

**MEETING REPORT****DEVELOPING A SYSTEM OF LINKAGES, COOPERATION AND COORDINATION
BETWEEN PHILIPPINE AND ITALIAN AND FRENCH SERVICE PROVIDERS
TOWARDS IMPROVED SERVICE DELIVERY FOR MIGRANT WORKERS****9 February 2012 / Philippine Embassy, Paris, France****12 February / Philippine Embassy, Rome, Italy****INTRODUCTION***Background*

As part of an overall Asia Regional Labour Migration Programme, the International Labour Organization (ILO) is implementing an EC-funded project “*Going back – moving on: economic and social empowerment of migrants, including victims of trafficking, returned from the EU and neighbouring countries*”. The Project targets Thai and Filipino migrants, especially those who have experienced exploitation, returning from EU and neighbouring countries, and seeks to assist them through social and economic empowerment interventions.

One of the many challenges in the discussions on return and reintegration is pre-return preparation and access to on-site services pending return. Many return migrants, however, never receive or access pre-return and post-return services. There are many reasons offered to explain why this happens. One of these, and perhaps the most crucial, is the lack of transnational coordination between service providers in destination and origin countries that will link pre-return interventions while at destination and follow-up services and reintegration options at home.

Trafficking of Filipinos to Italy and France is insignificant, and is therefore less of a problem compared to other destinations for Filipinos. But there are recorded cases of abuse and exploitation, non-payment of wages and complaints regarding working conditions. Many Filipino workers in Italy and France are employed as domestic workers. Adding to their vulnerabilities is their immigration status; many are undocumented. In France, the large number of undocumented Filipinos remains a concern despite the relatively low number of Filipino migrants as compared to other EU destinations. Their status has kept them in low profile despite access to legal procedures and available support and assistance to protect their interests.

The Philippine Government through its embassies, consulates and overseas labor offices has established links with service providers, church-based organizations and migrant associations within their jurisdiction. Referrals and coordination are therefore fairly easy. While they work relatively well, such appear to be informal and ad-hoc, and in the long run may not be sustained and create gaps in service delivery. Central to ensuring effective and efficient delivery of comprehensive and appropriate services, whether in destination or origin countries, is the existence of an institutionalized framework of cooperation and referrals. A more structured way seems to be an imperative for sustainability. This will also address and/or prevent deficits in service delivery, guarantee comprehensive services and afford target beneficiaries with wider options and opportunities for integration in the host countries or reintegration back home.

In a study¹ commissioned by the ILO-EU project – “Going back, Moving on: Economic and social empowerment of Thai and Filipino migrants including victims of trafficking returned from the EU and its neighboring countries” - the consultant notes the “strong willingness to cooperate and coordinate in the provision of services to distressed Filipino migrants” expressed by the Philippine missions, Italian and French trade unions and NGOs, Filipino migrants’ associations, and trade unions and NGOs in the Philippines. Translating such opportunity for collaboration into concrete actions requires concerted reflection on practical and realistic strategies among different actors.

It is along the above premises that meetings between and among Philippine and Italian authorities including trade unions, migrant associations and key service providers in Italy and France were separately convened in Paris and Rome. These events concluded the series of meetings with service providers in the Philippines, Italy and France, including the Service Providers’ Meeting in April 2010 in Tagaytay City, Philippines and its follow-up meeting in Turin, Italy in June 2012, and the consultations with individual organizations and implementing partners undertaken as part of the process of the study.

Meeting objectives and output

The meetings aimed to:

1. Review/validate the challenges and recommendations identified in the study vis-à-vis the participants’ own experiences;
2. Identify practical and feasible working arrangements, in the short-term and long-term period, on cooperation and coordination among service providers to improve delivery of services to Filipino migrants in Italy and France; and
3. Agree on follow-through measures to concretize identified cooperation and coordination arrangements.

The outcomes of the meetings were integrated in the final paper, ‘Developing a system of linkages, cooperation and coordination of service providers in Italy, France and the Philippines to improve delivery of services to distressed Filipino migrant workers, including victims of trafficking’.

Content and flow of the meetings (Please see final programme in Paris as Annex 1 and in Rome as Annex 2)

1. Each meeting was divided into three parts: i) Project background and highlights of the study; ii) Review of key challenges and recommendations; and iii) Fine-tuning of recommendations and follow-up measures to concretize recommendations.
2. After opening formalities, the Programme Officer of the ILO-EU project made a brief presentation about the project and situated the discussion within the overall project framework. A summary of the Service Providers’ Meeting in Manila in April 2010 and the follow-up meeting in Turin in June 2010 was included.

¹ Ramos-Carbone, Elsa. “Developing a system of linkages, cooperation and coordination of service providers in Italy, France and the Philippines to improve delivery of services to distressed Filipino migrants, in particular victims of exploitation and trafficking”, 2012

3. The project consultant made a presentation on the highlights of the study with emphasis on existing coordination mechanisms in the Philippines and Italy and France, the key challenges and recommendations to address those challenges.
4. Open discussion followed. Central to the discussions was exploring ways to optimize opportunities for collaboration in destination countries given what already exists. Particular attention was drawn on how realistic were the recommendations given limitations in terms of resources, geographical reach, mandate of service providers, opportunities for coordination and collaboration, among others. Recommendations to strengthen coordination arrangements were discussed.

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| <p>THE PARIS MEETING February 9, 2012 Philippine Embassy in Paris</p> |
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Opening

1. The meeting started with a welcome from the Philippine Ambassador to France, Her Excellency Cristina G. Ortega. She acknowledged the presence of the representatives of the three primary trade unions in France (the *Confédération générale du travail* [CGT]; the *Confédération française démocratique du travail* [CFDT]; and *Confédération générale du travail-Force Ouvrieré* [FO]), migrants associations, service providers, and the ILO. She emphasized that the Philippines has a coherent approach on migration as declared in the Overseas Filipinos and Migrant Workers Act of 1995 (Republic Act No. 8042), as amended by Republic Act No. 10022. The protection of migrant workers through the Assistance-to-Nationals (ATN) Program is one of the three main pillars of Philippine foreign policy. In France, the Social and Assistance to Nationals Committee [SAANC] was set up and the internal rules for the Filipino community were adopted. She stressed that there is still room for strengthened cooperation among stakeholders in order that migrant workers could benefit from the services.
2. Thirty-three (33) representatives of various migrant associations, trade unions, the Embassy and ILO attended the meeting. The following French NGOs extended their apologies to the organizers for their inability to attend the meeting but expressed interest on collaborative efforts for the protection of Filipino migrant workers: *Groupe d'information et de soutien des immigrés* (GISTI); *Comité Inter-Mouvements Auprès Des Evacués* (CIMADE); and, *France Associations de Solidarite avec les Travailleur-euse-s Immigre-e-s* (FASTI). (Please see Annex 3 for the complete list of participants)

Project overview and background of the meeting

3. Mr. Robert Larga, ILO Collaborator, provided an overview of the project and the objectives of the meeting. He mentioned that the meeting is a culmination of a series of meetings and consultations in Manila, Paris and Rome towards developing a system of coordination and cooperation among service providers. This effort proceeded from the need to make service delivery more responsive through a more formal system of partnership and cooperation. (See Annex 4 for the PowerPoint Presentation).
4. Mr. Larga underscored the need for coordination and cooperation as it will facilitate efficient and effective delivery of services to migrant workers. This will, however, require a more institutionalized framework and system of cooperation. With this in

place, the deficits in service delivery will be addressed and/or prevented; comprehensive services will be guaranteed; and migrants afforded with wider options and opportunities for integration in the host countries or reintegration in home countries. He further articulated on the objectives of the meeting as mentioned above.

Presentation of the study: results and recommendations

5. Ms. Elsa Ramos Carbone, ILO Consultant, presented the findings and recommendations of the study she conducted entitled, “Developing a system of linkages, cooperation and coordination of service providers in the Philippines, Italy and France to improve services to Filipino migrants in need and/or in distress”. She said that the study seeks to contribute towards the development of a more structured system of cooperation and referrals. She made a brief background on the objectives of the study and the processes undertaken.
6. The presentation was divided in three parts: a) a description of the existing policies, programs and services and cooperation and coordination arrangements between service providers in the Philippines and France; b) key challenges on the areas of return and reintegration and coordination among service providers in the two countries; and c) some recommendations to address the challenges, both in the short and long term periods. *(See Annex 5 for the details of Ms. Ramos-Carbone’s PowerPoint presentation)*
7. In her presentation, Ms. Ramos focused on the key challenges and recommendations in the Philippines and in France, as follows:

a. Key Challenges

| Philippines | France |
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| There are information gaps on return and reintegration; irregular workers; service providers in host countries and the Philippines; and the types of services and programmes available. | Due to the proportionately low percentage of Filipino migrants in France, they tend not to be ‘on the radar’ of service providers. |
| Data sharing amongst service providers was assessed by the stakeholders to be weak. The joint data base on trafficking in the Philippines is a major step in this direction. | Given the increasingly restrictive immigration policy of the government, the large number of undocumented Filipinos remains the biggest challenge for the Philippine authorities and the Filipino community. |
| There seems to be overlapping of services. This is particularly true of the NGOs, especially those focused on special groups (e.g. women, children of migrants, returnees, victims of trafficking). However, the geographic scope of these services should be taken into account. | Keeping a low profile should not deter the Philippine service providers from linking up with their French counterparts, in particular the trade unions and non-governmental organizations working for migrants’ rights. Their services and facilities (legal and administrative assistance, representation, training, health and welfare, etc.) are accessible to migrants, whatever their status, especially those in distress. |
| The crucial role of trade unions and NGOs in delivering services and protecting the rights of undocumented | Great concern was expressed by stakeholders over the abusive treatment meted out to many migrant domestic |

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| workers should be enhanced in conjunction with a vigorous campaign to stop irregular migration and trafficking. Providing resources to enable them to assist this most vulnerable of groups should be considered. | workers by their employers in the diplomatic service who enjoy immunity from prosecution |
| Partnership between Philippine trade unions and those of destination countries should be encouraged and supported | |
| Access of distressed migrants to service providers is low which is mainly attributed to the lack of awareness amongst migrant workers of the array of services | |

b. Moving forward: some recommendations

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| Building and strengthening links amongst service providers | SAANC and Philippine migrants' organisations and the Philippine Embassy, on the one hand and French trade unions and NGOs, on the other, to discuss and agree to work jointly to deliver efficient, timely and effective services to Filipino migrants in distress/need. If feasible, such an agreement is formalized in a memorandum of cooperation |
| Information gathering and data sharing | Philippine and French service providers to develop together a system of information gathering and sharing. |
| | For the Philippine mission, to compile and regularly update list of major and relevant service providers in host country – public, trade unions and NGOs - and identify useful contacts therein |
| Improving access of migrants to service providers | Production and wide dissemination of leaflet (bi-lingual) listing available services, how to access these, and contacts; special outreach to irregular migrants through Philippine migrant organizations and Chaplaincies. |
| | Production of a user-friendly, comprehensive guide for Filipino migrants in France for wide distribution and also to OFWs in Monaco. |
| Return and reintegration | The National Reintegration Center for OFWs (NRCO) in the Philippines to compile and update list of services and providers for returning migrants (advice, assistance, etc.) for distribution by Philippine missions and organizations in France. |
| | Good practices on return and reintegration should be disseminated and replicated, as appropriate including joint initiatives of the Philippine mission and NGOs, such as organising courses on financial literacy and starting up small business and investing in the Philippines. |
| Capacity building | In cooperation with trade unions and NGOs, organise information and training sessions on rights of migrant workers, benefits of integration, etc. |
| | Capacity-building activities for Philippine service providers on improving delivery of services, labour and |

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| | other relevant laws, policies and regulations in France. |
| Victims of trafficking | Fully implement the National Referral System for Victims/Survivors of Trafficking and the Philippine Anti-Trafficking Database by Philippine authorities abroad. Return procedures should be linked to economic and social reintegration services in the country, including legal assistance. |
| | Strengthen coordination between the embassy and consular officials (incl: OWWA Welfare Officers; Labor Attaché) and the IACAT and its member agencies to optimize available services for trafficked persons. |
| | Raise awareness of migrants on dangers of trafficking and need to report cases through Philippine and French service providers, ensuring protection of victims. |
| ILO Convention no. 189: Decent Work for Domestic Workers | Given that the majority of Filipino migrant workers in France are in domestic work, the convention is useful and an excellent tool for migrant rights' advocates and service providers. |
| | Actively participate in the ratification campaign of the ILO Convention No. 198 |

8. The participants expressed no objection on the findings and recommendations of the study. They validated the information contained in the report.

Open Forum

Undocumented migrants

9. Ms. de los Santos of the Association of Mindanao in France raised the issue of '*sans papiers*' (undocumented or irregular migrants). France has the highest number and proportion of undocumented Filipinos in all of Europe. She was happy to know about the services trade unions extend to migrants to 'regularize' immigration status. She expressed that migrant associations should link-up with trade unions to avail of free legal assistance. She, however, noted that the phenomenon of undocumented migrants in France could also be an issue of poor recruitment regulations.
10. Ms. Zita Obra of CFDT and *Asosasyong Sangguniang Filipino (ASF)* stressed that the government cannot be compelled to issue regularization papers. It is important that those who need help are able to access legalization service and be assisted in the process. To facilitate this helping process, it is important that persons working with undocumented migrants cooperate with trade unions.

Role of the trade unions

11. Mr. Ouman Benfaid of CDFT shared that the trade union is working on the issue of discrimination including against migrants. The trade union finds the 'selective migration policy' discriminatory. This policy favors migration into France of 'skilled' over 'low-skilled' migrants. He likewise mentioned a number of CFDT programs and services, including assistance to domestic workers, regularization of status, workers' rights and training/education. CFDT, with assistance from the ILO, has also initiated the development and publication of a guide for migrant health workers from Senegal and

- Mali. A similar guide could be developed for Filipino migrants. He offered the assistance of the CFDT to Filipino migrant association. He encouraged them to work together with the trade unions to get workers out of precarious conditions. He expressed support for a more formal and more intense partnership to ensure fruitful results.
12. Ms. Corinne Nares of FO said that her trade union has been in contact and working with migrant workers, including Filipinos, especially in defending their labour rights, be they documented or not. Many of them are in the domestic work sector. She said that many undocumented migrants are unaware of their rights. The current policy, however, makes it harder for migrant workers to work in France. Thus, she underscored the importance of pursuing collective rather than individual action to ensure protection including against expulsion through regularization proceedings. She stressed the need for everyone to be in touch and regularly exchange information and to collaborate in helping migrant workers.
 13. Ms. Francine Blanche of CGT emphasized the right of migrant workers to decent work. Migrants are first and foremost workers and their rights and dignity should be respected and their right against exploitation defended. The trade union works for the rights of the vulnerable and that includes migrant workers regardless of whether they are affiliated with a trade union or not, irrespective of the nature of their jobs and notwithstanding where they come from. There should be equal treatment between national workers and migrant workers and there should be no competition between them.
 14. Ms. Blanche shared that CGT, along with other trade unions, were able to invite more than 7,000 to the trade union movement and obtain regularization of more than 5,000 workers on the basis of a defined criteria that French authorities have accepted. These criteria include: a) the applicant has been in France for three years; and b) the employer is willing to declare that s/he has in his/her employ someone without proper documentation. When the worker has been declared by his/her employer, the '12 pay slips' requirement is no longer necessary. CGT had processed 340 cases of domestic workers but none of them was a Filipino. Many of those they assisted were Chinese and African. The application of such criteria, however, was suspended in July 2011. The trade unions are trying to restore the said criteria.

Other issues

15. Mr. Lito Gomez of *Maharlika* shared that integration into French society requires proficiency in the spoken French language. Many Filipinos, however, are not willing to undergo language lessons despite availability of French lessons for free. This inability of some Filipinos to speak French makes access to services difficult as service providers or trade unions speak French. Filipino migrants need to know their rights. As regards the criteria for regularization, he strongly opined that employers should be able to have the courage to declare their workers as '*sans papier*'.
16. Ms. Espie Matugas of *Gawad Kalinga* mentioned that it offers language training courses for Filipino migrants in France.
17. Ms. Sally Rousset of *Babaylan* was of the view that information given to migrants should not deal about 'generalities' but cover other important issues for migrant workers especially women. For instance, adequate information should be provided on health issues. She also suggested that stories of migrants and their experiences in France should be documented and compiled, as these can provide useful guidance for future interventions.

18. Mr. Dennis Mana-ay of *Hiligaynon* Association in France commented that the migrant associations and trade unions have a common ground and share the same objective for migrant workers. He proposed that meetings should be convened between migrant associations and trade unions to allow regular exchange of information and facilitate referrals. Through these meetings, migrant associations would be able to hear and appreciate the services that are offered by trade unions.
19. In response to the proposal to have a regular exchange between migrant associations and trade unions, Vice Consul Winston Almeda of the Philippine Embassy offered to facilitate such meetings.
20. One participant raised the issue of migrants having permits to work as professionals but end up working as domestics, while another expressed interest in knowing the range of legal services that trade unions offer.
21. Ms. Obra also shared that CFDT has been working not only with the Filipinos but with migrants of all nationalities. The CFDT organizes orientation on rights for all migrants and does not force migrants to become members of the trade union. She called on the cooperation of everyone as there are over two million domestic workers in France and many of them need assistance.
22. In response to a request to expound on the experiences of the *Samahan* (an organization of Filipino domestic workers) in Belgium, Ms. Ramos said that the organization which has been in existence for 30 years started with a nucleus of people with a common desire and felt need to organize. That group of people met with trade unions in Belgium that helped the *Samahan* to be organized. The *Samahan* later became part of the Commission of Migrant Workers of that trade union. Migrant associations should consider the trade unions as their natural allies.
23. A proposal to develop an information guide for Filipino migrants was supported strongly by the group, as many are unaware of their rights under French laws. They also do not know where to seek help when necessary. Such a guide should include a directory of service providers, trade unions, non-government organizations and key migrant associations. The trade unions will share their existing publications on rights of migrant workers. The material was also proposed to be translated in *Tagalog* as some Filipino migrant workers do not speak or understand English well. For this purpose, a drafting team should be composed. The ILO was asked to support the process.
24. It was also proposed that migrant associations should visit the offices of trade unions and witness the services being offered. They may even join the regular orientation sessions.

Campaign for the ratification of the ILO Convention on Domestic Workers (No. 189)

25. Ms. Ramos mentioned the on-going campaign for the ratification of the ILO Convention 189 on Domestic Workers. She said that the Philippines, having chaired the International Labour Conference discussion on a draft convention and recommendation, has been working for its ratification and aims to earn the distinction of being the first country to do so.
26. CFDT said that it will participate in the campaign while CGT will mobilize workers in France to have a united action.

Meeting with the Filipino community

27. After the meeting with French trade unions and service providers, an open discussion with the Filipino community followed. The participants assessed the meeting; informed those who were not able to attend the afternoon meeting of the results of the meeting; and discussed ways to concretize proposals for collaboration as recommended in the study and those that were raised during the earlier meeting.
28. The participants appreciated the meeting. Some said the meeting was informative. They learned a lot from the sharing of trade unions and what these could offer to migrants associations. Others said that the meeting offered opportunities for collaboration and partnership which should be followed through without delay. Others saw the potential partnership as a means to elevate the existence and purpose of the Filipino community.
29. The following were discussed:
 - Meeting of French trade unions and NGOs with the migrant associations and the Filipino community. This will be an opportunity to push further and/or concretize cooperation with them. This meeting could be held at the Embassy. CFDT also offered its office as a venue.
 - The need for migrant associations to inform their members about the meetings and the partnership with the trade unions.
 - The possibility of setting-up a joint committee that will focus on migrant issues, follow developments and inform the community on a regular basis.
 - The need to also deal with problems which are not labour-related such as domestic violence, eviction, women and gender, and other laws and rights.
 - The setting up of a committee to be responsible for: a) developing a concept note for ILO funding; b) collate available information; and c) draft the content of the 'Guide for Filipinos in France'.

Summary and moving forward (summary of agreement)

30. The participants agreed to the findings and recommendations of the study. A few other recommendations were put forward to concretize follow-up actions.
31. Philippine migrants' organizations, under the aegis of the Philippine Embassy to develop and produce a 'Guide to Filipino migrants in France' with ILO support. The guide will contain information on the current immigration policies and contexts in France, the rights and responsibilities of migrant workers and the institutions and persons the migrants could contact in case of need of assistance.
32. Philippine service providers and migrants associations welcomed the offer of French trade unions (CGT, CFDT and FO) for collaboration to assist Filipino migrant workers in precarious situations. Regular meetings and information exchange will be initiated to advance this collaborative effort towards establishing more formal arrangements. The Philippine Embassy in Paris committed to facilitate such meetings.

33. Philippine migrants' organizations, with the assistance of the Embassy, to call as soon as possible a meeting of their members and the wider community to inform them of these initiatives, including concretizing cooperation with trade unions. They recognized that the trade unions could be tapped for labour rights education and legal assistance at no cost at all. It was recommended that representatives of the trade unions be invited to speak on their programs and services during the meetings of the Filipino migrants association.
34. French trade unions to inform their organizations of the study and raise their awareness about Philippine migrants, their situation and their contribution to their host country.

THE ROME MEETING
February 11, 2012
Philippine Embassy in Rome

Opening

1. The Philippine Ambassador to Rome, His Excellency Virgilio Reyes, welcomed the participants. He said that the Philippine Embassy supports the goal of the meeting. He gave an overview of Filipino migration to Italy. There are 4.5 million migrants in Italy and the migrant population constitutes 10% of the total population in Italy. Filipino migrants number to around 140,000, a large portion of them (about 80%) are in major cities such as Milan, Rome, Bologna, Florence and Turin. Of the total number of Filipino migrants, 73% are female and 75% are in the service sector mainly in domestic work. The others are in Italy either for family reasons (i.e., family reunification) at 18%; for religious purposes at 3% and 1% for business such as travel agencies. The Ambassador stressed that the Italian Republic is a good host for Filipinos. Filipinos enjoy social and economic mobility.
2. Twenty-three (23) representatives of various migrant associations, trade unions, the Embassy and ILO attended the meeting. Due to inclement weather, a few participants who had earlier confirmed failed to make it to the meeting. *(See Annex 6 for the complete list of participants)*

Project overview and background of the meeting

3. Mr. Robert Larga, ILO Collaborator, provided an overview of the project and the objectives of the meeting (Same presentation as in the Paris meeting). He mentioned that the meeting is a culmination of a series of meetings and consultations in Manila, Paris and Rome towards developing a system of coordination and cooperation among service providers. This effort proceeded from the need to make service delivery more responsive through a more formal system of partnership and cooperation.
4. Mr. Larga underscored the need for coordination and cooperation as it will facilitate efficient and effective delivery of services to migrant workers. This will, however, require a more institutionalized framework and system of cooperation. With this in place, the deficits in service delivery will be addressed and/or prevented; comprehensive services will be guaranteed; and migrants afforded with wider options and opportunities for integration in the host countries or reintegration in home countries. He further articulated on the objectives of the meeting.

Presentation of the study: results and recommendations

5. Ms. Elsa Ramos Carbone, ILO Consultant, presented the findings and recommendations of the study she conducted entitled, “Developing a system of linkages, cooperation and coordination of service providers in the Philippines, Italy and France to improve services to Filipino migrants in need and/or in distress”. She said that the study seeks to contribute towards the development of a more structured system of cooperation and referrals. She made a brief background on the objectives of the study and the processes undertaken.
6. The presentation was divided in three parts: a) a description of the existing policies, programs and services and cooperation and coordination arrangements between service providers in the Philippines and Italy; b) key challenges on the areas of return and reintegration and coordination among service providers in the two countries; and c) some recommendations to address the challenges, both in the short and long term periods. (*See Annex 7 for the details of Ms. Ramos-Carbone’s PowerPoint presentation*)
7. In her presentation, Ms. Ramos emphasized on the key challenges and recommendations in the Philippines and in Italy, as follows:

a. Key Challenges

| Philippines | Italy |
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| There are information gaps on return and reintegration; irregular workers; service providers in host countries and the Philippines; and the types of services and programmes available. | Strong willingness to cooperate and coordinate in the provision of services to distressed Filipino migrants was expressed by all service providers: the Philippine mission, Italian trade unions and NGOs, Philippine migrant workers' organizations in Italy and trade unions and NGOs in the Philippines. Translating this into concrete action – including the setting up of a joint referral system - requires concerted reflection on practical and realistic strategies by the stakeholders and service providers |
| Data sharing amongst service providers was assessed by stakeholders to be weak. The joint data base on trafficking in the Philippines is a major step in this direction. | Whilst acknowledging the capacity of Filipino migrant organizations to take care of their own, it is in their long-term interest to be more involved in the wider immigrant community in Italy and be visible as important and valuable stakeholders, thus also contributing to promoting integration and empowerment of Filipino migrants. |
| There seems to be overlapping of services among NGOs, esp. those focused on special groups (e.g. women, children of migrants, returnees, trafficked persons). The geographic scope of these services should be taken into account. | Urgent attention should be given to the second generation, bearing in mind the specific needs of the different groups of young people. |
| The crucial role of trade unions and NGOs in delivering services and protecting the rights of undocumented | Return and reintegration – voluntary or not – should be given urgent attention in the migration policy and programmes of the |

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| workers should be enhanced in conjunction with a vigorous campaign to stop irregular migration and trafficking. Providing resources to enable them to assist this most vulnerable of groups should be considered. | Philippines and Italy. |
| Partnership between Philippine trade unions and those of destination countries should be encouraged and supported | Strong involvement of local governments is crucial to ensure that migration effectively contributes to the long-term development of destination and origin countries. |
| The relatively low access of distressed migrants to service providers could be attributed mainly to the lack of awareness amongst migrant workers of the array of services | Capacity-building is needed especially on the following: rights of migrant workers; benefits of integration (language courses, appreciating Italian culture/ tradition); for counsellors and mediators; in financial literacy and entrepreneurship; starting small businesses (both in Italy and in the Philippines), wise investments, etc. |

b. Moving forward: some recommendations

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| Building and strengthening links amongst service providers | Philippine service providers – Philippine mission and migrant organizations - assess together the efficiency and impact of existing service delivery to migrants in distress/need and work out practical and concrete procedures to improve delivery of services. |
| | Philippine and Italian service providers discuss and agree to work jointly to deliver efficient, timely and effective services to Filipino migrants in distress/need; if feasible, such an agreement is formalized in a memorandum of cooperation. |
| Information gathering and data sharing | Determine what kind of information should be shared: a) amongst Philippine service providers; and b) between them and Italian service providers (government, trade unions and NGOs), taking care not to jeopardize the situation of migrant workers, in particular those who are undocumented. |
| | The Philippine mission , compile and regularly update list of major and relevant service providers in host country – public, trade unions and NGOs - and identify useful contacts therein. |
| Improving access of migrants to service providers | Update and wide distribution of a comprehensive, reader-friendly guide for Filipino migrants |
| | Production and wide dissemination of leaflet (bi-lingual) listing available services, how to access these, and contacts; special outreach to irregular migrants through Philippine migrant organizations and Chaplaincies |
| Return and reintegration | The National Reintegration Center for OFWs (NRCO) in the Philippines to compile and update list of services and |

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| | providers for returning migrants (advice, assistance, etc.) for distribution by Philippine missions and organizations in Italy. |
| | Good practices on return and reintegration to be disseminated and replicated, as appropriate, including joint initiatives of the Philippine mission and NGOs, such as organising courses on financial literacy and starting up small business and investing in the Philippines. |
| Capacity building | In cooperation with trade unions and NGOs, organise information and training sessions on rights of migrant workers, benefits of integration, etc. |
| | Capacity-building activities for Philippine service providers on improving delivery of services, labour and other relevant laws, policies and regulations in Italy. |
| Victims of trafficking | Fully implement the National Referral System for Victims/Survivors of Trafficking and the Philippine Anti-Trafficking Database by Philippine authorities abroad. Return procedures should be linked to economic and social reintegration services in the country, including legal assistance. |
| | Strengthen coordination between the embassy and consular officials (incl: OWWA Welfare Officers; Labor Attaché) and the IACAT and its member agencies to optimize available services for trafficked persons. |
| | Raise awareness of migrants on dangers of trafficking and need to report cases through Philippine and Italian service providers, ensuring protection of victims. |
| ILO Convention No. 189: Decent Work for Domestic Workers | Given that the majority of Filipino migrant workers in Italy are in domestic work, the Convention is a useful and excellent tool for migrant rights' advocates and service providers. |
| | Actively participate in campaign for ratification of Convention by Philippines and Italy. |

8. As in the meeting in France, the participants likewise expressed no objection on the findings and recommendations of the study. They validated the information contained in the report. Few specific comments and recommendations were made during the open forum.

Open discussion

EU migration policies and economic situation

9. The ILO Director in Italy, Mr. Luigi Cal, pointed out that despite the crisis in Europe, people continue to come to Italy.
10. EU migration policies were raised (i.e. quota system, etc.). The Ambassador opined that while the policies are in place, their implementation will be the question. Moreover, these are general policies and are not targeted to specific group of migrants. He suggested that a study be conducted on the impact or projected impact of such policies on migrants.

11. Ms. Sandra Rainero shared that various Italian authorities are mandated to address migration issues including the protection of migrant workers. One of these is the Ministry of the Interior² which has an office that is responsible for voluntary return. On the other hand, the Ministry for Equal Opportunities³ which has offices at national and local levels promoting equal opportunities was created in 1997 to highlight the importance of gender issues and policies. Both agencies coordinate with each other.
12. Ms. Rainero also informed the group about the National Office against Racial Discrimination (UNAR), an agency responsible for addressing all forms of discrimination, including against migrants. UNAR cooperates with national and local autonomies, social partners like trade unions and employers' groups and non-government

² The Ministry of the Interior's responsibilities in the field of civil rights protection are entrusted to the Department for civil liberties and immigration, including the following: Immigration; Asylum; Citizenship; Religions. The Department is made up by the following Directorates: i) Central Directorate for immigration and asylum policies; ii) Central Directorate for assistance to immigrants and asylum seekers; iii) Central Directorate for civil rights, citizenship and minorities; iv) Central Directorate for religions; v) Central Directorate for the administration of F.E.C. (the ministry church owning fund); vi) Central Directorate for general affairs and the management of equipment and financial and human resources.

The Department for civil liberties and immigration is led by a Head of Department assisted by a Vice Head of Department acting as deputy and by a second Vice Head of Department, who is also in charge of the above-mentioned Central Directorate for immigration and asylum policies.

Central Directorate For Immigration And Asylum Policies

The Central Directorate for immigration and asylum policies participates in the drawing up of the migration policies adopted by the Government. In this respect the Ministry of the Interior is engaged at various levels and pursues a multiplicity of objectives- on the one hand the traditional objective of both law and order and internal security maintenance, through the fight against illegal immigration and related offences, and on the other the favouring of the arrival and integration of immigrants who legally stay in our country. In doing so, the Ministry strives to bring about a situation of social cohesion, which is an essential element of security in a broader sense.

In this connection the Central Directorate for immigration and asylum policies carries out the following tasks: analysis and planning of migration policies; monitoring and promotion of policies for the integration of aliens, notably through the *Consigli Territoriali per l'immigrazione (Local Immigration Councils)*. The above Councils, established within the Prefectures, carry out "analysis of needs and promotion of interventions to be implemented at local level"; they are essential means for the practical implementation of immigration policies at local level. http://www.cies.it/aeneas/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=63:italian-ministry-of-interior&catid=40:partners&Itemid=57

³ The Minister for Rights and Equal Opportunities has been recently appointed as responsible for new issues in the field of human rights, actions against trafficking of human beings and female entrepreneurship in coordination with the Minister for the Economic Development. The Minister realizes her goals with the support of the Department for Equal Opportunities which has been renamed "Department for Rights and Equal Opportunities" in 2006. The Department for Rights and Equal Opportunities, which operates within the Presidency of the Council of Ministries, supporting the Minister for Equal Opportunities, has the pivotal responsibility in the transposition of European Law into the national legislation.

The Department for Rights and Equal Opportunities has the mandate to:

- Propose and coordinate legislative and administrative initiatives dealing with policies for equal opportunities;
- Promote study and coordination of processes related to equality and Equal Opportunities;
- Define new guidelines to study and encourage projects and initiatives related to equal opportunities, in addition to coordinating all the proposals made by governing bodies or public authorities;
- Organize and coordinate central or local governing bodies having the specific task to guarantee correct implementation of national regulations relating to equality between men and women;
- Develop national positions in the European legislative process and adaptation the national legal system to the legislation and the principles set up by European Union;
- Coordinate and monitor projects concerning the organization and use of Structural Funds for policies related to equal opportunities;
- Promote cooperation between national, regional and local governing bodies and national or international organizations for equal opportunities, in particular with the European Union, the United Nations, the Council of Europe and the OCSE.

The Department for Rights and Equal Opportunities is organized in three main offices:

- the Office for intervention in economic and social fields;
- the Office for intervention for equality and equal opportunities;
- the National Office against racial discrimination.

organizations towards establishing 'contact centers' on cases involving discriminatory acts.

13. The other institutions or mechanisms include:

- *Consigliere Aggiunto* or Associate Counselor, who is elected by foreign residents from among its ranks to represent them in the municipal Council's Assembly. The Associate Counselor has the right to participate in deliberations but has no right to vote.
- Patronatos
- *Sportelli unici per Immigrazione*, one-stop-shop for immigrants.
- Parity counselors found in each region and province who deal with cases of discrimination based on sex.

14. Director Cal interjected that trade unions play an important role in the protection of migrant workers. He recalled specifically the case of a Filipino who sought assistance from a trade union in filing a case of contractual fraud against an employer. In three months, the case was resolved favorably, awarding the complainant Euro 700 as compensation. He, however, observed that Filipinos are a closed group that seeks immediate help from one another rather than from available formal mechanisms.

15. Given the many institutions working for migrants at various levels, one participant remarked that it is difficult to have a one-track mechanism for coordination and referral. It is important, however, that contacts with these institutions are established.

Migrants associations in Italy

16. The meeting also focused on migrants associations and their role on the promotion of the welfare and protection of migrant workers. The Consul-General of Milan, Lourdes Tabamo, remarked that there are about 70 informal migrant organizations in Milan. Most of them are organized mainly for social events and gatherings. They are not federated. She was of the view that these migrant associations should be strengthened. They should be capacitated on how to organize associations and how to be involved in social issues.

17. Ambassador Reyes commented that Filipino migrants have the tendency to form small groups. This becomes a problem for accreditation or registration with Italian authorities. This also deprives them of an opportunity to access available funds.

18. Mrs. Maria Luarda Reyes of the Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO) said that many Filipino migrants are grouped according to profession. They, however, do not have much time to run their organizations. She also informed the meeting about the forthcoming conference of the Filipino Diaspora in Italy under the auspices of CFO.

19. It was also gathered that only 20% of Filipino migrant associations are affiliated with the Filipino community. Father Romeo Velos of *Sentro Pilipino* commented that only a small percentage of the Filipino community participates in church activities.

20. Consul-General Tabamo said that while meetings are convened and held in Milan, only a few migrant associations attend. Only a few also are interested in social causes. She said that it would help if associations were classified according to purpose or interest.

21. The issue of reaching out to migrants was also discussed. Ms. Rainero said that in Eastern Europe, migrants are contacted in churches, parks and other public places where migrants regularly converged. Father Velos said that the church also reaches out to Filipinos through the media. The chaplaincy has national coordinators who often meet on issues concerning migrants.
22. Ms. Donna de la Cruz of the Filipino Women's Council (FWC) shared that it cooperates with the Philippine Overseas Labor Office (POLO) and the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) on the registration of Filipino associations with Italian authorities, one of which is the Filipino Nurses Association. It also offers literacy programs for Filipino migrants. The program includes training on managing finances of migrant workers in Italy as well as their families. She also mentioned the problems confronting the second generation of Filipino migrants.

Access to services by migrants

23. Ms. Ruth Roselyn Vibar of OWWA said that it regularly communicates with migrants associations through email blasts. The ATN in Milan, Atty. Rowel Garcia, added that the Consulate has a dedicated 24/7 hotline but has not so far received any calls for assistance. There are, however, walk-in clients. He said that they have not yet established contact with the Italian authorities and service providers. There is no built-in, structured referral mechanism in place.
24. Atty. Rico Foz of the Office of the Undersecretary for Migrant Workers Affairs (OUMWA) of the Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) said that there seems to be a problem on the appreciation of the work of the Assistance-to-Nationals (ATN) and the other representatives of Philippine government agencies (DOLE, OWWA, etc.), which together operate under a one-country-team approach. He acknowledged the need to expand contacts with service providers in destination countries and for a more holistic approach to service delivery, adding that flexibility in referrals requires a lot of creativity.
25. Rome Embassy Vice-Consul Jarie Osias informed the meeting that there are four modes through which migrant workers could reach the Embassy: i) calling through emergency phone numbers; ii) accessing website; iii) using Embassy local lines; and iv) visiting the Embassy (walk-in). Migrants can reach the consular official for consular services like issuance of passports; the labor attaché, for labor contracts; and the ATN, for all other cases. He added that walk-in clients often complain of debt payments and family problems.
26. Short-digit emergency numbers could also be considered for easy recall. Such facility should be connected to an information system where responses are orchestrated. The Ambassador mentioned that he had recommended to DFA the setting up of a call-center type of a system which could be centrally managed in Manila and receive calls and reports all over the world. This proposal has not yet been followed through.
27. OWWA presented a copy of a book for Filipino migrants in Italy. It was recommended, that OWWA and the Embassy update the list of Italian organizations, service providers, trade unions and the *Patronatos*. The Embassy may get in touch with ILO Rome for trade union contacts. The development of a more migrant-friendly version of the guide similar to the one produced by FWC was considered. Ms. Rainero offered a list of locally-based institutions which the Embassy could tap in case of need and for establishing links with Italian authorities.

Political involvement and participation of migrants

28. Director Cal stressed the need for migrants to be actively involved in issues affecting migrants. Migrants can be excellent leaders. A case in point is the representative of migrants in the Municipal Council of Rome, a Filipino migrant, Romulo Salvador. The other is a Peruvian migrant who eventually became national secretary of a trade union. Ms. Ramos also cited the case of Zita Obra in Paris who became a member of a trade union and now occupies a top post in its federation for service workers. Mr. Salvador remarked that regrettably Filipino migrants do not participate in political events.
29. The Ambassador added that the same is the case in Great Britain where, despite the big Filipino migrant community – the largest in Europe - Filipinos have little political representation.

Return and reintegration programs

30. The meeting also discussed mechanisms and assistance to facilitate return and reintegration of migrants. Ms. Rainero expounded on the Return Information Desk in Veneto region through the labour agency Veneto Lavoro. The desk is a counseling and information service for regular migrants residing in the region and having nationality outside the EU territory. It helps migrants to identify and plan a productive return path towards their country of origin.
31. Ms. Maria Gallotti of ILO Geneva, on the other hand, shared the Spanish return programme that was decreed to cushion the effects of the 2009 financial crisis in Spain. Under this programme, incentives are given to non-EU citizens from countries which have bilateral social security agreements with Spain. These incentives include: i) advance payment (in two payments) of unemployment benefits to foreign workers who are entitled to these; ii) accumulation of social security contributions in Spain with those made in the country of origin, for calculating future pensions; and iii) assistance to facilitate return trip. Those who are willing to avail of the programme can return to Spain to reside or work, only after a 3-year period. Those with residence permits can likewise re-apply after three years and will receive special consideration.
32. Consul-General Tabamo also shared information on the Italian Ritornare scheme which provides logistical and economic assistance to migrants returning voluntarily to their home countries. This program is available for migrants who cannot or do not want to remain in Italy and choose to return to their home countries. The Assisted Voluntary Return is provided throughout the return process, from pre-departure, during the journey back home, and upon arrival in the home country.
33. Problems and difficulties, however, are encountered in the implementation of return programs. Some migrants have concerns about losing social security benefits, while others are not willing to return due to lack of economic opportunities in countries of origin, among others. The Ambassador added that it is the economy which rules in return and reintegration programs. Economic reintegration should be afforded to those who wish to return and the policy environment should allow such reintegration to succeed. Migration and its development nexus must be defined and/or reformulated.

34. Director Cal mentioned that the discussion on portability of pension agreement has not progressed, and may not likely in the near future. Atty. Fos echoed that for old-aged migrants, portability of benefits is a concern to ensure a comfortable life after retirement. It was recommended to look at the Chilean and Moroccan models on portability of pension.
35. Mr. Salvador stressed that any return and reintegration programs should be gradual and the process, personal and flexible.








Ratification of the ILO Convention on Domestic Workers

36. Ms. Ramos elaborated on the efforts of the Philippine Government to ratify the ILO Convention and, hopefully, earn the distinction of becoming the first to ratify the international instrument. The chairing by the Philippines of the discussions in the International Labour Conference was an occasion for the Philippines to further take the lead in making the convention work for the benefit of domestic workers through an early ratification.
37. Mr. Salvador shared that through his initiative, Rome passed a resolution expressing support for the ratification of the Domestic Workers Convention. While municipal governments are not given the constitutional power to ratify conventions and other international agreements, the resolution could influence the authorities to fast-track the ratification process. This could be done in other areas. Mr. Salvador will send the resolution to those interested.

Conclusion and summary of agreement

38. The ILO Office in Rome has agreed to convene a follow-up meeting between the ILO tripartite constituents on the one hand, and the Philippine mission, the migrants' associations and other service providers in Italy. The meeting will be a forum to exchange information on services provided to migrant workers and to discuss potential collaboration between and among these institutions and organizations.
39. The report of the meeting and the final paper should highlight the above agreement. The ILO Office in Manila will formally transmit said reports to ILO Rome with a request to take appropriate action to such agreement.
40. The Philippine missions in Rome and Milan should compile and update list of Italian authorities at national, regional and municipal levels that provide assistance to migrant workers. Veneto Lavoro through its representative will provide the missions with the list in the Veneto region.
41. Migrant associations should be a) strengthened to provide assistance to Filipino migrants in distress; b) become more active in political discussions and events concerning migrant workers, and c) affiliate to larger organizations and form confederate organizations for accreditation purposes.

SUMMARY OF ANNEXES

| Annexes | Template |
|------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Final Programme Paris |  Final Programme Paris (Annex 1).pdf |
| 2. Final Programme Rome |  Final Programme Rome (Annex 2).pdf |
| 3. List of Participants Paris |  List of Participants Paris (Annex 3).pdf |
| 4. RLL Presentation |  RLL Presentation (Annex 4).pdf |
| 5. Ms Elsa's presentation in Paris |  Ms Elsa's presentation in Paris |
| 6. List of Participants Rome |  List of Participants Rome (Annex 6).pdf |
| 7. Ms Elsa's presentation in Rome |  Ms Elsa's presentation in Rome |

