

Bridging Overseas Filipinos and their home communities through cooperatives, savings, reintegration & economic initiatives: MFA and MCG examples

National Convention of LLPDC

24 May 2017, Arevalo, Iloilo City

REX VARONA

M&D Program Coordinator, Migrant Forum in Asia (MFA), and Secretariat Coordinator, Migrants Coordinating Group in WV

Realities of overseas migration

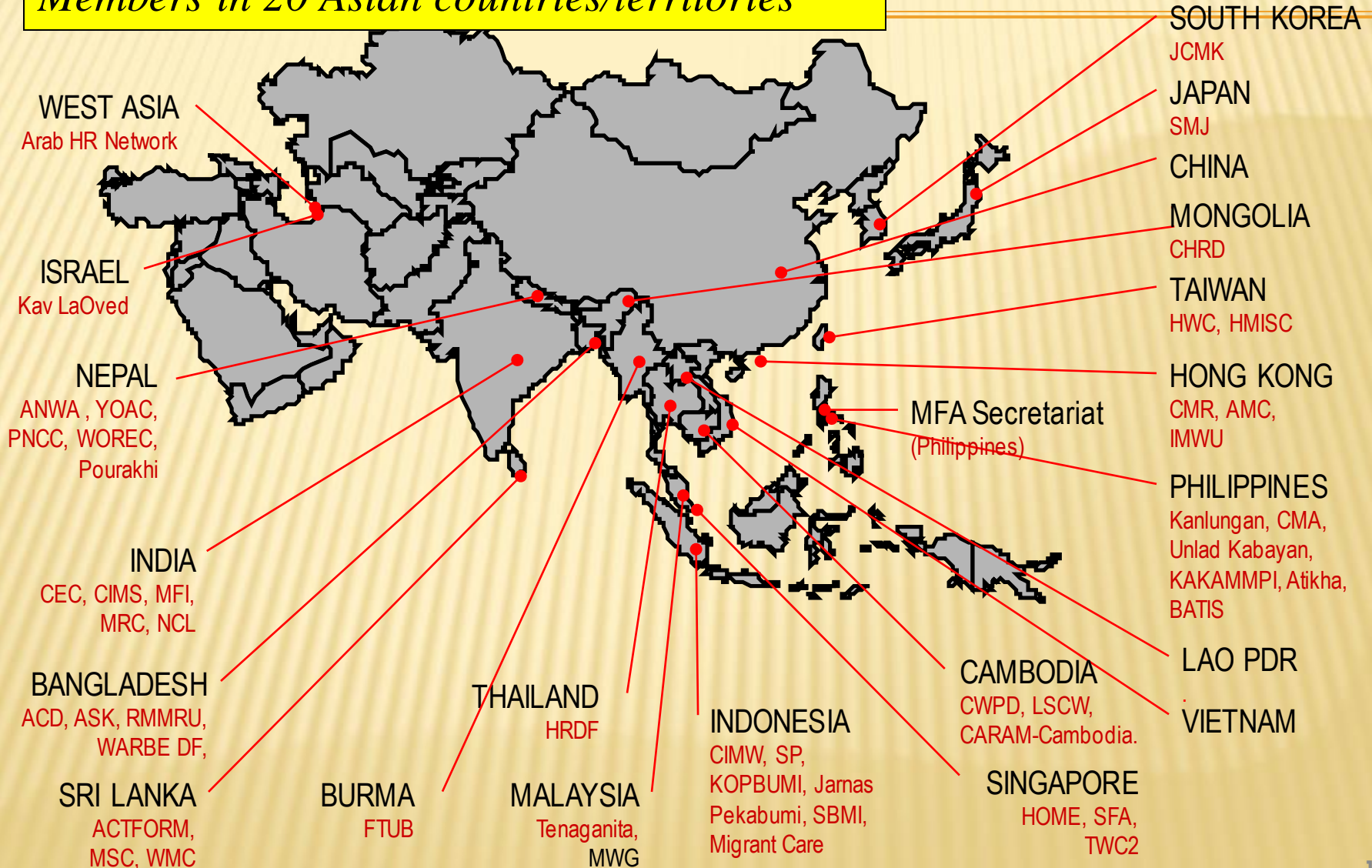
- For majority of Filipino migrants, particularly workers (OFWs), working abroad entails a lot of risks, vulnerabilities, abuses and exploitation.
- Their jobs abroad are NOT secure; they often have NO social protection (retirement, health insurance, etc.).
- They will ultimately return to the Philippines, mostly to their home regions;
- They/family could not be key drivers of development if they are abused/sick/disabled, have no social protection, no savings, no jobs or livelihood.

Empowering OFWs to save, reintegrate, and become drivers in local economic development

**Case examples: The experience of
Migrant Forum in Asia (MFA) and
Migrants Coordinating Group in Western Visayas (MCG)**

Migrant Forum in Asia (MFA)

Members in 20 Asian countries/territories



Migrants Coordinating Group in WV (MCG-WV)



MCG was founded on 28 November 2015 by 27 organizations from all over WV and key countries in Asia; supported by JMDI, MDI-WV, LLPDC, JBLFMU, CFO, MFA, SENTRO, IDWF

MCG 2nd General Assembly successfully held

Theme: “Strengthen MCG and Empower Migrants and Families to Promote Rights and Development in WV.”

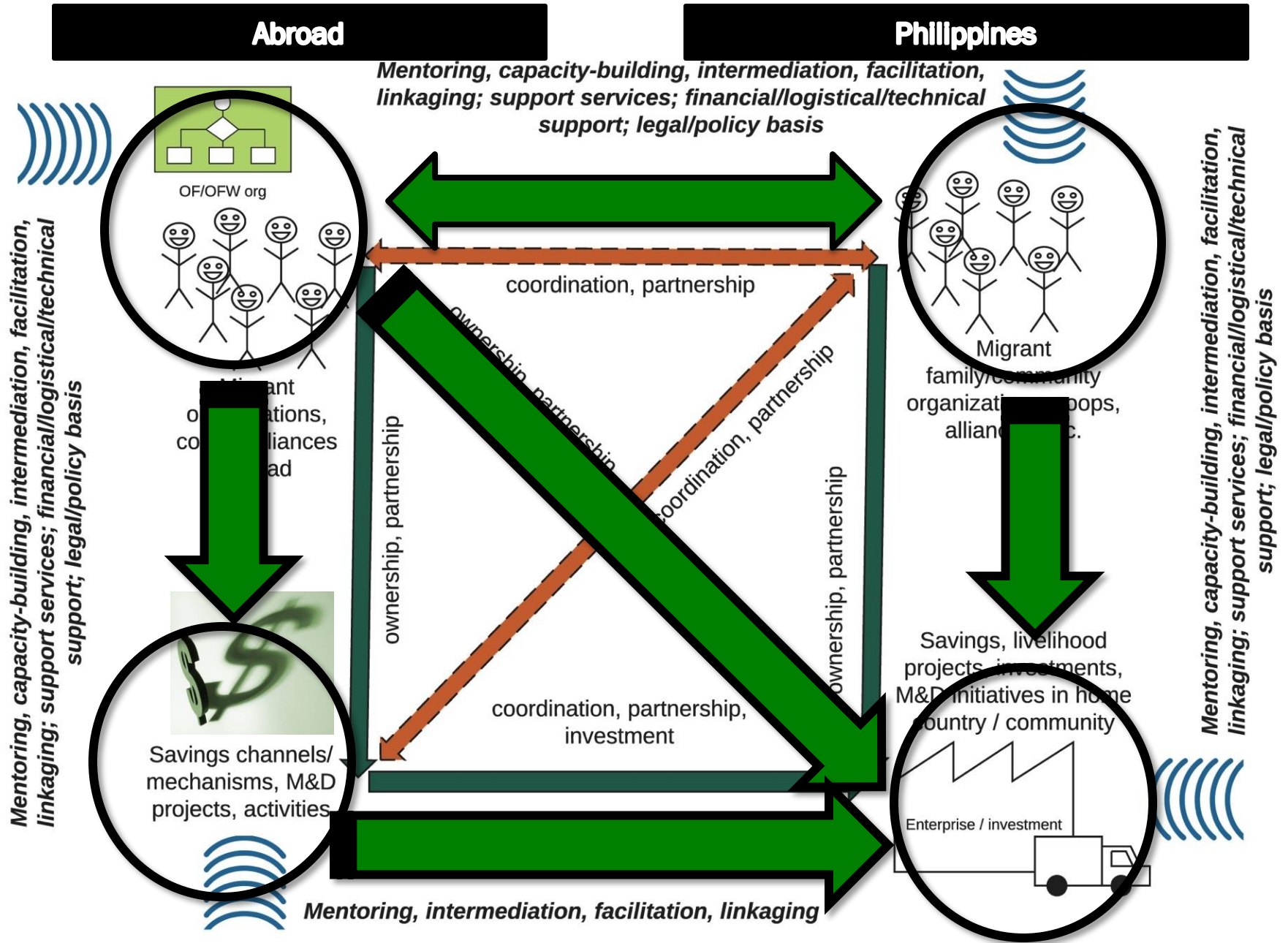


MCG held its 2nd General Assembly on 27-28 January 2017, Pototan, Iloilo; supported by JMDI.

***“Migrant Savings for Alternative Investments” (MSAI) strategy and
“Reintegration Program”***

***(initiated by the Asian Migrant Center/AMC
and Migrant Forum in Asia/MFA in 1994)***

4-WAY PARTNERSHIP ON MIGRANT SAVINGS & ALTERNATIVE INVESTMENTS



MSAI Strategy

- ▶ Ensure social protection for OFW/family (retirement, health insurance, provident savings) → protect the OFW/family from financial/personal emergencies (loss of job, health crisis, etc.)
- ▶ Build, accumulate, mobilize OFW/OF savings and assets while still working abroad → savings program, coops, acquire assets;
- ▶ Build savings/assets of their families back in the Philippines → savings programs, coops, acquire assets;
- ▶ Invest these assets in transformative livelihood, enterprises back in the home town/regions in Philippines → farms, food production, services (generate jobs, livelihood for migrant and community);

Building assets/savings, not training certificates

***Organizing OFW/OF “reintegration and savings groups” (RSGs) and cooperatives
abroad***

The main strategy is NOT “financial literacy” training, but the organizing of RSGs, coops and building their savings and assets (tools, real property, production equipment, etc.)



(Top) 1998, HK: Organizing of OFW savings groups in Hong Kong for MSAI;

(Right) 2004, HK: organizing of “reintegration and savings groups” (RSGs)

*Asset-building training, leadership, organization development training.



Organizing of OFW/OF coops, savings groups abroad



Hong Kong:

4th Annual
Members'
Meeting of the
Asian Migrants
Credit Union
(AMCU), 2012

AMCU is the first and only registered cooperative of/for migrants in Hong Kong. Majority of the members are Filipino domestic workers. It has over P2 million in migrants' savings as of 2013.

Building OF/OFW M&D groups, coops abroad



Nov 2015, HK: JMDI partners in HK (unions, cooperative and organizations of OFWs/migrant DWs), including groups from Bicol.

Building OF/OFW M&D groups, coops abroad



Singapore: coop-building, savings, reintegration efforts

Malaysia: Organizing of OFWs, Training of Trainers, and Financial Education Course



Organizing and capacity-building of OFW organizations abroad



Malaysia OFWs, MDWs;
organized by UNIMAD-
SENTRO

Photo: UNIMAD-SENTRO



Organizing and building OFW/OF/family organizations, networks in the **hometowns, regions in PH**

Building OF/OFW M&D networks (hometown-abroad): Western Visayas (MCG)



**Migrants Coordinating Group (MCG)-Western Visayas:
founded in November 2015 by 27 organizations from all
over WV and key countries in Asia**



**Capacitating
migrants on
Strategic
Planning, 28-29
Nov 2015,
JBLFMU, Iloilo
City**



Capacity-building: leadership, financial literacy, investments



Capacity-building workshop for MCG and migrant/family organizations in Iloilo & Guimaras (5-6 April 2016, Iloilo City). Organized by MDI-WV, LLPDC and CFO in partnership with MCG.

Capacity-building: leadership, financial literacy, investments



Capacity-building workshop for MCG and migrant/family organizations in Aklan (13-15 April 2016, Kalibo, Aklan). Organized by MDI-WV, LLPDC and CFO in partnership with MCG.

Diplomacy Training Program (Basic Orientation on Philippine Migration Issues and Realities)



***Diplomacy Training Program
(Basic Migrants Orientation
- Philippines); October 2016,
Iloilo City; with CMA, MFA;
10 modules.***

Building OF/OFW M&D networks (hometown-abroad): Bicol (Naga)



Naga: Network of OFW, OF and family organizations (PAMANA)

***JMDI process**

Building OF/OFW M&D networks (hometown-abroad): Bicol (region-wide)

**Legazpi:
Integrated
Bicol Migrants
(IBM) and
organization of
youth/children
of migrants**

***JMDI process**



***Self-representation, advocating for migrants'
agenda, and engaging with
LGUs and national authorities
on migrants' M&D needs, concerns***



Abroad: Engaging with Philippine embassies/POLO on MSAI / M&D needs, concerns

(Top) 1998, HK: engaging with Phil Consulate to promote MSAI, savings and unionization of migrants.

(Right) 2004, HK: Leaders' forum with Phil. Consulate in HK to promote MSAI.



Home regions: Engaging with LGUs; representing migrants in M&D bodies, decision-making



Sorsogon, May 2015 (JMDI process)

Submitting policy and action agenda on M&D: MCG submission to SCIMD (Region 6) – on registration of migrant organizations, coops

**MIGRANT FORUM IN ASIA
MIGRANTS COORDINATING GROUP-WESTERN VISAYAS
SENTRO NG MGA PROGRESIBO AT NAGKAKAISANG MANGGAGAWA**

23 December 2015

Assistant Director General Rosemarie Edillon
Chairperson
NEDA Sub-Committee on International Migration and Development
Philippines

A. Proposal

Amend pertinent laws/policies and prescribe procedures for the formal registration and recognition of OFW/OF organizations based abroad, as legal entities fully recognized under Philippine laws

A. Proposal*

MCG Strategic Policy and Action Agenda: Submitted to SCIMD, RDP Region 6, PDP 2017-2022 consultation

MIGRANTS COORDINATING GROUP-WESTERN VISAYAS

MCG STRATEGIC & PRIORITY ADVOCACY & ACTION AGENDA

Submitted to SCIMD Western Visayas for SCIMD FGD, 10 November 2016, Iloilo City

Submitted to National Consultation on Philippine Development Plan 2017-2022, 14-15 December 2016, Quezon City

Adopted by the MCG EC, 27 December 2016

Based on:

*Results of MFA-CMA-MCG Capacity-building and advocacy training (Diplomacy Training Program-Philippines), 20 October 2016, Iloilo City

*Joint policy submission by MCG-WV, MFA and SENTRO, submitted to JMDI and MDI-WV, 2016

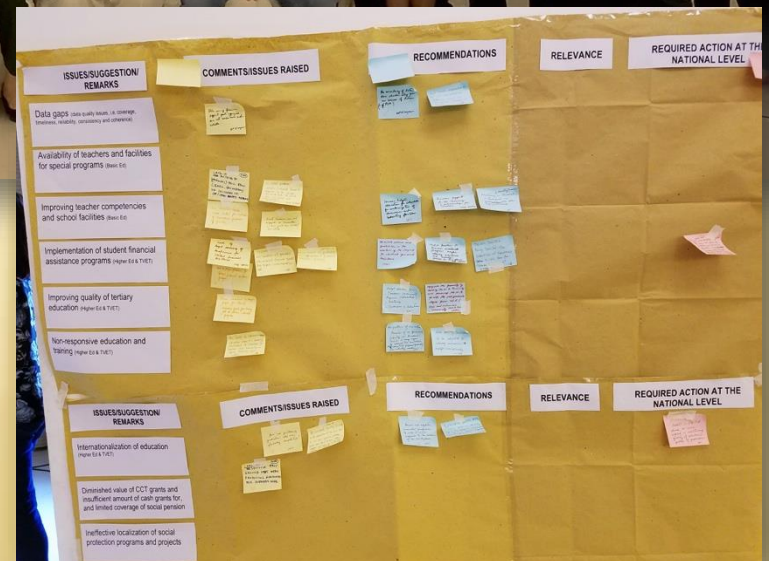
*MCG public forum and founding assembly action points, 25-29 November 2015.

Issue / Need / Challenge	Response strategies	Policy, legislative, action agenda	Major Intervention by the SCIMD	Responsible agency/ LGU/ actor
A. MIGRANTS' SUBSTANTIVE PARTICIPATION, REPRESENTATION				
1. Need for more effective representation and participation by WV migrants in policy/decision-making, and coordination/monitoring mechanisms in WV	<p>a. Advocate for additional migrant reps in SCIMD, particularly MCG rep (in addition to Signpost) – MCG can represent both migrants abroad and families in WV; MCG has accountability mechanism for reps both at the local and regional levels</p> <p>b. Advocate for migrants' representation and participation in inputting into the successor PDP, RDP and local development plans</p>	<p>*Appoint MCG representative in SCIMD</p> <p>*Appoint MCG member-org reps in M&D committee/body in all WV provinces, and relevant cities/municipalities</p> <p>*Include/ensure MCG representation/participation in meetings, discussions in WV where successor RDP, PDP are discussed;</p> <p>*Include/ensure migrants' representation (at least those</p>	<p>*Appointment of MCG rep/s at regional SCIMD;</p> <p>*Adoption of similar appointment process/procedure in local M&D committee/bodies</p> <p>*SCIMD invitation for MCG rep/s in meetings on successor RDP, PDP;</p> <p>*JMDI/SCIMD invitation for migrant organizations involved</p>	<p>*SCIMD</p> <p>*Relevant M&D committees, bodies at city/municipality, provincial levels in WV</p> <p>*MCG and respective MCG member-organizations at the local level</p> <p>SCIMD</p> <p>JMDI</p>

Representation and advocacy in regional development planning



Western Visayas Regional Consultation, November 2016, Iloilo City



Representation and advocacy in national development planning



PDP 2017-2022: National consultation, Dec 2016, QC

***Building multi-stakeholder consensus,
strategic agenda, partnerships on MSAI /
M&D needs, concerns***



Strategic M&D agenda by migrants, civil society, government partners

1st International Conference
on OFW Savings, Remittance
& Economic Potential, 2003,
Bohol

*Adopted 'Bohol Declaration'
and platform of action on
enhancing migrant savings,
alternative investments, key
role in development
processes.*

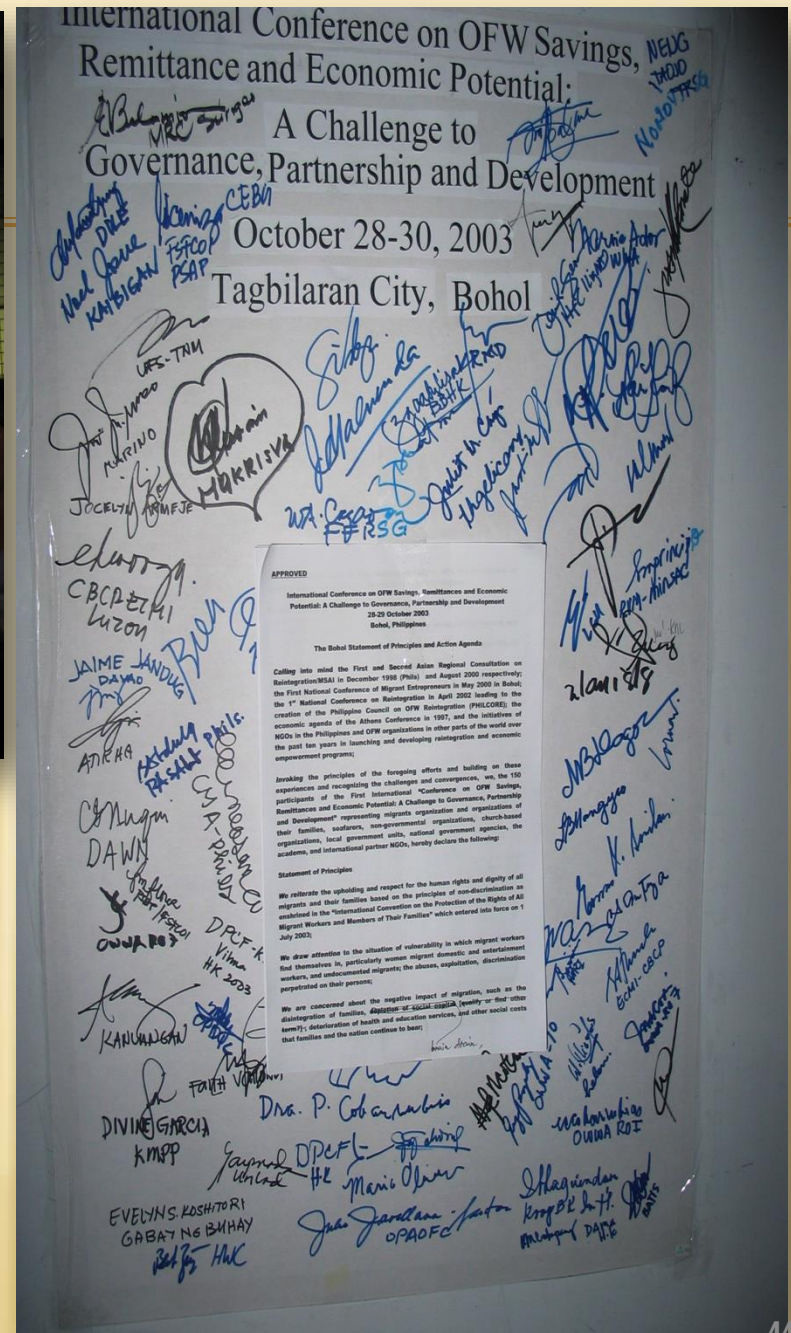


(c) Asian Migrant Centre, October 2003



2003 Bohol Declaration: recommended roles of key stakeholders in M&D:

- * migrants, families, communities;
- * advocates, support groups;
- * government (LGU, national);
- * private sector



1. For OFWs and their families:

- To organize themselves for self-empowerment;
- To take a central and active role in mobilizing savings and building investments back in the Philippines, that are geared towards reintegration and economic development; and
- To advocate for promotion of their rights and welfare, representation in policy-making, and support/assistance for their needs and concerns, especially in savings, investments, reintegration and economic development.

3. For national and local government institutions and embassies/missions abroad:

- To adopt and institutionalize, in consultation with OFWs and other stakeholders, a comprehensive national program on OFW savings, reintegration and economic development;
- To provide an enabling environment for OFWs and stakeholders to build savings and economic development initiatives;
- To upscale, replicate, and mainstream viable projects or initiatives on savings, social investment and economic development;
- For all relevant line agencies and embassies to provide coordinated, integrated, and efficient policies and procedures in assisting OFWs in all phases of migration consistent with international human rights standards; and
- To collaborate with OFWs and NGOs to mobilize migrants' savings and investments for development.

Building OF/OFW M&D partnerships with LGUs



HK: Linking migrants' coops, organizations to M&D programs in respective regions (Bicol, Western Visayas, etc.)

Engaging, lobbying local and national policy-makers, LGUs



Photo 13: Interface session between MCG and LGUs, government agencies in WV.

- MCG interface, 28 Nov 2015, Iloilo City: 36 representatives from MCG, LGUs in Western Visayas, LLPDC, JMDI, MDI-WV, CFO, etc.;



Photo 14: Commitment board -- MCG, LGU and line agency representatives affirm their commitment to build M&D partnerships and collaboration in WV.

- Committed to build collaboration and partnership between MCG, LGUs and local/national agencies on M&D in Western Visayas.

***Building OFW/OF/families livelihoods,
enterprises, savings, cooperatives,
reintegration projects in their **hometowns**,
regions in PH***

Building OFW investments in home towns: Bukidnon



FAMDEV Farm (Dalwangan, Bukidnon) – started in early 2000s; collectively owned by OFWs who used to work in Hong Kong; based on the strategy of “migrant savings for alternative investments” (MSAI).

Building OFW investments in home towns: Bohol



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(since
2008) – by
OFWs,
advocates
in Korea

Building local M&D groups, coops: seafarers (WV)



Western Visayas: coop of seafarers/families

Building local M&D groups, coops: WV migrants coop



Western Visayas: OFW, migrants & families coop

WV Migrants, OFW & Families Credit Coop

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**ARTICLES OF COOPERATION
OF
WESTERN VISAYAN MIGRANTS, OFW & FAMILIES CREDIT COOPERATIVE**

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS

We, the undersigned, of the Philippines, have voluntarily organized this Cooperative in accordance with the laws of the Republic of the Philippines.

**Article II
Type and Purposes**

That the type of this cooperative is credit cooperative and the purposes for which this Cooperative is organized are to engage in:

1. Savings and personal financial and remittance management program for members to help them reduce dependence on overseas work;
2. Lending and credit services;
3. Provident savings programs to help members and their families prepare for reintegration (permanent return of the OFW/migrant back in the Philippines), provision for retirement/social protection coverage, provision for education and skills upgrading, build capital/assets for livelihood/investments in the Philippines especially Western Visayas.

WV Migrants, OFW & Families Credit Coop

Article VII Area of Operation

That the membership of this Cooperative shall be open to all overseas Filipino workers (OFWs), Filipino migrants, their families and relatives (up to the third degree of consanguinity) who originate from Western Visayas (Panay, Guimaras and Negros Occidental).

International networking and advocacy on M&D

Solidarity-building, international networking in building migrants' savings, investments, and cooperatives

Promoting good practices on M&D (e.g. JMIDI initiatives) in the international forums

UN High Level Dialogue on M&D (2006, NY)



2006, New York
U.N. High Level Dialogue on
Migration & Development

**MFA, MRI gave oral
statements;*

**Advocated for people-
centered development; not
transfer burden of
financing development on
to migrants.*



2nd Global Forum on M&D (GFMD) – 2008, Manila

2008, Manila: 2nd Global Forum on Migration & Development (GFMD)



People's Global Action on Migration, Development & Human Rights (PGA) 2008

5th GFMD (2011, Geneva)



2011, Geneva,
Switzerland

*5th GFMD

*2011 PGA



3rd Global Mayoral Forum (2016, Quezon City)



September
2016,
Quezon City
– 3rd Global
Mayoral
Forum



UN Global Compact on Migration (2nd thematic session) – 22-23 May 2017, NY

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English

*Addressing drivers
of migration –
sustainable
development &
poverty
eradication*

*As civil society expert,
discussed with UN
member-countries the
M&D perspectives of
MFA, and initiatives of
MCG and JMDI in the
Philippines*



Thank you!

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