase training capacity, improve health workforce planning, development and retention, and promote ethical recruitment of migrant health workers.

1.4 Why do health workers migrate?

Health workers move for a variety of reasons. It is widely known though that the motivation to migrate is largely economic in nature. Some of the common push and pull factors that drive the international recruitment and migration of health workers are shown below:

PUSH -- factors or causes in the origin place that force people to move away	PULL -- conditions that attract people to a particular location
Lack of jobs	Higher salaries
Low pay	Better working conditions
Poor working conditions	Lesser workload
Heavy workload	Opportunities for professional growth
Lack of adequate health infrastructure or facilities	Better technology and facilities
Lack of opportunities for professional growth	Higher standard of living
Poor implementation of policies	
Political instability	

(Source: Public Services International “Quality Health Care and Workers on the Move”, National Reports of Kenya (2011), Ghana (2011), South Africa (2011), Philippines (2013) and Australia (2012).

1.5 Impact of Health Worker Migration

The international migration of health workers has both negative and positive consequences. While it can provide career opportunities for Filipino migrant health workers, it can also expose them to new vulnerabilities. While remittances can boost the economy of the origin country, it can also lead to social costs that may offset short-term gains and further weaken already failing health systems in source countries.

1.6 Benefits of working abroad

- Possibility of earning a higher income and receiving better benefits for the migrant worker
- Opportunities for professional development
- Enhanced cultural awareness
- Better quality of life for the migrant worker and his/her family
- Remittances benefiting the origin country

1.7 Challenges and risks in working abroad

- Discrimination and violence against migrants
- Racial discrimination
- Gender discrimination
- Homesickness
- Culture shock
- Unhealthy living and working conditions
- Lack of social protection
- Lack of access to grievance and redress mechanisms

- Rights violations
- Lack of respect for migrants' religion and culture
- Human trafficking
- Psycho-social costs to migrants and their families
- Separation
- Loneliness
- Anxiety
- High-risk behavior in children left behind

1.8 Social costs of migration to the country

Often, migration is seen as a personal decision, which impacts the migrant and his or her family alone. It is important to understand that while labour migration can bring economic gains through remittances, it can also lead to substantial social costs to origin countries.

Migration in the health sector has short-term and long-term implications to national development. For countries already experiencing a critical shortage of health workers, continued emigration of doctors and nurses pose serious threats to health-care systems. This situation leads to a phenomenon called “brain drain”, wherein a country loses its essential health workforce to migration at the expense of the right to health of its own population.

In 2005 several institutions, including the WHO, sounded the alarm over the unabated outmigration of health workers from the Philippines and its negative impacts to its health-care system. The scale of brain drain in the health sector around that period was staggering -- at that time the Philippine Hospital Association (PHA) reported that 200 hospitals had closed within just two years, while 800 had partially closed (ending services in one or two wards) due to shortages of doctors and nurses.

Given the health needs of its growing population, the country still lacks doctors, dentists and therapists. Early in 2014, the Philippine Medical Association (PMA) reported that the shortage in doctors is expected to reach 930,000, when the population reaches 100 million. According to the PMA, over the past decade, around 10,000 doctors have shifted to nursing jobs in order to migrate.

The country also remains the biggest source country for nurses in the world, despite having high nurse-to-patient ratios. The Department of Health recommends a 1:10 nurse-to-patient ratio, but in most public hospitals one nurse serves more than 50 patients. The ratio gets worse in public health facilities in local communities, where one nurse has to serve more than 50,000 residents.

All this is happening in the midst of an already ailing health system in the country.

- Budget for public health has been persistently low and falls short of the WHO's recommended budgetary allocation of 5 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP)
- Four out of ten Filipinos have never seen a doctor or nurse
- Six out of ten Filipinos die without medical care

- Every day 13 women die while giving birth. Maternal mortality rates have in fact worsened from 95-163 maternal deaths for every 100,000 live births in 2010 to 221 at the end of 2011. This means that the country will not be able to achieve its commitment to reduce maternal mortality rate under the UN Millennium Development Goals by the end of 2015
- According to the 2012 Philippines Health Service Delivery Profile, only four out of 17 regions meet the acceptable hospital bed to population ratio
- Health workers are unevenly distributed throughout the country and are concentrated in urban and more developed areas
- While PhilHealth coverage has increased from 38 per cent of the total population in 2000 to 82 per cent in 2011, 18 per cent of the population is still not covered and has no access to quality health care
- The country has one of the highest out-of-pocket health expenditures at 54.7 per cent, and one of the lowest government health expenditure shares at only 34.7 per cent compared to its Southeast Asian neighbours. This highlights the serious inequity in the health financing system

Adequate staffing ratios are crucial in ensuring patient safety, quality health care and health workforce retention. Replenishing the health workforce that is lost will also take years given the time and resources needed to train a doctor or a nurse.

Individuals make decisions based on perceptions of what would be beneficial for them. But those decisions can have a cumulative effect on communities and the country. Loss of critical human resources and inadequate staffing ratios are some of the social costs of health worker migration that must be considered and weighed vis-à-vis against individual aspirations.

2. Clarifying Expectations / Motivations

2.1 Making an Informed Decision

A positive migration experience requires realistic expectations. It is important to know exactly what you're getting into in your new job and living environment. Try to speak with as many people as possible when interviewing and ask as many questions as possible about the job itself so there are no surprises. Spend enough time to reflect on the short and long-term consequences of emigrating before you make a decision. Migration can bring rewards, but it also involves a lot of risks and challenges.

2.2 Important Questions to Ask Before Deciding to Migrate Overseas For Work

The following questions will help you explore your thoughts about migration and clarify your expectations:

1. Why do I want to work abroad?
2. What are the benefits and risks of working overseas? Do the benefits outweigh the obstacles?

3. What and who are you leaving behind?
4. Will I be able to cope with stress/homesickness and adapt to change?
5. Am I ready to leave my family and friends?
6. How will moving overseas affect my family and other loved ones?
7. Can I obtain the necessary documents and afford the costs?
8. Will my qualifications be recognized?
9. Am I ready to work in a foreign environment?
10. What are my financial goals and would working abroad meet them?
11. What is the cost of living and how much can I expect to earn?
12. How long do I intend to stay away and do I have a backup plan if things do not work out?
13. Will working in a different country provide me with better opportunities than my current situation?
14. What other alternatives in the country do I have?

The more questions you ask yourself and clarify your expectations, the more you will understand what's important for you to have a decent and fulfilling life, and the better choice you will make.

3. Illegal Recruitment and Trafficking

3.1 Illegal recruitment as defined by the Amended Migrant Workers Act or Republic Act No. 10022

What is illegal recruitment?

When committed by an unlicensed/unregistered recruitment agency

Any act of canvassing, enlisting, contracting, transporting, utilizing, hiring, or procuring workers and includes referring, contract services, promising or advertising for employment abroad, whether for profit or not

When committed by any person, whether non-licensee, non-holder, licensee or holder of authority

To charge or accept directly or indirectly any amount greater than that specified in the schedule of allowable fees prescribed by the Secretary of Labor and Employment, or to make a worker pay or acknowledge any amount greater than that actually received by him as a loan or advance

To furnish or publish any false notice or information or document in relation to recruitment or employment

To give any false notice, testimony, information or document or commit any act of misrepresentation for the purpose of securing a license or authority under the Labor Code, or for the purpose of documenting hired workers with the POEA, which include the act of reprocessing workers through a job order that pertains to

nonexistent work, work different from the actual overseas work, or work with a different employer, whether registered or not with the POEA

To include or attempt to induce a worker already employed to quit his employment in order to offer him another unless the transfer is designed to liberate a worker from oppressive terms and conditions of employment

To influence or attempt to influence any person or entity not to employ any worker who has not applied for employment through his agency or who has formed, joined or supported, or has contacted or is supported by any union or workers' organization

To engage in the recruitment or placement of workers in jobs harmful to public health or morality or to the dignity of the Republic of the Philippines

To fail to submit reports on the status of employment, placement vacancies, remittance of foreign exchange earnings, separation from jobs, departures and such other matters or information as may be required by the Secretary of Labor and Employment

To substitute or alter to the prejudice of the worker, employment contracts approved and verified by the Department of Labor and Employment from the time of actual signing thereof by the parties up to and including the period of the expiration of the same without the approval of the Department of Labor and Employment

For an officer or agent of a recruitment or placement agency to become an officer or member of the Board of any corporation engaged in travel agency or to be engaged directly or indirectly in the management of travel agency

To withhold or deny travel documents from applicant workers before departure for monetary or financial considerations, or for any other reasons, other than those authorized under the Labor Code and its implementing rules and regulations

Failure to actually deploy a contracted worker without valid reason as determined by the Department of Labor and Employment

Failure to reimburse expenses incurred by the worker in connection with his documentation and processing for purposes of deployment, in cases where the deployment does not actually take place without the worker's fault. Illegal recruitment when committed by a syndicate or in large scale shall be considered an offense involving economic sabotage

To allow a non-Filipino citizen to head or manage a licensed recruitment/placement agency

Signs of Illegal Recruitment

Spotting an illegal recruiter can be difficult at times, but below are some signs to look out for. Be suspicious when the recruiter:

- Suggests shortcuts to a job in a destination country, bypassing the legal requirements
- Does not provide copies of the employment contract
- Does not provide adequate information about the employer and the work being applied for

- Does not provide sufficient information about the agency
- Immediately demands payment without issuance of receipts
- Makes unrealistic promises of instant wealth and success to entice a worker to apply and work abroad

(Source: POEA, www.poea.gov.ph)

How to Avoid Illegal Recruitment: The Don'ts

- Do not apply at recruitment agencies not licensed by the POEA
- Do not deal with any person who is not an authorized representative of a licensed agency
- Do not transact business outside the registered address of the agency. If recruitment is conducted in the province, check if the agency has a provincial recruitment authority
- Do not pay more than the allowed placement fee. The regulation limits to an equivalent of one-month's salary, exclusive of documentation and processing costs
- Do not pay any placement fee unless you have a valid employment contract and an official receipt
- Do not be enticed by ads or brochures requiring you to reply to a Post Office (P.O.) Box, and to enclose payment for processing of papers

- Do not deal with training centres and travel agencies that promise overseas employment
- Do not accept visit/tourist visas
- Do not deal with fixers

(Source: POEA, www.poea.gov.ph)

Modus Operandi of Illegal Recruiters

- Escort Services – Undocumented workers are escorted at the airport or other international exits to evade checkpoints set to check on the documents of workers
- Tourist–Worker Scheme – Workers leave the country supposedly as tourists but in reality are being deployed for employment abroad
- Assumed Identity – Workers, particularly minors, leave under another name or an assumed identity. They either use the passport of another worker or obtain passports using fake birth certificates and other documents
- Irregular Direct Hiring – Workers are allegedly hired by foreign employers without the intervention of licensed recruitment agencies and are deployed either as tourists or through any other illegal means
- Trainee Worker Scheme – Workers are recruited and deployed as trainees only but end up working abroad

- **Backdoor Exit** – Workers leave through international exits where immigration control is lax and are usually transported on board cargo ships or boats
- **Tie-Up System or Kabit System** – Unlicensed recruiters tie-up or use the name and offices of licensed recruiters in order to carry out their illegal activity. Workers are deployed under the job order of the licensed agency but actually work for another employer abroad, or the foreign principal of the unlicensed recruiter is registered or accredited under the licensed agency's name
- **Visa Assistance or Immigration Consultancy Scheme** – Entities that operate under the guise of consultancy or offer services such as visa facilitation, but in reality are actually engaged in the recruitment business. Some also operate through the conduct of orientation seminars, which are actually recruiting activities
- **Blind Ads Scheme** – Through advertisements, workers are enticed to apply and send cash payments addressed to a PO Box without the worker having the opportunity to communicate personally with the recruiter
- **Camouflaged Participants/Representatives in Seminars/Sports Events** – Workers leave as participants in seminars/sports events or entourage in concerts abroad but actually intend to work there
- **Mail Order Bride Scheme** – Marriage is arranged by brokers between Filipino women and foreigners. The Filipino wife ends up being a domestic worker to her husband and his family or gets trafficked

- **Cyber Fraud** – Workers are enticed to apply for work overseas through fake websites (that look legitimate) or instant messaging and submit their information and deposit money as payment for processing and placement fees

(Source: POEA, www.poea.gov.ph)

What to do in Case of Illegal Recruitment?

Immediately report the matter or file a complaint at any of the following offices:

- Anti-Illegal Recruitment Branch, POEA 4th Floor POEA Bldg., Edsa corner Ortigas Mandaluyong City
- POEA Regional Centres and Regional Extension Units
- DOLE Regional Offices
- National Bureau of Investigation, Philippine National Police and related law enforcement authorities

You can also get in touch with concerned trade unions or non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Check the directory for more information.

When you file a complaint with the POEA involving illegal recruitment, you will need to state the following information:

- Name/s and address/es of the complainant/s
- Name/s and address/es of the respondent/s

- Specific act/s or omission/s constituting the alleged offense
- Place where the offense was committed
- Date when the offense was committed
- The amount of claim, if any
- The relief sought

All pertinent documents in support of the complaint must be attached.

Check the POEA website for more information on illegal recruitment at www.poea.gov.ph.

3.2 Trafficking

What is human trafficking?

Human trafficking is a grave violation of human rights and a modern form of slavery.

Human trafficking as defined by the United Nations (UN) is “the recruitment, transport, transfer, harboring or receipt of a person by such means as threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud or deception for the purpose of exploitation”. This definition is spelled out in the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, which supplements the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. You can read more about the Protocol at the UN Office on Drugs and Crime website: (<http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/treaties/CTOC/index.html#Fulltext>)

Who can be a victim of trafficking?

Every year, thousands of men, women and children are trafficked within a state or across international borders. Almost every country in the world is affected by trafficking, whether it is a developing, developed or a country in transition.

Trafficking exists in different sectors or industries, even those that are often seen as invulnerable such as health care. Victims of trafficking can be of any age or gender, although a disproportionate number of women are affected.

Traffickers primarily victimize vulnerable people. A lot of the factors that push workers to migrate such as poverty, lack of economic opportunities, and unemployment also leave them vulnerable to human trafficking.

How bad is the human trafficking situation in the Philippines?

The Philippines is mainly a source country of men, women and children who are trafficked for sex or forced labour. It is likewise a destination country for women who are trafficked from South Korea, Eastern Europe and China. There are reports that international organized crime syndicates also use the Philippines as a transit country, where they bring victims from mainland China to other country destinations.

Internal human trafficking is also a big problem. People from rural areas are trafficked to urban cities such as Manila, Cebu, Angeles, and cities in Mindanao. Corruption at the different levels of government has also enabled traffickers to thrive, thereby undermining efforts to combat trafficking.

What are the policies against human trafficking in the Philippines?

The Philippines enacted the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003 or Republic Act No. 9208, which made it one of the first countries in Asia to have a law against human trafficking. This law criminalizes the act of trafficking in persons. The country established the Inter-Agency Council against Trafficking (IACAT), a multi-sectoral mechanism composed of government agencies and non-government organizations tasked to formulate and implement a comprehensive and integrated programme to prevent and suppress human trafficking.

In 2013, this law was further amended with the passage of the Republic Act No. 10364 or the “Expanded Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2013”. This legislation covers acts considered as promoting human trafficking and increased the penalties and sanctions in order to further strengthen the fight against trafficking in persons. Aside from the Philippine national legislation against trafficking, OFWs should also familiarize themselves with the national laws on human trafficking in their destination countries. Some countries have tougher and more comprehensive anti-trafficking laws, which can provide adequate protection and support for trafficked migrant workers.

Types of trafficking

There are various types of trafficking in persons that every overseas Filipino worker should be aware of:

Forced labour

Victims of this equally widespread form of trafficking come primarily from developing countries. They are recruited and trafficked using

deception and coercion and find themselves held in conditions of slavery in a variety of jobs.

Forced labour involves victims being compelled to work very long hours, often in hard conditions, and to hand over the majority, if not all of their wages, to their traffickers. Forced labour crucially implies the use of coercion and lack of freedom or choice for the victim. In many cases, victims are subjected to verbal threats or violence to achieve compliance.

The ILO has identified eleven indicators which individually or collectively imply the existence of forced labour. These are:

- Abuse of vulnerability
- Deception
- Restriction of movement
- Isolation
- Physical and sexual violence
- Intimidation and threats
- Retention of identity documents
- Withholding of wages
- Debt bondage
- Abusive working and living conditions
- Excessive overtime

Read more about these indicators at http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---declaration/documents/publication/wcms_203832.pdf

Debt Bondage

A person becomes a bonded laborer when their labour is demanded as a means to pay off a loan. Many migrant workers have incurred huge debts to pay the costs of recruitment and travel in order to work abroad. Upon arriving in the destination country, it turns out that the promised job doesn't exist. They cannot leave until the debt is paid off. This is often accompanied with threats against the victims' family back home.

Once in debt, the person loses control over their conditions of work and is forced to work long hours, often for seven days a week, for very little or no pay. The value of their work is significantly greater than the original sum of money borrowed. The debt becomes inflated through charges for food, transport and interest on loans, making it impossible to repay and trapping the worker in a cycle of debt.

Sexual exploitation

Sexual exploitation involves any non-consensual or abusive sexual acts performed without a victim's permission. This includes prostitution, pornography and escort work. Women, men and children can be victims.

Many have been deceived with promises of a better life and then controlled through violence and abuse. Many of the poorest countries have the highest incidences of human trafficking. Where economic alternatives do not exist, women and girls are more vulnerable to being tricked and coerced into sexual servitude.

How to recognize and prevent human trafficking

The most important step to avoid and help fight human trafficking is to become informed. Learn about the human trafficking situation and related laws in both the origin and destination countries as much as possible. Take heed of the signs of illegal recruitment, as discussed in the previous section. Also:

- Be wary of attractive job offers on websites as well as dating websites. Many traffickers use websites to traffic victims
- Investigate job offers, particularly where you are told to keep the opportunity secret, or not to share information with a friend or family member

While there is no set formula to determine whether or not a person has been trafficked, the following list of questions can help determine if trafficking elements are present in a given situation:

- Is the person free to leave the work site?
- Is the person physically, sexually or psychologically abused?
- Does the person have a valid passport or identification card and is he/she in possession of such documents?
- What is the pay and conditions of employment?
- Is the person afraid to share information about his/her living and working conditions?
- Does the person owe a huge debt?
- Does the person live at home or at/near the work site?

- Has the person or a family member of this person been threatened?
- Does the person fear that something bad will happen to him or her, or to a family member, if he/she leaves the job?

What to do in case of human trafficking?

If you are a victim of human trafficking or have information about a potential trafficking situation, immediately report the matter to the Philippine National Police (PNP), National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Bureau of Immigration, Department of Justice (DOJ) Action Center, or the POEA.

You can also get in touch with concerned embassies, trade unions/NGOs.

Kindly check the list of resources in the latter part of this booklet for the contact information of the aforementioned agencies.

4. Ethical Recruitment of Health Workers

Health worker migration has been increasing worldwide over the past decades, especially from lower income countries with already fragile health systems. More and more health workers leave their home countries looking for better working conditions and career opportunities abroad. This has led to an increasingly inequitable access to health care, within and between countries.

The WHO has adopted the 2010 Global Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Personnel as a way to address the challenges of labour migration in the health sector and improving retention of health workers. The Code aims to establish and promote voluntary principles and practices for the ethical international recruitment of health personnel and to strengthen health systems.

4.1 What is ethical recruitment?

There is no single accepted definition of ethical recruitment, but it is generally used as a term pertaining to a set of standards and practices that should govern the international recruitment of critical workers, particularly those in health care.

4.2 Principles of ethical recruitment

1. Effective human resources planning, management and development, leading to national self-sustainability
2. Equal rights and non-discrimination
3. Freedom of association and right to collective bargaining
4. Mutual recognition of qualifications
5. Transparency and accountability
6. Strict regulation of recruitment
7. Mutuality of benefits

4.3 Overview of the WHO Global Code of Practice

The WHO Code of Practice is voluntary, global in scope and applies to all health workers and stakeholders. The Code:

1. discourages active international recruitment of health personnel from developing countries facing critical shortages of health personnel;
2. urges states to address underlying causes of outmigration of health workers from developing to developed countries through health workforce development and creation of sustainable health systems;
3. calls for protection of the rights and non-discrimination of migrant health workers;
4. promotes cooperation between countries of origin and destination through bilateral or multilateral arrangements based on the principle of mutuality of benefits;
5. encourages member states, international organizations, international donor agencies, financial and development institutions and other relevant organizations to provide technical assistance and financial support to developing countries that are experiencing critical health workforce shortages; and
6. promotes data-gathering and information exchange nationally and internationally to better respond to challenges related to health workforce migration.

More information on the WHO Code of Practice at:
http://www.who.int/hrh/migration/code/code_en.pdf.

4.4 Other codes of practice on ethical recruitment of health workers

Along with the WHO Code of Practice, other codes have been initiated to ensure ethical recruitment of migrant health workers. It is useful for migrant health workers bound for these countries that have existing codes of practice to be aware about them. They are listed below:

1. USA: Voluntary Code of Ethical Conduct for the Recruitment of Foreign-Educated Health Professionals to the United States (<http://www.fairinternationalrecruitment.org/images/uploads/THE%20CODE%281%29.pdf>)
2. United Kingdom: UK Code of Practice (CoP) for international recruitment (<http://www.idcsig.org/DoH%20International%20Recruitment.pdf>)
3. Europe: EPSU-HOSPEEM Code of Conduct on Ethical Cross-border Recruitment and Retention (<http://www.epsu.org/a/3715>)
4. Commonwealth Countries: Commonwealth Code of Practice for International Recruitment of Health Workers (<http://secretariat.thecommonwealth.org/files/35877/FileName/CommonwealthCodeofPractice.pdf#page=3&zoom=auto,0,415>)

5. Workers' Rights

At present, there are several international instruments that set forth the rights of migrant workers regardless of their status. Awareness about all these instruments is crucial in protecting the rights of migrant health workers and facilitating compliance of governments, employers and other key actors in labour migration.

5.1 Core labour standards

The ILO is a tripartite organization consisting of governments, trade unions, and employers and is part of the UN system. It is responsible in maintaining and developing a system of international labour standards aimed at promoting opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive work, in conditions of freedom, equity, security and dignity. The ILO draws up labour standards in the form of Conventions, which are legally binding, or Recommendations that serve as non-binding guidelines. In principle, all international labour standards, unless otherwise stated, are applicable to migrant workers.

Conventions have to be ratified by a State to be legally binding. However, in 1998, the ILO adopted the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. In the Declaration, ILO member states agreed that they should all respect, promote, and apply Core Labour Standards (CLS) whether they have been ratified or not, and regardless of the level of economic development of the country.

The CLS consists of five standards laid out in eight ILO conventions:

1. Freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining (Convention No. 87 & No. 98)

2. The elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour (Convention No. 29 & No. 105)
3. The effective abolition of child labour (Convention No. 138 & No. 182)
4. The elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation (Convention No. 100 & No. 111)

You can find out more about the ILO Core Labour Standards at:
http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/---ilo-manila/documents/publication/wcms_126253.pdf

5.2 International instruments on migrant workers' rights

The ILO has also developed specific international standards for the governance of labour migration and the protection of migrant workers. These are the following:

ILO migrant specific instruments

- Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 97)
- Migration for Employment Recommendation (Revised), 1949 (No. 86)
- Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143)
- Migrant Workers Recommendation, 1975 (No. 151)

All the above-mentioned instruments, including the list of countries that ratified them, can be accessed at the ILO website (www.ilo.org).

Along with the international labour standards, migrant workers and members of their families are also protected by all of the UN core international human rights instruments, particularly the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families. The entire text of the Convention can be accessed at: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CMW.aspx>. The basic rights guaranteed under this Convention are summarized next.

5.3 Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families guaranteed under the UN Migrant Workers Convention

Basic Freedoms:

- Right to freedom of movement
- Right to life
- Right to freedom from torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment
- Right to freedom from slavery, servitude or forced compulsory labour
- Right to freedom of thought, expression, conscience and religion
- Right to privacy
- Right to property

Due process:

- Right to a fair and public hearing with all the guarantees of a due process
- Right to be provided with necessary legal assistance, interpreters and information in an understood language
- Right to liberty and security and freedom from arbitrary arrest or detention
- Right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty
- Prohibition to be subject to measures of collective expulsion
- Right to have recourse to diplomatic or consular assistance and protection
- Right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law
- Right to equality with nationals before the courts and tribunals

Employment:

- Right of equal treatment with nationals in respect to remuneration and other conditions of work such as overtime, holidays, etc.
- Right to join freely any trade union
- Right to enjoy the same treatment as nationals regarding social security benefits in so far as they fulfill the legislation requirements
- Right to emergency medical care

Family and Children of Migrant Workers:

- Right to a name, registration of birth and nationality
- Right of access to education

Cultural and Economic Rights:

- Right to preserve a cultural identity
- Right to transfer earnings and savings upon the termination of their stay in the State of employment

Information:

- Right to information by the State of origin, State of employment, or the State of transit of their rights arising from the present Convention, the conditions of their admission, and their rights and obligations in those States

Other Rights of Migrant Workers and Members of their Families Who Are Documented or in a Regular Situation:

Migrant workers and members of their families who are documented or in a regular situation shall enjoy the rights set forth below in addition to those already mentioned. In such a way, the Convention seeks to discourage irregular migration.

Temporary Absences:

- Right to be temporarily absent, for reasons of family needs and obligations, without effect on their authorization to stay or work

Freedom of Movement:

- Right to liberty of movement in the territory of the State of employment

Employment:

- Right to form associations and trade unions in the State of employment
- The right to equality of treatment with nationals in respect of protection against dismissal, unemployment benefits and access to alternative employment
- In case of violations of work contracts by the employer, the right to address his/her case to the competent authorities of the State of employment

Political Rights:

- Right to participate in the public affairs of the State of origin, in accordance with its legislation
- Right to vote and to be elected in the State of origin, in accordance with its legislation

Cultural and Economic Rights:

- Right to enjoy from export and import taxes
- The right to equality of treatment with nationals of the State of employment, including access to educational, vocational and social services

Information:

- Right to information, including all conditions concerning their stay and their remunerated activities

5.4 Trade unionism in the health sector

What is a trade union?

Trade unions are membership-based groups or organizations that represent, protect and advance the collective interests of workers.

What do trade unions do?

- Trade unions speak on behalf of their members
- Trade unions educate their members about their rights and provide them with information and advice about work-related issues
- Trade unions provide members with a range of services including research, training, professional development, insurance, financial services and legal counseling
- Trade unions negotiate or bargain with employers to get better pay and working conditions for members
- Trade unions campaign on important issues that matter for workers such as low pay, discrimination at the workplace, and precarious work

Why join a trade union?

- You will get support if you have a grievance or a problem at work
- You're better off in a union. Studies show that union members generally receive higher pay, better benefits, and more paid holidays and flexible working hours than non-members

- You will be entitled to additional membership services of the union such as insurance and discounts
- You have more opportunities for trainings to improve your vocational and professional qualifications
- You are safer and more secure in a union. Unionized workplaces have better health and safety practices and fewer accidents
- You will be treated fairly at work. Unions protect members from unfair and discriminatory practices in workplaces
- You will experience a sense of belonging to a group that values and cares for you. People who have a sense of belonging have better physical and mental health, have a greater capacity to manage stress, and tend to live happier lives
- You have the opportunity to support campaigns that promote a more just and equitable society

Can migrant health workers join trade unions?

All workers including migrant health workers have the basic human right to join and participate in trade union activities.

Some countries are far more open to a culture of unionism where the majority of the workers are highly organized and their collective right to negotiate is respected. However, there are still a number of countries that have laws and practices that do not comply with international core labour standards and explicitly prohibit workers from organizing into unions, such as those in the Gulf region. It is therefore important to know the labour laws and your rights in the destination countries prior to making a decision to migrate.

How do you join a trade union?

If you want to join a recognized union in your workplace, you could approach a representative for information like the shop steward. You can also get in touch with the PSI and its affiliates in the Philippines to find out which union is relevant to you. Check out the list of PSI trade unions in the Philippines at the end of this booklet.

6. Legal Recruitment Process

Recruitment of migrant workers in the Philippines is regulated by the POEA. It is an agency attached to the Department of Labor and Employment that is tasked to manage the migration of Filipino workers overseas. This government body:

- Approves job orders
- Documents and registers all Filipinos leaving the country to work abroad
- Issues the Overseas Employment Certificate (exit clearance) to all legally recruited OFWs
- Regulates the operations of private recruitment agencies
- Maintains a list of suspended, cancelled, banned or delisted licensed employment agencies
- Leads the government campaign against illegal recruitment

All aspiring OFWs must meet the following minimum requirements:

6.1 Minimum qualifications

- at least 18 years old
- at least high school graduate
- with minimum work experience of two (2) years
- no medical or legal impediments to disqualify the applicant from overseas employment
- no derogatory and criminal records
- not banned from leaving the country

There are three modes of hiring migrant workers legally recognized in the Philippines.

Mode of Hiring	Description
Through POEA-licensed recruitment agencies	Recruitment is done through a system where foreign principals course their human resource requirements through private employment and manning agencies licensed by the POEA. Licensed recruitment agencies may advertise the job vacancies in newspapers, create a human resource pool, and conduct preliminary screening and interviews of applicants as part of its services for its foreign principal.
Name hiring or direct hiring	Refers to workers who are able to secure overseas work with a foreign employer without the assistance or participation of any recruitment agency.
Through Government Placement Branch (GPB)	Hiring is done through the POEA's in-house recruitment and job placement facility known as the Government Placement Branch, or GPB. Recruitment is done primarily for foreign governments.

All OFWs regardless of mode of hiring, including name hires, need to register with the POEA to document their status as OFWs and ensure that their workers' rights are protected.

Each mode of hiring entails different procedures, documentary requirements and fees. Please keep in mind that these are constantly updated. It is best to visit the POEA website for the latest information (www.poea.gov.ph).

6.2 Registration of land-based applicants

There are two ways to register as a land-based applicant with the POEA. Registration is free.

➤ Walk-In Registration

- Submit documentary requirements for evaluation at Window M at the Manpower Registry Division, left wing, ground-floor lobby area. Wait for the result of evaluation
- If documents are complete and in order, proceed to the encoding room located in the same area for the encoding of registration data. (For those with lacking requirements, their documents shall be returned for completion)
- Return to Window M for issuance of land-based registration card.
- Wait for notification for possible referral to prospective employer. If not notified within six months, update your registration data through any Internet facility via the POEA website: <http://www.poea.gov.ph/> or at the Manpower Registry Division

➤ Online Registration

- Go to <http://www.epoeaservices.poea.gov.ph/ereg/ereg.asp>
- Register and create your log-in details
- Enter your personal information
- Upload your passport-sized photo

List of Documentary Requirements for Registration of Land-based Applicants

- Self-made bio-data / resume with detailed work experience
- Valid passport
- College diploma
- Transcript of records
- Valid PRC ID
- Board certificate
- Board rating
- Valid NBI clearance
- Employment certificates (at least two years' experience in one position)
- Training /Skills certificate
- Office of Muslim Affairs (OMA) certificate (for Muslim applicants)
- Active email address

6.3 Hiring through POEA-licensed recruitment agencies

Before you choose which recruitment agency to apply with, check whether it is licensed and allowed to recruit by the POEA through the following link: <http://www.poea.gov.ph/cgi-bin/agSearch.asp>.

Allowable Fees	
Placement fee	Equivalent to one month's salary
Processing fee	
POEA	US\$100
OWWA Membership Contribution (valid for two years)	US\$25
Phil Health Insurance Premium (one year coverage)	Php900
Documentation cost	Not more than Php10,000

6.4 Name hiring or direct hiring

Phase I.

- Get number from the guard at the POEA entrance, then proceed to the 2nd floor -- Name Hire Assistance Division
- When your number is called, proceed to the designated window and submit your documents for evaluation
- Take a seat and wait for your documents to be evaluated
- When your name is called, proceed to the designated window to receive documents, as may be appropriate

- If complete requirements are submitted
 - Medical referral to the Department of Health (DOH)-accredited medical clinic chosen by the worker
 - Pre-Departure Orientation Seminar (PDOS) referral to POEA Workers Education Division
 - OFW information sheet to be filled in
 - Submitted documents returned with checklist/claim stub of requirements
 - If incomplete requirements are submitted -- documents are returned with instructions and checklist/claim stub on what to comply with

Phase 2:

- Proceed to the Name Hire Assistance Division, 2nd floor and submit checklist/claim stub of your completed requirements at Windows 3 or 4. Wait for your name to be called
- When your name is called, proceed to the designated window to submit photocopies of completed requirements from Phase 1
- Wait for the release of your Registration Form and proceed to Window 16 for assessment of payment
- Proceed to Window 15 to pay the assessed amount and wait for the issuance of your e-Receipt, which also serves as your POEA travel exit clearance

List of Documentary Requirements for Skilled and Professional Workers

(Name Hires)

- Employment contract
- Valid visa/entry/work permit/ no objection certificate (NOC), or equivalent document
- Valid passport
- Valid medical certificate from a DOH-accredited medical clinic
- One (1) piece 2 x 2 picture (for medical referral)
- Pre-Departure Orientation Seminar (PDOS) certificate from the POEA

Fees:

- \$100.00 (PhP equivalent) -- POEA processing fee
- \$25.00 (PhP equivalent) -- OWWA membership contribution (valid for two years)
- PhP900.00 -- PhilHealth-Medicare (for one year coverage)

Why am I paying these fees?

Every migrant worker should have access to social protection wherever they are. It is a universal right guaranteed by international human rights instruments and consists of measures that seek to protect workers against economic and social distress arising from situations such as sickness, employment injury, unemployment, invalidity, and old age. It also includes provision of health care, maternity benefits and benefits for families with children.

The fees are intended to help support government programmes and services that ensure the right to social protection for all OFWs.

The OWWA, for example, collects \$25-contributions from its members and pools all these into a trust fund that is used to support its various programmes for OFWs, such as provision of social benefits (ex. disability benefit, burial benefit), education and training benefits (ex. scholarship for OFW dependents, skills-upgrading), welfare assistance (ex. psychosocial and legal assistance for distressed OFWs), repatriation assistance in case of political unrest or calamities, livelihood assistance and reintegration programmes.

As members of PhilHealth, OFWs -- including their dependents -- are covered by health insurance even while working overseas.

It is important to be aware of these fees and what they are for. Many OFWs are not aware of the different benefits that they are entitled to, which also hinder their access to social protection.

All Filipino migrant workers who contribute to the funds should also have access to information on how the funds are used. It is also important to be vigilant about how the government spends the funds of OFWs and ensure that they are spent properly and effectively.

For more information about the various programmes and services offered by OWWA and PhilHealth to OFWs, please visit:

www.owwa.gov.ph

www.pagibig.gov.ph

To learn more about social protection, you can check out the website of the ILO at www.ilo.org.

6.5 Through the Government Placement Branch (GPB)

- After receipt of notice, report to the Recruitment & Documentation Division (RDD), Government Placement Branch (GPB), ground floor for pre-documentation briefing
- If employment offer is acceptable, sign the employment offer and undergo medical examination at accredited medical clinics
- If medically fit, submit documentary requirement/s for processing. If medically unfit, employment offer is cancelled
- Attend Pre-Departure Orientation Seminar (PDOS) on the 2nd floor
- Submit visa requirements and accomplish visa application form. Pay visa fee
- Upon release of visa, pay the following fees for the issuance of OEC, which will also serve as your POEA travel exit clearance:

PhilHealth contribution	Balik-Manggagawa Service Area
OWWA membership contribution	OWWA Satellite Office, 2nd Floor
POEA processing fee	Cash Division, 5 th floor
Airfare	Travel Center, Balik-Manggagawa Service Area

- Attend pre-flight briefing conducted by GPB Account Officer at the Government Placement Branch, ground floor, for additional information and flight details

- Wait for the release of your travel documents (visa, passport, original employment contract and plane ticket).

List of Documentary Requirements for Government-hired Workers

- Duly accomplished OFW information sheet
- Duly executed employment contract/employment offer
- Passport (original & photocopy)
- Medical certificate (original & photocopy)
- Certificate of pre-departure
- Orientation Seminar (PDOS) (original & photocopy)
- NBI clearance (original & photocopy)

For VISA processing

- Duly accomplished visa application form
- Copy of visa authorization/visa availability
- Three passport size photos (coloured with white background)

Fees

- US\$50.00 (PhP equivalent) -- POEA processing fee
- US\$25.00 (PhP equivalent) -- OWWA membership contribution
- PhP900.00 -- PhilHealth-Medicare
- Visa Fee -- depending on the country of destination

6.6 What you need to know about the medical exam

All workers bound for overseas employment need to go through a medical exam procedure. This is to ensure that the hired worker is in good physical condition and is not suffering from any major illness.

The medical examination should only be required to applicants who already received an employment offer. Only the selected applicants will undergo a medical examination, so it should not be required at the start of one's application. Recruiters who initially refer a jobseeker to a medical clinic for examination may be a sign of an illegal recruitment activity.

Job offers may be canceled if the examination results prove that the worker is unfit to work and has a poor health condition.

The required medical examination depends upon the specifications and requirements of your destination country. For example, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)-Accredited Medical Clinics Association (GAMCA) governing the medical exams of migrant workers in the Gulf region has its own required medical tests that may be different from the requirements of other destination countries.

6.7 Eight steps to work overseas

1. Attend a Pre-Employment Orientation Seminar (PEOS) conducted by the POEA or other partner institutions to help you make an informed decision about working abroad.
2. Submit your application and other requirements.
3. Undergo preliminary interview and evaluation
You may have to attend a pre-application orientation being conducted by the concerned recruiter/local agent so you can be informed of the details of the employment offer. If you meet the minimum qualifications of the job, you will be asked to undergo testing and/or interviews among other screening procedures.

4. Undergo medical and trade testing
If selected, you will be instructed to proceed to an accredited medical clinic for basic medical examination and to any TESDA-accredited testing centres, if necessary, to ensure that you are fit to work.

5. Discussion of the terms and conditions of employment and signing of contract
When you pass the medical exam and trade testing, you will be asked to sign an employment contract. Review the section on signing a fair contract.

6. Processing of your documents with the POEA and concerned embassies or entities

Your agency will now proceed to process your documents with the following entities:

- Concerned foreign embassy -- Visa issuance/stamping

- Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) -- for registration and documentation of employment contracts as well as issuance of e-Receipt or Overseas Employment Certificates (OEC)

- Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) -- if certain documents need translation and authentication (e.g. employment contract written wholly in a foreign language)

- Concerned airline -- for issuance of booking certificates or Pre-paid Ticket Advice (PTA)

7. Attend the mandatory Pre-Departure Orientation Seminar (PDOS).
8. Have your exit clearance and other documents validated at the POEA-Labor Assistance Centre before you depart at the airport.

7. Employment Contract

A contract is a binding agreement that is entered into voluntarily by two or more parties. The purpose of a contract is to create legal obligations between you and your recruiter or employer to perform, or not perform, specific duties.

7.1 Five things to look out for before signing a contract

1. Clear and understandable written contract
The contract should be in writing and clearly define the roles and responsibilities of both you and your recruiter or employer. It should be written in a language that you understand. You have the right to negotiate offers or counteroffers with your recruiter or employer and any changes agreed upon by both parties should be written into your contract.
2. Dates and period of employment
The contract should indicate the beginning and end dates of your employment.
3. Comprehensive and specific job description
Your contract should identify your specific job position, tasks, working hours, work location and unit.

Some migrant health workers have experienced problems where they were originally told that they would be working in a hospital, but then were assigned to another job outside of their area of expertise, or even in another facility.

4. Detailed information about compensation and other benefits
What is your base pay? What benefits will you receive? Are these benefits guaranteed or discretionary? Do you have overtime pay? Make sure all types of compensation and benefits are indicated in the contract.
5. Just cause for termination
What are the grounds for termination? Are these grounds fair? Or does the employer have a wide discretion in termination?

7.2 Do's and Don'ts when signing an employment contract

Do's

1. Read your contract carefully before signing.
2. Discuss and negotiate any contract terms you do not agree with.
 - a) If you come to an agreement, make sure it is included in writing into your contract. Do not rely on spoken promises
 - b) If you cannot come to an agreement, do not sign the contract
 - c) Your refusal of one contract does not mean you will not be able to immigrate. Rather, this gives you the opportunity to look around and make sure you choose a recruiter that will treat you fairly and that can best meet your needs

3. Have friends, family and a lawyer if possible to review the contract with you.
4. Do your research. The more information you have, the less likely you will be taken advantage of.

Don'ts

1. Do not sign a contract that you do not understand. Always seek clarification on contract provisions you do not understand.
2. Do not forget to keep a copy of the contract you signed. Bring a copy with you when you go overseas and also leave a copy with your family who stayed behind.
3. Do not let anyone pressure you or force you to sign a contract. Be wary of a recruiter that tells you that you need to sign a contract on the spot, or does not allow you to take time to review it.
4. Do not fall prey to an employment contract substitution where the worker is asked to sign a different employment contract that does not contain the same benefits and conditions as what is stated in the previous signed contract. There are cases when the applicant would be presented and forced to sign a new contract before boarding a plane or upon arrival in the workplace. If this happens, immediately report the matter to the POEA, or if you are in the destination country already, contact the Philippine Embassy or Philippine Overseas Labor Office (POLO) nearest to your area.

7.3 Copy of the Philippine Standard Overseas Employment Contract for Various Skills

EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT FOR VARIOUS SKILLS

This Employment contract is executed and entered into by and between:

- A. Employer: _____
Address: _____
P.O. Box No.: _____ Tel. No.: _____
- B. Represented in the Philippines by;
Name of Agent/ Company: _____
Address: _____
_____ and

- C. Employee: _____
Civil Status: _____ Passport No.: _____
Date & Place of Issue: _____
Address: _____

Voluntarily binding themselves to the following terms and conditions:

1. Site of Employment _____
2. Contract Duration _____ commencing from the employee's departure from the point of origin to the site of employment.
3. Employee's Position _____
4. Basic Monthly Salary _____
5. Regular Working Hours: Maximum of 8 hours per day, six days per week.
6. Overtime Pay:
 - a. For work over regular working hours: _____
 - b. For work on designated rest days & holidays: _____
7. Leave with Full Pay:
 - a. Vacation Leave: _____
 - b. Sick Leave: _____
8. Free transportation to the site of employment and in the following cases, free return transportation to the point of origin: a. expiration of the contract; b. termination of the contract by the employer without just cause; c. if the employee is unable to continue to work due to work connected or work aggravated injury of illness; d. force of majeure; and e. in such other cases when contract of employment is terminated through no fault of the employee.
9. Free food or compensatory allowance of US\$ _____, free suitable housing.
10. Free emergency medical and dental services and facilities including medicine.
11. Personal life accident insurance in accordance with host government and/ or Philippine government laws without cost to the worker. In addition, for areas declared by the Philippine government as war risk areas, a war risk area insurance of not less than P100,000 shall be provided by the employer at no cost to the worker.

12. In the event of death of the employee during the terms of this agreement, his remains and personal belongings shall be repatriated to the Philippines at the expense of the employer. In the case the repatriation of remains is not possible, the same may be disposed of upon prior approval of the employee's next kin and/ or by the Philippine Embassy/ Consulate nearest the jobsite.
13. The employer shall assist the Employee in remitting a percentage of his salary through the proper Banking channel or other means authorized by law.
14. Termination:
- a. Termination by Employer: The employer may terminate this Contract on the following just causes: serious misconduct, willful disobedience of employer's lawful orders, habitual neglect of duties, absenteeism, insubordination revealing secrets of establishment, when employee violates customs, traditions, and laws of _____ and/ or terms of this Agreement. The employee shall shoulder the repatriation expenses.
 - b. Termination by Employee: The employee may terminate this Contract without serving any notice to the employer for any of the following just causes: serious insult by the employer or his representative, inhuman and unbearable treatment accorded the employee by the employer or his representative, commission of a crime/ offense by the employer or his representative. Employer shall pay the repatriation expenses back to the Philippines.
 - b.1 The employee may terminate this Contract without just cause by serving one (1) month in advance notice to the employer. The employer upon whom no such notice was served may hold the employee liable for damages. In any case, the employee shall shoulder all expenses relative to his repatriation back to his point of origin.
 - c. Termination due to Illness: Either party may terminate the contract on the ground of illness, disease or injury by the employee. The employer shall shoulder the cost of repatriation.
15. Settlement of disputes: All claims and complaints relative to the employment contract of the employee shall be settled in accordance with the Company policies, rules and regulations. In the case the employee contests the decision of the employer, the matter shall be settled amicably with the participation of the Labor Attaché or any authorized representative of the Philippine Embassy/ Consulate nearest competent or appropriate government body in host country or in the Philippines if permissible by host country laws at the option of the complaining party.
16. The employee shall observe employer's company rules and abide by the pertinent laws of the host country and respect its customs and traditions.
17. Applicable Law: Other terms and conditions of employment, which are consistent with the above provisions, shall be governed by the pertinent laws of the _____

In witness thereof, we hereby sign this contract this _____ day of _____,
_____ at Manila, Philippines,

Employee

Employer

Philippine Representative
(Licensed Recruitment Agency)

Witness

8. Remittances

Remittances refer to the money sent to a recipient at a distance. The term is often used to describe money sent by migrant workers to family or friends in their origin countries (inward remittances), but can also refer to sending money abroad in foreign currency (outward remittances).

Remittances can be sent through formal or informal means. The table shows some of the advantages and disadvantages of both.

	Formal	Informal
Modes of transfer	Money orders; cheques; demand drafts; electronic money transfers	Money sent through personal networks of the migrant worker (ex. cash carried in person); in-kind transfers
Cost	Can be very expensive. Service charges range from 10% to as high as 20% of the amount being remitted	Much cheaper as it requires no documentation and involves a minimum number of parties
Speed/Efficiency	Periods vary. Electronic money transfers such as wire transfer typically take 24-96 hours, but can also take place in real time. Other modes can take days and weeks. Various documentation requirements are also needed	Widely varies depending on the informal channel chosen
Availability/Coverage	Not all money transfer options are available at every location. While you can avail of the offline route at all bank branches, the online ones are mostly limited to urban areas	Widely available as it relies on social connections such as family and friends. In many rural areas, informal channels are the only possible means of sending money due to lack of banking facilities or linkages between the country of origin and destination

	Formal	Informal
Security	Varies depending on the bank or financial institution chosen, as well as the regulatory environment and practices in the countries involved. Nevertheless, money is generally safe and sending is secured	Being a document-free transaction, it provides anonymity and discretion. However, since this system is not regulated, it is very prone to abuse and there is a very high risk of losing the money sent
Other characteristics	Remittances sent through official channels are generally preferred by governments as they are transparent	Obtaining data about informal remittances is difficult because of its nature and secrecy. This system has been used for criminal activities such as money laundering and smuggling

A Note of Caution:

Before deciding on the mode of transfer, consider very carefully the availability, accessibility, costs involved, speed, efficiency, reliability and convenience, as well as your own needs and your family's.

Sending money from the Philippines

Should you need money sent from the Philippines while you are already abroad (ex. for education fees), you can choose from any of the following modes of transfer:

- Cheques
- Foreign currency demand draft

- Wire transfer through banks

- Direct online transfer

Charges such as administrative costs, agent commission and transfer fees are covered by the remitter [sender], and may depend on the amount transferred and the mode of transfer.

Before you choose a mode of transfer, consider the fees involved. In general, the faster the transfer is, the higher the costs.

9. Permanent Migration

Some Filipino health workers opt to find employment overseas with the goal of moving permanently to another country. It is important to keep in mind though that immigration rules and regulations vary significantly from country to country.

There are countries that provide a number of pathways for permanent migration, while others have rigid immigration restrictions.

Before you make the decision to migrate, find out what options are available, whether for temporary stays or for permanent migration. If you are considering to apply to settle permanently in another country, note that immigration rules may change and you must meet the requirements at the time when you make your application. Equally important is to consider the situation of health in the Philippines and the shortages of health professionals in the country. While you explore your options of working abroad, you may also want to explore your options to stay and help improve the conditions of the health workforce in the country. Working with your trade union and winning workers' rights is one important option to begin with.

10. Return and Reintegration

Even as you are preparing to migrate, it is also important to plan your return and reintegration, should you decide to eventually return to your home country. Here are some useful tips:

- Set achievable goals and the time frame of your work abroad and discuss them with your family. Define responsibilities among the members of the family before you go overseas. Prepare for future employment or investment opportunities when you return to your home country. As much as possible, prepare your departure in such a way that you will not lose your skills and experience abroad, but instead enhance them to contribute to the health workforce of the country when you come home. Aim to return to health sector employment if you can. Your home country needs your skills.
- Keep in touch with your family and friends as you can. Nowadays, there are various communications and social media technologies that are available and accessible to use.
- Watch your spending. It's tempting to celebrate your return with dining out or giving gifts or pasalubong, but it's important to stay within your budget and continue to save for the future. Don't spend impulsively upon your return and deplete your savings.
- Learn to manage your finances effectively and implement a "forced-savings" programme.
- Re-examine future plans, dreams and expectations as needed.

You can visit the website of the National Reintegration Center for OFWs at <http://nrco.omdsinc.com> to get more information on the various programmes and services related to reintegration of OFWs. A number of NGOs that provide assistance to OFWs in their reintegration back to the country and their local communities are also included in the list of resources.

11. Frequently Asked Questions regarding work abroad

How do I seek overseas employment?

A person can take up overseas employment in a foreign country either through a registered recruiting agent or directly through a foreign employer or a project exporter.

How do I know if a recruitment agency is legitimate?

You can confirm whether a recruitment agency is legitimate or not by getting in touch with the POEA.

You can also do it online yourself by visiting this link: <http://www.poea.gov.ph/cgi-bin/aglist.asp>

What is the Overseas Employment Certificate (OEC) issued by the POEA?

The OEC serves as the OFW travel exit clearance at the airport and immigration counters. The OEC is also an exemption for OFWs from payment of travel tax and airport terminal fees. You shall likewise get a free OFW electron ID card or e-Card, which is your permanent identification card to facilitate your departure and access to services as an OFW.

What is a name-hire?

A name-hire refers to a worker who is able to secure an overseas employment opportunity with an employer without the assistance or participation of any agency. This is direct hiring.

Does a name-hire need to register with the POEA?

Yes. A name-hire has to register with the POEA to document his/her status as an OFW. Documenting your status contributes to your security as a migrant worker and can help facilitate assistance by the government in case of problem situations.

What are the fees for name-hire processing?

The fees include:

- POEA processing fee -- \$100 or its peso equivalent
- OWWA membership fee -- \$25 or its peso equivalent
- PhilHealth -- PhP 900.00 (good for one year coverage)
- Pag-Ibig membership -- PhP 100.00 (minimum)

What is a placement fee?

A placement fee is the amount charged by a private employment agency from a worker for its recruitment and placement services. My recruitment agency wants me to pay PhP 40,000 as a placement fee. Is this legal?

POEA-licensed recruitment agencies are allowed to collect placement fees equivalent to up to one-month's salary of the deployed OFW. This amount does not include documentation and processing costs. Thus, check the equivalent amount of your one-month's salary and compare this with the fees imposed on you.

Aside from recruitment fees, are there other expenses that I need to pay for if I want to work abroad?

Other fees to be shouldered by an OFW include the following documentation costs:

- Passport
- NBI/barangay/police clearance
- Authentication
- Birth certificate
- Medicare/PhilHealth
- PAG-IBIG Fund
- Trade Test if needed
- Immunization (if required by the host country)
- Medical certificate

Are there fees that should be shouldered by the foreign employer?

Yes. The employer should cover the following fees:

- Visa
- Airplane ticket
- OWWA membership fee
- POEA processing fees

Why is it that some OFWs get to work outside the country without paying a placement fee?

Some destination countries such as the United Kingdom, Australia and some parts of Canada prohibit the collection of placement fees. Some recruitment agencies have also found employers that are willing to shoulder the amount for the applicants.

PSI, along with the trade union movement, is advocating globally to prohibit agencies from imposing a recruitment or placement fee on the worker. These fees should be borne by the employer. PSI believes that no worker should pay in order to work.

Is illegal recruitment committed only by agencies without license or authority from the POEA?

No. A licensee or a holder of authority, when it conducts any of the prohibited acts stated in the law, may be charged with illegal recruitment.

What do I do in case of recruitment violations?

You can file your complaints with the Legal Assistance Division Anti-Illegal Recruitment Branch, 4th Floor, POEA Building, the nearest POEA/DOLE regional office, or the NBI, PNP, and police authorities in your area.

Complaints for recruitment violations against any principal, employer, and/or Philippine recruitment agency can also be filed at any of the existing POLOs in your destination country. A list of POLOs can be found here: <http://www.dole.gov.ph/pages/view/24>.

Where do I file money claims arising from the employer-employee relationship such as unpaid wages, breach of contract and illegal dismissal?

Money claims may be filed with the Migrant Worker's Desk of the National Labor Relations Commission in Quezon City, or in the NLRC's Regional Arbitration Branch in the region you reside.

Someone is recruiting me to work overseas under a tourist visa. Is this a legitimate way to find work abroad?

Leaving the country as a tourist but with the intention of working is not a legitimate way to find work abroad. This is considered as unauthorized migration. Not only is this unauthorized, it is also very risky on the life, safety and well-being of the migrant worker. If you intend to migrate for work, use the regulated and established channels. It is for your well-being and protection.

How do I enroll with PhilHealth and renew my membership thereafter?

If in the Philippines, submit the following documents to any PhilHealth office:

- Properly accomplished duplicate copies of the PhilHealth Member Registration Form (PMRF)
- Supporting documents for legal dependents to be declared
- Proof of being an active OFW
- Pay the corresponding premium contribution to any PhilHealth office

If overseas, submit the following documents to any PhilHealth office:

- Properly accomplished PhilHealth Premium Payment Slip (PPPS)
- Duplicate copies of the PhilHealth Member Registration Form (PMRF) -- for initial registration only
- Any of the following documents: birth certificate, baptismal certificate, POEA ECARD/SSS/Company ID, passport, any valid ID/document acceptable to the Corporation
- Pay the corresponding premium contribution of PhP 1,200.00 (for Year 2012) or its equivalent in the local currency of the host country to any accredited collecting agent

Why do I have to renew my PhilHealth membership every time I have to leave the country as an OFW?

It's not actually renewal of membership but an updating of your premiums, which shall be equivalent to the length (in years) of your fresh contract. It will also ensure your continuous eligibility to PhilHealth benefits.

I am spending my vacation in the Philippines and will go back to my employer after one month. Do I have to go through POEA processing all over again?

No. Your employer and employment contract were already verified. As a returning overseas Filipino worker, or balik-manggagawa, all you have to do is secure an overseas employment certificate (OEC) at the POEA Balik-Manggagawa Processing Division, regional centres and satellite offices and some POLOs to enable you to leave the country again and avail of the same privileges such as exemption from travel tax and airport terminal fee.

I was able to secure a work visa from a foreign country. Do I need to go through the POEA for processing of my documents?

Yes. A visa merely allows entry into another country. It does not specify the terms and conditions of work for a particular employer. Name hires or Filipino workers who have found jobs on their own should have their documents processed at the POEA. Check the list of documentary requirements and procedures in the previous section of this booklet.

Are OFWs required to register with Pag-IBIG?

Under RA 9679, all OFWs are required to register under Pag-IBIG, regardless of whether they are POP members or not. Other POP members (immigrants and those naturalized in other countries) may register voluntarily under Pag-IBIG.

Are there SSS Programmes for OFWs?

The Regular Coverage programme of SSS is open to all overseas Filipinos, not over 60 years of age, who have been recruited in the Philippines by foreign-based employers for work abroad, or may have legitimately gained entry in a foreign country and are eventually employed. Coverage takes effect upon registration and payment of first contribution.

The SSS also established the Flexi-fund Programme as a mechanism for overseas Filipinos to save a portion of their income abroad and maximize returns on their investments. The tax-exempt programme is designed to supplement their benefits under the Regular Coverage Programme.

I already have a social security (SS) number; does this mean I am already covered by SSS benefits for OFWs?

No. Securing an SS number does not automatically mean a person is already covered as a member. You are considered a member when the employer has reported you for SSS coverage and you have paid at least one-month's contribution as an employee. For a self-employed OFW or non-working spouse, they should have paid at least one-month's contribution. Securing an SS number does not mean automatic membership.

What do I need to consider before migrating for work abroad?

First, make sure you do your research and understand the pros and cons of migration for you and your family and its attendant realities. Clarify your expectations, values and goals before making a decision.

Once you have decided to migrate, go through the proper recruitment process and know your rights and responsibilities in both the origin and destination countries. You must first make sure that you are dealing with a legitimate recruitment or placement agency. Check the veracity of your employment contract, visa and other related documents.

Review the information and check out the list of resources and directory in this booklet for more information.

12. List of Resources and Directory

Relevant government agencies on migration

Agency/Institution and contact	Website	Focus Areas
Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) DOLE Building, Muralla Wing cor. General Luna St., Intramuros, Manila, 1002, Philippines Tel: +63-2-527-8000	www.dole.gov.ph	Labour and employment policy formulation and implementation
Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) 2330 Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City Philippines Tel: +63-2-834-4000; +63-2-834-3000 Fax: +63-2-832-0683	www.dfa.gov.ph	Foreign policy formulation and implementation, OFW rights protection, OFW welfare promotion
Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) EDSA corner Ortigas Avenue, Mandaluyong City, Philippines Tel: +63-2-722-1144; +63-2-722-1155 Email: info@poea.gov.ph	www.poea.gov.ph	OFW recruitment industry regulation, employment facilitation, workers' protection, pre-employment orientation seminars
Bureau of Immigration Magallanes Drive, Intramuros, Manila Tel: +63-2-527-3260; +63-2-527-3248	http://www.immigration.gov.ph/	Anti-trafficking initiatives
Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking (IACAT) c/o Department of Justice, Padre Faura, Ermita, Manila Phone: +63-2-523-8481 local 216 Fax: +63-2-526-2748 Action Line: 1343 Email: contactus@iacat.net	http://www.iacat.net/	Anti-trafficking initiatives

Agency/Institution and contact	Website	Focus Areas
<p>Department of Justice (DOJ) Padre Faura Street Ermita, Manila 1000 Tel: +63-2-523-8481; +63-2-521-2930 Action Center Tel: +63-2-521-2930;+63-2-523-8481 local 403 Email: dojac@doj.gov.ph</p>	<p>http://www.doj.gov.ph/</p>	<p>Prosecution of human trafficking perpetrators, IACAT lead agency</p>
<p>National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) NBI Building, Taft Avenue, Ermita, Manila, Philippines 1000 Tel: +63-2-523-8231 to 38 Violence Against Women and Children’s Division (VAWCD) Tel: +63-2-523-8231 loc 3403;+63-2-525-6028</p>	<p>http://www.nbi.gov.ph/</p>	<p>Criminal investigation</p>
<p>National Reintegration Center for OFWs, Ground Flr. Blas F. Ople Development Center, cor Solana and Victoria Sts., Intramuros, Manila</p>	<p>http://www.nrco.dole.gov.ph/</p>	<p>Reintegration programmes and services, information dissemination, counseling, financial planning, values formation</p>
<p>Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) 7th St. Cor. F. B. Harrison Pasay City, Philippines Tel: +63-2-891-7601 to 24/24/7 Operation center +63-2-551-6641; +63-2-551-1560 TextOWWA +63-2-917-898-6992 FAX +63-2-551-6651 Email: owwa_opcenter247@yahoo.com</p>	<p>http://www.owwa.gov.ph</p>	<p>Pre-Departure Orientation Seminars, social and welfare services to OFWs, insurance, social work assistance, legal assistance, cultural services, remittance services, repatriation, reintegration</p>

Agency/Institution and contact	Website	Focus Areas
<p>Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) Citystate Centre, 709 Shaw Blvd., 1603 Pasig City, Philippines Tel: +63-2-441-7444 Action Center: +63-2-441-7442</p>	<p>http://www.philhealth.gov.ph</p>	<p>Health insurance coverage</p>
<p>Philippine National Police (PNP) PNP National Headquarters Camp General Crame, Quezon City, Metro Manila. Philippines 1100 Tel: +63-2-723-0401</p> <p>For human trafficking concerns contact PNP Women and Children’s Concern Division (WCCD) Tel: +63-2-723-0401 loc 3480 Call or text 117 (PATROL 117)</p>	<p>www.pnp.gov.ph</p>	<p>Law enforcement</p>
<p>Social Security System (SSS) SSS Building East Avenue, Diliman Quezon City, Philippines Tel: +63-2-920-6401 SSS Call Center: +63-2-920-6446 to 55 Email: member_relations@sss.gov.ph Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/SSSPH</p>	<p>http://www.sss.gov.ph</p>	<p>Social security benefits</p>
<p>DFA-Overseas Voting Secretariat (Manila) Tel: +63-2-834-4361; +63-2-834- 3275; +63-2-833-0914</p>	<p>www.dfa-oavs.gov.ph</p>	<p>Overseas voter registration and voting</p>
<p>Commission on Elections --Office for Overseas Voting (OFOV) Palacio del Gobernador Bldg., Gen. Luna St., Intramuros, Manila</p>	<p>www.comelec.gov.ph</p>	<p>Overseas voter registration and voting</p>

Trade unions affiliated with the PSI in the Philippines

Agency/Institution	Website
<p>Alliance of Filipino Workers Rooms 204-206 VIR Bldg., 1840 E. Rodriguez Sr. Avenue, Cubao Quezon City, Philippines Tel: +63-2-727-4804; +63-2-723-2787 Fax: +63-2-410-9737 Email: nhea1973@yahoo.com.ph</p>	
<p>Confederation of Independent Unions in the Public Sector 3/F N.Dela Merced Bldg. Corner Quezon and West Ave., 1103 Quezon City, Philippines Tel: +63-2-374-2035 Email: ciu@bayandsl.com</p>	
<p>Philippine Government Employees Association (PGEA) PGEA Building Maharlika and Masaya St. Elliptical Rd., Diliman 1100 Quezon City, Philippines Tel: +63-2-926-1573 Email: eso_hdmfpgea@yahoo.com</p>	
<p>Public Services Labor Independent Confederation (PSLINK) 15 Clarion Lily St. St. Dominic Subd. Congressional Avenue Quezon City Philippines Tel: +63-2-924-4710 Email: pslinkconfederation@gmail.com Website: www.pslinkconfederation.org</p>	<p>www.pslinkconfederation.org</p>
<p>Alliance of Government Workers in the Water Sector (AGWWAS) Home of AGWWAS #58 Andres Abellana Ext. Barangay Guadalupe Cebu City 6000 Philippines Email: agwwas.phils@yahoo.com</p>	

Agency/Institution	Website
<p>Manila Water Employees Union (MWEU) Manila Water Employees Center Manila Water Compound, Katipunan Road Balara, Quezon City, Philippines Tel: +63-2-927-2917 Fax: +63-2-927-2917 Email: ed_borela@yahoo.com</p>	
<p>Maynilad Water Supervisors Association (MWSA) MWSS Compound, Katipunan Road Balara, Quezon City, Philippines Tel: +63-2-928-1453 Fax: +63-2-928-1453 Email: rey.fumar@yahoo.com</p>	
<p>NAPOCOR Employees Consolidated Union (NAPOCOR) Quezon Avenue cor. Agham Road Oiliman Quezon City, Philippines Tel: +63-2-924-5337 Fax: +63-2-924-4710 Email: apeleria@napocor.gov.ph</p>	

Other trade unions in the Philippines

Agency/Institution	Website
<p>Alliance of Progressive Labor (APL) 94 Scout Delgado Street, Baranggay Laging Handa 1103 Quezon City Philippines Tel: +63-2-666-3545 Fax: +63-2-332-1378 Email: mail@apl.org.ph</p>	<p>http://www.apl.org.ph/</p>
<p>Federation of Free Workers 1943 Taft Ave., Malate 1004 Manila, Philippines Tel: +63-2-521-9435; +63-2-521-9464; +63-2-400-6656</p>	<p>http://www.ffw.org.ph</p>
<p>Philippine Independent Public Sector Employees Association -- PIPSEA 3/F Workers' House 94 Scout Delgado Street, BrgyLagingHanda 1103 Quezon City, Philippines Mobile: +63-918-367-2619 Email: mail@pipsea.org</p>	<p>http://www.pipsea.org/</p>

Professional associations

Agency/Institution	Website	Description
<p>The Philippine Dental Association 2012 Ayala Extension corner Kamagong St. Makati City Tel: +63-2-899-6332; +63-2-890-4609; +63-2-897-8091 Email: secretariat@pda.ph</p>	<p>http://pda.ph/</p>	
<p>Philippine Nurses Association (PNA) 1663 F.T. Benitez Street, Malate, Manila 1004 Tel: +63-2-536-1888; +63-2-521-0937, +63-2-400-4430 Fax: +63-2-525-1596</p>	<p>http://www.pna-ph.org/</p>	<p>Counseling, legal advice, education and training, policy advocacy</p>
<p>Philippine Medical Association Secretariat: PMA Bldg., North Avenue, Quezon City 1105 Tel: +63-2-929-6366; +63-2-929-7361; +63-2-926-2447 Fax: +63-2-929-6951 Mobile: +63-917-822-1357 Email: info@philippinemedicalassociation.org</p>	<p>https://www.philippinemedicalassociation.org/</p>	<p>Membership benefits, professional development, policy advocacy</p>

Non-governmental organizations

Agency/Institution	Website	Focus areas
<p>ANG NARS #67 Bronze St. Tugatog, Malabon City, 1470 Tel: +63-2-782-9708 Email: angnars@yahoo.com.ph</p>	<p>www.angnars.com</p>	<p>Organizing of nurses, policy advocacy on ethical recruitment, lobbying, alliance-building, community outreach</p>
<p>Atikha Overseas Workers and Communities Initiative, Inc. Overseas Filipino and Women Center Green Valley Subdivision, San Francisco San Pablo City Laguna 4000 Philippines Email: atikha@atikha.org Tel: +63-45-562-3156 Mobile: +63-917-569-1031</p> <p>Batangas Office Mabini OFW Migration Center, TalagaProper Mabini, 4202 Batangas Philippines Tel: +63-43-410-0734</p>	<p>http://www.atikha.org/</p>	<p>Trainings on financial literacy & addressing barriers to reintegration for OFWs</p>
<p>Blas Ople Policy Center and Training Institute Unit A 2295 Wycliff Townhomes, Roberts St., Pasay City, Philippines Tel: +63-2-833-5337 Mobile: +63-2-942-808OPLE (6753) Fax: +63-2-833-9562 Email: blasoplecenter@hotmail.com Facebook: http://www.facebook.com/blasoplecenter Skype: Blas Ople Center</p>	<p>http://www.blasoplecenter.com/contact-us/</p>	<p>Migrants' rights advocacy, trainings, support services for distressed OFWs, reintegration services</p>

Agency/Institution	Website	Focus areas
<p>Center for Migrant Advocacy 15 (Unit 7) CASAL Bldg. Anonas Road, Project 3 Quezon City 1102 Philippines Tel: +63-2-990-5140 Fax: +63-2-433-0684 Email: cmaphils@pldtdsl.net</p>	<p>http:// centerformigrantadvocacy. com/</p>	<p>Policy advocacy, research and information dissemination, networking, capability-building, and direct assistance</p>
<p>Migrant Forum in Asia (MFA) 85-C Masikap Extension, Central District, Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines 1100 Tel: +63-2-928-2740 Fax: +63-2-433-3508 Email: mfa@mfasia.org Website: www.mfasia.org</p>	<p>http://www.mfasia.org/</p>	<p>Policy advocacy, information exchange, networking, alliance-building, capacity-building</p>
<p>UnladKabayan Migrant Services Foundation Inc. 3/F Room-9, UCCP Building, #877 EDSA West Triangle, Quezon City 1101 Philippines Tel: +63-2-794-1379 Fax: +63-2-433-1292 Email: info@unladkabayan.org</p>	<p>http://www.unladkabayan.org/</p>	<p>Research, education and training, savings and investment opportunities, micro-credit and financial literacy education, business and enterprise development</p>



Philippine Pre-Decision Booklet on Labour Migration for Health Workers



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