

Globalization, Gender, Employment, and Social Policy: Comparing The Philippine and Japanese Experiences*

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Abstract

The largely negative effects wrought by globalization have been magnified in the late 1990s by the Asian crisis, which saw many women in the affected countries losing their jobs, facing more insecurity in various forms of irregular work, trying to make do in the unprotected informal economy, and roaming foreign lands to earn a living for themselves and their families. Women and men are affected differently; a gender perspective shows how this is so particularly in the field of employment. Scarce economic opportunities at home drive Filipino women and men towards overseas work at a rate of about 2,400 a day. By the late 1990s, most of the new hires had been women who go abroad mainly as domestic helpers, care givers and entertainers, thereby giving substance to what has been called feminization of migration. The exodus is explained by the usual push factors: poverty, unemployment, family responsibilities, failed relationships, as well as pull factors such as prospects of much higher incomes, better standards of living, and possibilities of permanent residence through marriage. The migration of Filipino women to Japan also has to do with gender dynamics which has seen more and more Japanese women marrying late, refusing to have children or take on 3-D (dirty, demanding, demeaning) jobs that include entertaining and sexually servicing Japanese men. Through the years, Filipino women have learned how to struggle and adjust within Japanese culture, manifesting stronger indicators of agency and resilience. A major source of strength is the existence of a strong support network in both Japan and the Philippines, which has been there since the late 1980s.

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Globalization has been a mighty force enveloping much of the world, bringing about sweeping changes in the lives of working women in both North and South. This has been a common theme in documents produced in the last decade not only by trade unions, women's organizations and other sections of civil society but also by various agencies of the United Nations (particularly UNDP, ILO, UNIFEM, and ESCAP). The largely negative effects wrought by globalization have been magnified in the late 1990s by the Asian crisis, which saw many women in the affected countries losing their jobs, facing more insecurity in various forms of irregular work, trying to make do in the unprotected informal economy, and roaming foreign lands to earn a living for themselves and their families.

In Japan in particular, the effects of globalization have been mostly in the field of employment: major bankruptcies leading to "a wave of restructuring" which displaced many full-time workers, more relocation of production to sites overseas where wages are lower, decreased membership and power of unions, and more part-time workers who now comprise half of working women (Japan Women's Watch 2004: 41). Under increased global competition, employers have put a premium on worker efficiency, cutting down the number of regular employees, and increasingly relying on a "pool of more flexible workers always at hand." The effect of such a situation is "to compel a greater number of women to work as irregular workers" (Hiroki 2002: 1). They endure low pay, do not take paid leaves, have no social protection (social insurance, old age pension, medical care, unemployment allowance), enjoy few if any of the benefits (housing, paid leave for weddings, funerals and other occasions, use of company recreational facilities), and suffer increasing job insecurity (Hiroki 1-2).

In contrast to Japan, the Philippines, a country of 84 million people, has been in crisis for decades, as a result of flawed economic policies associated with globalization. The crisis reached a high point towards the end of 2004, when hunger stalked one out of seven households. Poverty incidence rose in recent years to more than one-third of the population and almost half of the rural population (47%). Unemployment, at almost 11% in October 2004, affects almost four million people, and under-

employment, at almost 17%, is the lot of more than six million Filipinos (NSO 2005). The value of our currency fell by 60% from PhP26.38 to about PhP43 to the dollar in 1997, during the height of the Asian crisis, and has descended to as low as PhP56 to the dollar in recent months; our foreign debt has ballooned to US\$57.395 billion, and our government is now gripped by a fiscal crisis which if not addressed will lead to bankruptcy.

Under such circumstances, the state cannot afford to guarantee and take care of the basic needs of its citizenry. Government spending on education, health, housing, and other social services has been going down as a result of austerity measures and the need to allocate more and more of the budget to debt service—33% for 2005. Social security is limited mostly to a minority—government and formal sector workers who are entitled to death, sickness, disability, old age, maternity and other benefits, but not to allowances during periods of unemployment. The Philippine Health Insurance Corporation, although aspiring for universal coverage, can hardly cover the informal workers and other working poor. And since jobs are disappearing, and incomes are falling or at best irregular, many cannot sustain their contributions to formal social protection mechanisms.

In contrast to the Philippines, Japan, being a rich country, seems to have a highly developed social welfare system. There is a national health insurance system with widespread coverage. There are allowances for the unemployed. There are public health services for expectant mothers, new mothers, and their babies. There is child care leave for both parents (although not even one percent of fathers take this leave). (JAWW 2004: 49). There is a pension system (although the system is disadvantageous to women who generally earn less and for a shorter period of time than men). There are child care allowances for single parents and low-income families. However, some of these gains in social welfare are being eroded; for example, child support allowances for single mothers are now lower because of budgetary deficits (JAWW 2004: 42).

The problems of working women in the Philippines are aggravated by the lack of childcare facilities that can look after their children during the hours they are at work. What are available in most villages are govern-

ment-run day care centers which provide only a few hours of care, hardly enough to allow mothers with small children to work. Thus, women workers are forced to hire domestic helpers, and if they cannot do so, they have no recourse but to send their children off to their parents in the provinces while they work. In Japan, the trend is towards more private day-care facilities and reduced child-care personnel (or more part-timers), resulting in insufficient care and in worrisome accidents (Ibid).

In the Philippines, rising prices of basic utilities (as a result of the deregulation of the oil industry, privatization of water, etc.), transportation, food, and other basic necessities, force women to work harder, make do with less, in order to save more cash and thereby extend the meager family budget. Caring for the young, for the sick, and for the old fall more on their shoulders, as government facilities can no longer provide this for free or at minimal cost. Even while women and girls carry the burden of the world, men and boys are not forced to work as hard. Reproductive work to maintain home and family remains the domain of females; males, even if unemployed, do not have the same obligation. Men also retain their traditional entitlements to cigarettes and alcohol despite the belt-tightening measures in most families on account of the crisis, while women and children make do with less of everything.

Globalization, Gender and Changing Employment Patterns

Given the continuing crisis situation in the Philippines, which can be traced to globalization, in what ways are women and men affected differently? A gender and development (GAD) perspective sharpens our appreciation of the differentiated impact of globalization on employment. Such a perspective posits that there are unequal relations between men and women which are embedded in economic, political, and social structures. Men and women have different roles and responsibilities which tend to place a higher burden on working women since they are in charge of unpaid and unvalued reproductive work to maintain and sustain their families. At the same time, they are engaged in productive work to earn an income which is usually considered just supplemental to that of the male

breadwinner. Because of their overwork, lack of time, and lack of opportunities to develop their potentials, capabilities, and leadership qualities, many women are hampered in participating in political and social affairs. They are usually considered as passive beneficiaries of, rather than active contributors to development initiatives. Their voices are seldom heard when macro-economic policies and programs which can affect them negatively are formulated and implemented. Dominant development models also tend to perpetuate and exacerbate unequal gender relations by remaining blind to the disadvantages women work under, and therefore failing to address their increasing vulnerabilities under globalization.

Three-fourths of the Philippine poor are in the countryside, many of them rural women. Rural poverty has structural causes, principally the maldistribution of land. The government's agrarian reform program is progressing very slowly, and has been hounded by massive conversions of thousands of hectares of agricultural land into golf courses, resorts, industrial parks, etc.—a trend associated with globalization. With GATT, staple crops are out; high value crops are in. Thus, women producers in rice and corn areas are at risk, especially with the increasing importation of such staples in direct competition with local farm produce. Also at risk because of cheaper imports are those in sugar, garlic, onion, pork, and poultry production. The long-range implication of this is on food security (and ultimately on women as the principal food providers within the family), as the country becomes more and more dependent on imports to feed its people, while allowing its food production base to narrow and wither due to lack of support. Due to the worsening conditions in Philippine agriculture, rural women are forced to migrate to the cities or to other lands for employment opportunities.

Overall, Filipino women are entering the labor force in increasing numbers because of the need to contribute to family income under conditions of hardship and also due to opportunities opened up in certain sectors of the economy with globalization. About 80% of more than 900,000 workers in 62 economic or export processing zones are women, especially in the electronics industry which is responsible for almost three fourths of Philippine exports. In this sense, it can be said that our country's

trade is highly dependent on cheap, flexible female labor consigned to repetitive, monotonous jobs requiring manual dexterity. Such labor is also mostly contractual and unorganized, since export processing zones are generally union-free. In these zones, 40% of investors from 1995-2003 are Japanese firms (de Lima 2004). Many women workers therefore have no job security, no sustained social protection, and are vulnerable to maltreatment, sexual harassment, and occupational health and safety hazards.

Flexibilization and contractualization have taken their toll on unions, which are weak in terms of bargaining power. The 2,842 estimated number of Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs) as of 2003 covered only 556,000 workers, just 14% of the 3.96 million union members, and not even two percent of the total employed labor force of 30.1 million. (Leogardo 2004). Unions have generally been unable to protect organized workers from displacement due to downsizing, and to reach out to the legions of part-time, contractual, casual, and other non-regular workers. Employers and most unions have remained gender-blind, failing to institute policies and programs that are geared to the specific needs of women.

Furthermore, there is a disturbing decline in the participation of women in trade unions. In 1996, they constituted 59.6% of union membership. In 2000, the percentage declined to 34.2. Women's share of union leadership also decreased from 35% in 1998 to 25.6% in 2000 (NCRFW 1998; current website). Reasons for the general decline include the many lay-offs of unionized women workers in the garments and other women-dominated industries, and the more intense economic pressures coupled with domestic responsibilities that prevent women from being active in unions.

The fastest growing subsector of the service industry is the call center phenomenon, which has in recent years generated many "high-value" but short-term jobs (estimated at 40,000 this year) for young, English-speaking women who work night shifts at great expense to their health, family, and social life. Foreign companies save a lot by transferring such jobs to the Philippines because of the wage differential—in the US, the average call center employee gets \$4,000 a month, while in the Philippines, the rate ranges from \$300 to \$400 (Ofreneo 2004).

But in vulnerable industries like garments, which is already anticipating a disaster with the termination of the Multi-Fiber Arrangement this year, tens of thousands of women workers have already lost their jobs. Cheap imports, smuggled items, and the burgeoning trade in second-hand clothing are fast displacing even those working in enterprises geared to the local market. The same may be said of workers in the local shoe industry. The problem here is that there is hardly any "safety net" to catch the many women falling into economic uncertainty.

Women and Informal Work

More Filipino women are absorbed in the informal economy, since they are willing to accept low-quality employment in order to ensure family survival. One estimate placed informal sector workers at 20 million, 65% of total employed, compared to formal sector workers who numbered only 5.7 million, comprising 17% of total employed in 2003 (Leogardo 2004).

More than half of all employed women are in the informal sector: in homebased work, vending and retailing, laundry work, domestic service, beauty culture, vegetable and animal raising, etc. Work in this sector is invisible, unrecognized, unregulated, unprotected, low skilled, and lowly paid. Those under subcontracting are suffering a decline in orders due to intense global competition and the shift to higher technology (e.g., computer-aided machines for embroidery that used to be done by homebased workers). Micro-entrepreneurs are complaining of lack of capital, declining demand, and competition from cheaper imports. Most suffer from lack of access to social protection and marginalization in terms of representation and participation in governance. The gender issues they articulate are: multiple roles in productive and reproductive work; domestic violence; unequal remuneration of work; poor working conditions, occupational health and safety; and lack of maternal and health care.

Organizing informal workers in the Philippines commenced in the late 1980s, with the founding of PATAMABA, then concentrating on homebased workers. PATAMABA had a membership of 14,138 in 34

provinces as of end of 2003 in its formal registry. In addition, the PATAMABA youth sector has been actively recruiting from among their ranks, and has reported a membership of at least 2,000. PATAMABA is a people's organization (meaning it is membership-based) and its leaders are elected at every level—from the barangay or village, to the municipal, provincial, regional, and national. It has a National Council elected every three years during a national congress, and an Executive Committee based in Metro Manila, which manages its day-to-day operations.

PATAMABA is part of a subregional network called Homenet Southeast Asia, which emerged from the technical cooperation project of the ILO-DANIDA in the late eighties and has served as a focal point for national HomeNets in Thailand, Philippines, and Indonesia.

Homenet Southeast Asia has sustained sub regional, regional, and global networking despite limited funds, holding a sub regional workshop on sharing mapping research results, launching a newsmagazine as well as a website, and commencing expansion work in Laos. Membership in all the national Homenets has increased substantially, and in the Philippine case, has expanded to other workers in the informal economy. There was numerous capability building activities for home workers in the areas of leadership, entrepreneurship development, occupational safety and health, computer connectivity, etc. which have been conducted in the three countries. There have been increasing visibility and recognition through the mapping project in Indonesia; policy and implementation advances in terms of health insurance and occupational safety and health in Thailand; and progress in terms of informal workers' representation, access to resources, social protection coverage, and local government initiatives in the Philippine case.

Although homeworkers' groups in the subregion have made significant strides towards greater visibility and a better policy environment, their own organizations and networks are in need of further strengthening and consolidation. The onslaughts of globalization have eroded gains in group formation as members lose their jobs, migrate to other areas, or have become too occupied with survival needs to attend to organizational concerns. Under such circumstances, it is difficult to expect members to

sustain their groups through their financial contributions; homeworkers' organizations and networks have therefore had to rely mainly on external assistance to continue their work. This assistance has however been inadequate to cover existing and evolving needs.

The unprecedented growth of the informal economy worldwide has given birth to a global movement to redefine the concept "worker" away from very narrow notions associated with formality, regularity, and clear employer-employee relations which refer only to a shrinking male minority of working people in the world. A much more inclusive definition of worker is "anyone who lives by selling his or her capacity to work, either for wages or for other forms of income" (Gallin 2002: 1). Such a definition covers the majority of workers in the world who work in the informal economy, or all those who have unprotected and unregulated work. This means "all work in informal enterprises as well as informal jobs (jobs that pay no benefits or provide no social protection), thus including the *self-employed* in informal enterprises (for example home-based workers or street vendors) and *paid workers* in informal jobs (for example casual workers without fixed employers, most domestic workers, even factory workers in unregulated and unprotected work)" (Ibid.).

The informal economy has been growing in both North and South, due to the combined effects of liberalization, deregulation, and privatization which altogether drove out millions of workers from the formal economy (24 million, according to the ILO, in East Asia alone in the aftermath of the Asian financial crisis, in itself a consequence of the liberalization and deregulation of financial markets culminating in the successive domino-like devaluation of Asian currencies). At the same time, as exemplified by the production or value chains spearheaded by transnational corporations particularly in the garments industry, the informal economy serves as the bottom end of the production ladder, providing cheap and unprotected labor vulnerable to exploitation while management saves on costs by retaining a small core of permanent and regular workers.

The informal economy is also highly gendered, consisting mostly of women who were among the first to be displaced from formal work as globalization progressed. But women have also been the mainstay of the

informal sector even before the onslaughts of globalization since informal work (e.g., homebased work) is compatible with their reproductive work (child care, domestic chores), and since their status as secondary or supplemental earners often deprive them of opportunities to find formal employment.

The experience regarding irregular and informal work, although exhibiting certain commonalities, has also manifested different features in Japan and in Southeast Asia. The responses and initiatives of informal workers, particularly homebased workers, have also been separate and distinct.

In Japan, the concept of informal work has not been officially accepted and therefore, the number of informal workers as such has not been tracked in labor statistics. But just the same, the growth of informal work is indicated by the increasing number of “irregular workers,” including part-time workers, dispatched workers, temporary workers, contract workers, workers on loan and so on” (Hiroki: 1).

The number of home business workers, estimated before at 330,000 in manufacturing industries (Hiroki 2002) has, however, exhibited a decreasing trend, and was pegged at 257,000 in 2002, 92% of them women. Full-time workers among them number only 5%, meaning that most do homebased work only as a side job. An increasing trend is telehomework: about 200,000 use information and communication technology (ICT) to do work at home, 70% of them women (JAWW 2004: 54). The same is true for other “women with ambiguous work status:” those who work at SOHO (small office, home office) and as free lancers. “Sometimes, they work as low-wage part-time employees and the moment they are dismissed, they go back to their ‘self-employed’ jobs” (Hiroki 2002: 4).

In 1995, the Labor Ministry figures reported a total of 657,300 homeworkers, 93.4% of them side workers, mainly housewives. In the same year, a National Conference of Homeworkers was held in Tokyo under the auspices of the Tokyo-based All-Japan Federation of Homeworkers’ Unions (Kanai-soren). This was held in order to campaign for the then draft Convention on Homework (which saw approval in the

ILO Conference in the same year as ILO Convention 177). The Convention sought to provide homeworkers the same rights and privileges as those who worked in factories and offices, which Kanai-Soren pointed out as better than the Industrial Homeworker Act passed in 1970 in Japan which considered homeworkers only as self-employed workers. Kanai-Soren itself was founded in 1960 among workers producing boots, shoes, sandals, and thongs, many of whom are men. In places outside Tokyo, homeworkers have formed community-based associations which act as subcontractors, negotiate contracts with employers, take responsibility for quality control, and deliver the orders.

In Japan, trade unionism has suffered a major decline in membership through the years. In 2001, the organization rate of labor unions was just over a fifth; in terms of gender, women comprised only 27.5% of total members. Only 2.7% of part-timers, 89% of whom are women, have unions (JAWW:2004:59). Such a situation does not augur well for the protection and promotion of working women's rights under conditions of increasing vulnerability and insecurity.

Feminization of Philippine Migration: Japan as Destination

Scarce economic opportunities at home drive Filipino women and men towards overseas work at a rate of about 2,400 a day. By the late 1990s, most of the new hires had been women who go abroad mainly as domestic helpers, care givers, and entertainers, thereby giving substance to what has been called feminization of migration. Percentage of women among new hires progressively increased from 54% in 1996 to 69% in 2002. (POEA website). They take on jobs that are gendered, 3D (dirty, demeaning, dangerous), or SALEP (shunned by all locals except the very poor) in countries where their counterparts refuse to work in karaoke bars (as in Japan), or as in Hong Kong or Singapore, where women now have paid jobs and thereby leave their homes to women of lower station to run.

Even if their contracts are terminated, they stay on as illegal or undocumented workers which make them even more vulnerable to harass-

ment and maltreatment. Even if OFWs do decide to come home, appropriate and sustainable reintegration programs for them hardly exist. A major problem is that there are no existing government services or comprehensive social security packages to assist returning OFWs who have taken ill abroad, especially for women survivors of violence and abuse. What is more alarming is that trafficking in women, now a problem of major proportions is embedded in migratory flows.

Despite the enormity of the problems encountered by those working abroad, the state encourages such migration, because increasing remittances of overseas Filipino workers, reaching \$7.739 billion in 2003, comprise one of the few bright spots in the economic picture.

The migration of Filipino women to Japan also has to do with gender dynamics which has seen more and more Japanese women marrying late, refusing to have children, or take on 3-D jobs that include entertaining and sexually servicing Japanese men. Migrant women fulfill the function of ensuring the pleasure, relaxation, and satisfaction of Japanese male employees who by custom go to the bars after work to unwind. The Japanese entertainment industry is huge, with gross annual earnings estimated at between four and ten trillion yen or US \$33-84 billion. (Cameron 2003:4, quoting *The Asian Wall Street Journal* of November 2000 and the *Financial Times* of February 2003). The entertainment industry includes thousands of bars, not all of which provide a venue for prostitution. However, embedded within it is the sex industry. Accordingly, "Japan has the largest sex market for Asian women, with over 150,000 non-Japanese women involved, mainly from Thailand and the Philippines" (Cameron 2003:4, quoting the IOM bulletin of July 1999).

A disturbing dimension of increasing international migration is the globalization of the sex trade. Trafficking in women and girls, primarily for purposes of prostitution, has been described by UN Secretary General Kofi Annan as a phenomenon of epic proportions, affecting millions all over the world. It involves an intricate web which stretches across borders and continents. Marketing of women as commodities has become more rampant. Cases of trafficking in Filipino

women have been reported in Japan (specifically in relation to the Yakuza crime syndicate), Australia, Malaysia, Belgium and elsewhere. In the first two years of the Asian crisis (1997-98), 143,611 Filipino women went abroad ostensibly to join their fiances. Even the Internet is being used to advertise Filipino "mail-order brides." Many of them might have wound up in prostitution houses controlled by international syndicates.

Most Filipinas enter Japan with entertainment visas but together with trafficked women from Columbia, Thailand, China, and Taiwan, they "are often eventually absorbed into the sex industry" (JAWW 2004: 7). Many of them wind up becoming partners of Japanese men, but the latter do not always acknowledge paternity. These make the women and their children "illegal immigrants" subject to deportation. Their lives become doubly difficult, because they cannot earn while saddled with child care, and they cannot afford child care because they have no jobs (Ibid.). They are also fearful of leaving their Japanese partners because of their economic dependence, even enduring domestic violence as a consequence.

Migration of Filipinas to Japan has increased a lot in the new millennium. In the 1990s, the annual figure was less than 40,000. From 2000 up to now, the legally deployed has been pegged at 60,000-70,000 annually. Estimated number of Filipinas in Japan is now at 180,000, around 31,000 of them overstaying. Attempts by the Philippine government to limit and screen the number of Filipinas going to Japan by setting minimum age requirements have had no effect. In the early 1990s, after the sensational killing of Filipina migrant Maricris Sioson through multiple stab wounds and traumatic head injuries in Japan hit the headlines, the age requirement was pegged at 23; this was later lowered to 21 in the late 1990s, and to 18 in 2001, as a realistic adjustment to the continued flow of very young women to Japan, despite the restrictions, through such means as the falsification of identifying documents.

The exodus is explained by the usual push factors: poverty (for more than one-third of the population, unemployment (15% for

women, in most years 3 points higher than men's), family responsibilities, failed relationships, as well as pull factors such as prospects of much higher incomes (200,000 yen is at least 10 times the average earnings in the Philippines), better standards of living in a developed country like Japan, and possibilities of permanent residence through marriage. No wonder figures show that 60,000 Filipinas are already legally married to Japanese men (there is as of yet no estimate of those just living in). Such unions have resulted in the birth of *Japinoys*, children of mixed parentage, many of whom are not recognized or supported by their fathers (Anolin 2004).

The treatment of Filipino women and their children in Japan is aggravated by racism and discrimination. They suffer not only from the fact that they are foreigners in a society which tends to exclude non-Japanese but also from the stigma of identification with the sex industry. Many *Japinoys* are not entered into the Japanese family registry, cannot gain nationality, and therefore are not eligible for health and other social services. Their mothers are reluctant to send them to Japanese schools, for fear of being reported to immigration authorities and therefore, of eventual deportation. Those children who enter school face teasing and bullying by their schoolmates (Villalba 2000: 3).

The Japanese government will soon implement an old immigration rule requiring two year' schooling or work experience for Filipino overseas performing artists (OPAs) intending to work in Japan. This is expected to lead to the displacement of thousands of Filipino women dependent on the Japanese entertainment industry. Thus, the Philippine government is calling for a five-year moratorium on the rule, supported by the recruiters and many of their women recruits who took to the streets to protest against the rule. The stand of feminist organizations like Batis Women's Center, however, is to affirm the rule as "a step in the right direction" since it will set higher standards for the quality of entertainers entering Japan. However, it is not enough, since "the possession of professional entertainment skills alone will not protect Filipina entertainers from the institutionalized labor and sexual abuse and exploitation in Japan's adult

entertainment industry if the existing system and sub-culture remain unchanged." As described by Batis:

... the reality of the work that awaits Filipino women is one that includes not only singing and dancing, which they were trained for and their skills assessed on back in the Philippines through the government's certification program, but a host of other responsibilities that cater to the demands of male customers in Japan such as sitting down with the customers where the women are within arm's length of the customer's groping hands and other forms of sexual advances, enticing customers to order drinks to meet the quota set by the entertainment establishment for the entertainers as a way to bring in business, going out on a weekly quota of dohan (where male customers pay the club a certain amount of money so that they can meet the entertainers outside the club's premises on a date) again imposed by the club to once again bring in business (Batis 2005).

Batis added that the new immigration rule serves as a wake-up call on the erratic nature of the overseas labor market, highlighting the folly of "over-reliance on overseas employment" and the urgent need for "the creation of gainful local employment opportunities for our people" (Batis 2005).

Cross-Border Solidarity Under Globalization

Through the years, Filipino women have learned how to struggle and adjust within Japanese culture, helping out the newer migrants when they come in. Whereas before, they have been perceived purely as victims without means to resist, today they are manifesting stronger indicators of agency and resilience. A major source of strength is the existence of a strong support network in both Japan and the Philippines which has been there since the late 1980s.

There is a Solidarity Network with Migrants in Japan (SMJ), which has about 90 organizations in its roster. It was founded to protect and advocate for the rights of migrant people, promote cooperation and build a network composed of all migrant support groups. Among these are women's NGOs, shelters for the abused and the displaced, Church-based

groups, trade unions, etc. which also draw on the services of lawyers, doctors, teachers, counselors, and researchers. Some of the older and more active ones on Philippine concerns are the women's shelter HELP (House of Emergency for Love and Peace) which provides counseling; Kapatiran, which runs hotline services to assist Filipino clients in undergoing legal procedures; and Kalabaw-No-Kai, which gives counseling on labor and living conditions together with trade unions such as the Edogawa Union. The Church-based groups have also been very helpful from the very beginning, since Filipinos naturally congregate in churches on Sundays to attend mass and other services. Among them are the Catholic Commission of Japan for Migrants, Refugees and People on the Move; United Church of Christ in Japan, and the National Christian Liaison Council for Foreign Registration.

But perhaps, the most visible example of Japanese-Filipino solidarity is that focusing on the welfare of the *Japinoys*. The JFC (Japanese Filipino Children) Network, founded in 1994 and based in Tokyo, provides "paralegal assistance for paternal recognition, child support, acquisition of Japanese nationality, mediation/law suit for divorce, special permission for residence; father-locating; Japanese lessons for JFC mother; tutorial services for JFC, study tour to the Philippines; and quarterly newsletter." It has a Manila branch called *Maligaya House*, established in 1998, which does case registration and management; psycho-social workshops for JFC and mothers/caregivers; and Japanese lessons for JFCs.

There are other Philippine-based NGOs which have focused on the problems mainly of *Japinoys* who are trying to trace their Japanese fathers for recognition and support. Among them is the Development Action for Women Network (DAWN), founded in 1996. The children it assists perform in musical plays that are staged in various prefectures of Japan in order to dramatize their issues and facilitate meetings with Japanese fathers. DAWN, though, has a much broader agenda in that it also provides social services to distressed Filipino migrants and their Japanese-Filipino children; prepares women clients

for alternative livelihood; conducts research and advocacy; and comes out with publications.

By far the oldest NGO catering to Filipino migrants to Japan and their children is the Batis Center for Women, founded in 1989 through the interaction of the division of family ministry of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines and the Japanese women's NGO HELP. Batis has four programs: social case management; information, education, and research; women and empowerment (focusing on raising awareness towards social transformation); and children and youth development (through workshops, theater, sports festivals, etc.). Lately, it has also conducted fora on sexuality for *Japinoys*, many of whom are already in their teen years. The ten percent success rate of Batis for accessing child support from Japanese fathers for their children, after years of case management, has not been encouraging (Anolin, 2004).

Batis has been instrumental in assisting Filipino women who have returned from Japan to form their own independent organization. AWARE (Association of Women in Action for Rights and Empowerment) was founded in 1996 and went through the ups and downs of organizational life through its eight years of existence. It has lately reorganized and held a General Assembly. AWARE is engaged in organizing, education and training, networking and advocacy. It is run by former entertainers.

Aside from the abovementioned organizations founded purposely to cater to Filipino migrants to Japan, there are women NGOs serving migrants to any country who have experienced physical, mental, and emotional abuse while abroad. An example is Kanlungan Center which provides counseling services, crisis intervention, and shelter for the severely affected.

Over the long run, however, the solution to migration is to enable migrants and their families to make a decent living in the Philippines. Unlad Kabayan, which began in 1994, is experimenting with savings mobilization programs aimed at investing migrant earnings in productive endeavors in their own communities, thus creating jobs not only for migrants when they reintegrate but also for others whom they may employ.

The Need for Further Advocacy

In the meanwhile, much still has to be done to improve the conditions of Filipino migrants in Japan, and enable them to realize their rights while empowering themselves. The policy and regulatory environment needs to be more migrant-friendly, and Japan itself must make the transition towards a multi-cultural and multi-ethnic society. General recommendations toward this end include the following: 1) ratification by Japan of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families; 2) enactment of comprehensive laws against trafficking, against all forms of ethnic or racial discrimination, and for the fundamental human rights of foreign nationals; and 3) measures providing equal treatment of domestic and foreign workers.

To ensure migrant women's rights, the SMJ has specific recommendations. (See Appendix A for full text.) Regarding trafficking in women and controlled prostitution in the sex industry, it puts a heavy responsibility on the Japanese government to investigate the problem, encourage trafficked women and children to redress their grievances, expose and punish offenders, and care for the victims/survivors by tying up with supporting NGOs. Regarding the rights of women migrant workers in the context of their communities, the SMJ insists that they be covered by protective labor laws, and that they be provided with information, cultural, medical, reproductive health, and other social services. The SMJ also recommends that those who are victims of domestic violence shall be covered by Japanese law on the matter, that they should be assisted and cared for irrespective of immigration status, with the participation of NGOs to be subsidized by government.

Over and beyond these specific concerns is the need to focus on the reeducation of Japanese men, who account for the demand side of the sex industry, and who become unaccountable fathers of children of mixed parentage. Thus, in stating that the new immigration rule is not enough, Batis Center for Women called on the Japanese government to also "take steps to address the demand side of the problem and to penalize traffickers, illegal recruiters, and entertainment estab-

lishments that directly deal with individuals and groups that victimize Filipina entertainers. "This is where the women's movements in both Philippines and Japan can intersect, as they did in the early 1980s during the campaign against Japanese sex tours in Manila and other major cities of Southeast Asia (Pineda Ofreneo and Ofreneo, 1998: 103). Patriarchal structures and gender dynamics which lie at the root of prostitution, trafficking, and irresponsible fatherhood possible need to be problematized and addressed.

In sum, Filipino working women, and to a lesser degree, Japanese working women, have become more vulnerable to risks due to changing employment patterns and less government protection and services due to the onslaughts of globalization. However, the revolution in communication technology which ushered in globalization also provides cross-border solidarity and hope, as vulnerable groups all over the world seeing themselves in same disadvantaged position find it easier to exchange information and forge cooperation to correct a patently unequal and morally unacceptable situation.

The gains of the past 15 years or so are well-recognized but the gaps and challenges that remain call for an all-sided reflection and concerted action across borders. Change makers in both Japan and the Philippines, in both North and South, need to be ready for the long haul. Policy advances are never achieved overnight, and the negative effects of globalization can only be undone in a comprehensive and thoroughgoing manner by forces which think and act not only locally but also globally.

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Appendix A.

3-1 Trafficking in women and controlled prostitution in the sex industry

- 3-1-1 The Japanese government shall investigate the actual conditions of trafficking in foreign women and children, and controlled prostitution.
- 3-1-2 The Japanese government shall take appropriate measures to redress the human rights of the women and children victimized by human trafficking and controlled prostitution, prevent recurrence of similar cases and eliminate all forms of human trafficking and controlled prostitution.
- 3-1-3 Establish a system aiming at encouraging the women and children victimized by human trafficking and controlled prostitution to charge, and redress their rights.
- 3-1-4 Take appropriate measures to effectively expose and punish offenders and offending organizations including brokers.
- 3-1-5 Remove from governmental offices in charge of redressing such victims the restraints imposed upon them by the Immigration Control Law which might interfere with their duties.
- 3-1-6 Reinforce tie-ups with domestic supporting NGOs and those in the countries from where such victims are, and extend supporting activities for the rescue and protection of victimized women and children.
- 3-1-7 Provide victimized women and children with social, medical and psychological care and re-integration programs in Japan.

3-2 Rights proper to the migrant female worker

- 3-2-1 Make efforts in the labor administration to widen the area where female migrant workers can work, and to assure them their human rights.
- 3-2-2 Most of female migrant workers who enter Japan with an entertainer visa shall be treated as workers in the labor supervisory administration since they are employed as a matter of fact in the service trade as stipulated in the Act to Control Businesses which may Affect Public Morals. The labor supervisory administration shall, in addition, take sufficient measures to protect them and their rights in accordance with the related labor laws. The rights of such female migrant workers who work substantially in the service trade shall be redressed as such, regardless of sta-

tus of residence including temporary stay and entertainer according to the Immigration Control Law. (See 2-1-10.)

- 3-2-3 Give more guidance to the employer who employs female migrant workers to follow the related labor laws when treating them.
- 3-2-4 Notify the parties concerned that the Labor Standards Inspection Law shall be applied to a female migrant worker who is employed as a domestic worker by an individual. (See 2-1-11.)
- 3-2-5 The Japanese government shall be administratively responsible to request the foreign embassies and consulates in Japan to apply the labor laws to domestic workers employed by any of them.

3-3 Female migrant workers, their rights and local community

- 3-3-1 The central and local governments and communities shall establish a mechanism to provide information on family relations, language, culture, daily life and medical services and necessary support to female migrant workers who form their families in Japan.
- 3-3-2 A mechanism shall be established to supply information, consultation services and continuous support to the Japanese members of the female migrant workers' families to encourage the members to have a better understanding of their background family relations, culture, language and society.
- 3-3-3 Multi-lingual brochures shall be prepared and distributed as necessary which describe contraceptive measures available in Japan with due considerations to the medical services, society and customs of the countries from which female migrant workers come.
- 3-3-4 A consultation and support system shall be established to help these female workers solve their problems arising in connection with their sex life, pregnancy and delivery.

3-4 Domestic violence

- 3-4-1 The Japanese government shall state that the Domestic Violence Prevention Act is operative without regard to nationality and status of residence to protect victimized women, and inform the local government of the matter well.
- 3-4-2 Review the related laws with respect to their sphere of application to enable victimized women to be covered by livelihood assistance, health insurance or national insurance and the Child Welfare Law, without regard to status of residence. (See 6-1, 6-2, 6-3.)

- 3-4-3 In applying the Domestic Violence Prevention Act, the protection of victimized female migrant workers shall come first, suspending the public servant's obligation to report visa violators according to the Immigration Control Law.
- 3-4-4 When a female migrant with a spouse visa wants to get a divorce because of having suffered domestic violence, she shall be able to renew or change her visa promptly without approval of her husband.
- 3-4-5 In the event that there is a mediation over divorce or a dispute over parental authority between a female migrant victim of domestic violence and her husband, due consideration should be given to the facts of domestic violence over and above her status of residence, whether or not she is on livelihood assistance, or the type of work she does.
- 3-4-6 The central and local governments shall subsidize NGOs and shelters which provide female migrant victims of domestic violence with consultation services, support and protection.
- 3-4-7 The central and local governments shall investigate the actual conditions of female migrants who have suffered from domestic violence and reflect the results in their policy making.