



Graduate School of Development Studies

**MIGRANT VISIONS ABROAD, AT HOME:
Collective action towards local economic development**

A Research Paper presented by:

Bernice Roldan

(Philippines)

in partial fulfilment of the requirements for obtaining the degree of
MASTER OF ARTS IN DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

Specialization:

**Local and Regional Development
(LRD)**

Members of the examining committee:

Dr Georgina Mercedes Gomez (supervisor)

Dr Erhard Berner (second reader)

The Hague, The Netherlands
December, 2009

Disclaimer:

This document represents part of the author's study program while at the Institute of Social Studies. The views stated therein are those of the author and not necessarily those of the Institute.

Research papers are not made available for circulation outside of the Institute.

Inquiries:

Postal address: Institute of Social Studies
 P.O. Box 29776
 2502 LT The Hague
 The Netherlands

Location: Kortenaerkade 12
 2518 AX The Hague
 The Netherlands

Telephone: +31 70 426 0460

Fax: +31 70 426 0799

Contents

List of Figures, Boxes and Tables	iv
List of Acronyms	v
Glossary	vi
Abstract	vii
Chapter 1 Introduction	1
1.1 Statement of the problem	1
1.2 Background	2
1.3 Objectives and research questions	4
1.4 Research methods and limitations	5
Chapter 2 Concepts and analytical framework	7
2.1 The migration-development nexus and trans-local livelihoods	7
2.2 Collective action through microfinance	9
2.3 LED and the focus on community economic development	11
2.4 Analytical framework: Migrant collective action for community economic development	13
Chapter 3 The migrant civil society terrain: Context and analysis	15
3.1 ‘Beyond heroes and victims’: Philippine transnational migration	15
3.2 ‘Europe without borders’ and ‘Fortress Europe’: Migration policy contradictions	17
3.3 Invisible yet organized: Filipino migrant domestic workers and support organizations in the Netherlands	11
3.4 Political lines, diverging strategies: Potential and limits of migrant collective action	23
3.5 Building local assets: Community economic development in the Philippines	25
Chapter 4 Migrant collective action for LED: Findings and analysis	28
4.1 Migrant actors for LED: Identities and motivations	28
4.2 Migrant visions: Negotiating trans-local development	32
4.3 Trust and ties: Conditions for collective action	36
4.4 Building on practice: Cases from Hong Kong and Taiwan	38
Chapter 5 Conclusion	41
References	43
Appendices	47
	iii

List of Figures, Boxes and Tables

Figure 2.1 Analytical framework: Migrant collective action towards LED	14
Figure 4.1 TRUSTED/Koop Natin on capacity-building received in managing income and supporting LED	29
Figure 4.2 Church choir on capacity-building received in managing income and supporting LED	30
Table 4.1 Comparison of assets of TRUSTED/Koop Natin and church choir	30
Figure 4.3 Factors that would motivate migrants to invest in LED in the Philippines	32
Box 4.1 Jane’s story: On gains, losses and family negotiation	33
Box 4.2 Amy’s story: On life’s ups and downs, and negotiating with employers	34
Box 4.3 Responses to ‘What to you are the main achievements of TRUSTED/Koop Natin?’	37

List of Acronyms

AMC	Asian Migrant Center
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CBO	Community-based organization
CFMW	Commission for Filipino Migrant Workers
CO	Community organizing
GCIM	Global Commission on International Migration
GFMD	Global Forum on Migration and Development
HWC	Hope Workers' Center
ILO	International Labor Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
LED	Local Economic Development
MFA	Migrant Forum in Asia
MSAI-CDR	Migrant Savings and Alternative Investment for Community Development and Reintegration
NELM	New economics of labor migration
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OWWA	Overseas Workers Welfare Administration
POEA	Philippine Overseas Employment Administration
RESPECT	Rights Equality Solidarity Power Europe Co-operation Today
SHGs	Self-help groups
THP	The Hague Process
TRUSTED	Towards Respect United Strength Total Emancipation Development
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Glossary

Au pair	French for ‘on a par’ or ‘on equal footing’; single foreign nationals who join a cultural exchange program and help a host family with light housework during the one-year stay
Bayanihan	Neighbourly Cooperation
Informal insurance arrangements	Mutual help relationships where people pool their risks together so that when one or several members incur a shock, other members will help them recover from the shock
Kababayan	Fellow citizen; compatriot
Koop Natin	Our Cooperative
Migrant civil society	Migrant-led membership organizations and public institutions, which underscore the significance of migrant capacity for self-representation
Migrant worker	A person who is to be engaged, is engaged or has been engaged in a remunerated activity in a state of which he or she is not a national
Reintegration	Re-inclusion or re-incorporation of a migrant into the society of his/her country of origin
Remittances	Flows of money, knowledge and universal ideas
Transnational (also trans-local)	Multi-faceted and multi-local processes of cross-border migration, people’s experiences as migrants in forming communities in host societies while yet maintaining intensive everyday ties with their societies of origin
Transnational migration	International migration movement whereby an individual develops ties in more than one country, and engages economically, socially, politically and culturally, in both his/her country of origin and residence
Unlad Kabayan	Progress for Filipinos

Abstract

This research paper analyzes the process of shaping the role of migrant domestic workers as actors in local economic development. The analysis explores the potential, limits and conditions for migrant collective action towards LED to take place. As links are drawn between migrant collective action and community economic development, the heterogeneity of migrant domestic workers, and their negotiation of development visions are seen as initial factors that shape the process.

This research paper looks at the use of microfinance as a strategy for collective action, discusses current practices of migrant workers that hint at their potential as actors in LED, as well as their motivations in supporting LED in their origin communities. Migrant collective action is characterized by the composition of ties, trust and embeddedness demonstrated by migrants, support organizations and networks. The findings reveal that an outcome of collective action is the striking diversity of economic activities undertaken by migrant workers, and explain how their interests in LED are sustained and how they further define their roles as actors in LED.

The case demonstrates how local government, NGOs and CBOs in local communities can be similarly involved as LED actors, which is a reminder that migrant workers alone cannot be studied and that non-migrants should be examined as well, together with the broader development context in which migration takes place.

Keywords

Migration-development nexus, migrant domestic workers, collective action, microfinance, community economic development

Chapter 1

Introduction

*'There are as many visions of development as there are actors,
albeit that some are more equal than others.'*

J. Nederveen Pieterse (2001: 41, in Dannecker, 2009: 119)

1.1 Statement of the problem

For many Filipino migrant domestic workers in the Netherlands today, the usual strategy of going abroad to work for a limited period often does not go according to plan. After paying off debts incurred from making the journey to what many have called 'Fortress Europe', migrants begin to fulfil the visions of development that made them decide to work abroad in the first place: providing family members in the origin country with the means to access better education and health services, purchasing housing and land, or building small enterprises that provide economic opportunities to family members and others in the local community. As this happens, the tourist or au pair visas they have used to gain entry into Europe eventually lapse, which results in their becoming undocumented.

Domestic work in the private household is not recognized as proper work in the Netherlands. It is not an accepted immigration status; therefore migrant domestic workers are not protected by the law. Being invisible in this context makes the work and living conditions of migrant domestic workers precarious to say the least, yet this risk is often taken with the knowledge that there are not enough economic opportunities at home to sustain them.

The situation can easily fall out of the boundaries of their original plan to stay and work for a few years to accumulate sufficient savings: five years of domestic work in the Netherlands can easily stretch to 10 or 15 years and even more. Migrant domestic workers remit a large part of their income to fulfil the day-to-day needs of both immediate and extended family members. But spending for personal and family emergencies abroad and at home has also become a recurring theme. Saving towards a means of livelihood they could return to in the origin country begins to fade into a hoped-for yet unfulfilled vision.

Family members of migrant domestic workers have shown the inclination to join them abroad, and end up going through a similar experience. While this particular cycle of transnational migration has continued, there have been emerging attempts to reverse the situation. Through their organizations and support networks abroad and at home, migrant domestic workers have started to support local economic development (LED) in the Philippines with the view that this could be a means for them to eventually return to their origin communities.

The Philippines has been projected around the world as a model labor-sending country (Agunias, 2008: 1; Ochi, 2005: 3; Santo Tomas, 1999), wherein

institutions and policies have been set up to protect and promote the rights and welfare of migrant workers. But given that those who migrate tend to be the more resourceful and better-off segments of the population (Zachariah et al., 2001, in de Haas, 2008: 29), unless local economies start providing better opportunities to its citizens, with over 10% of the country's population working and living abroad, it stands that the Philippines may continue losing its best and brightest people, particularly if local jobs are not created in origin communities as an alternative to transnational migration.

This research paper works on the assumption that migrants can consciously become actors in LED in the origin country when collective action occurs in trans-local social spaces, which refers to strong ties being maintained simultaneously with communities in host societies and in societies of origin. Collective action transpires through a range of conditions and practices that include institutional support, organizing, microfinance, and trust. Support organizations accelerate the process, attempt to address constraints, and increase the opportunities for more migrants within the collective to become LED actors. Whether the role of migrants as LED actors is shaped through collective action or through the migrant's own initiative, it stands that mixed motivations and visions towards development, and the heterogeneous nature of migrant domestic workers as a whole, are some factors that explain why migrant actors in LED tend to be the exception rather than the rule.

1.2 Background

Transnational migration has emerged as a strategy by individuals and households to meet the global demand for low-skill work, increasing their contribution to initiatives that can range from raising families to raising capital for micro-enterprises. Transnational migration is defined as 'international migration movement whereby an individual develops ties in more than one country, and engages economically, socially, politically and culturally, in both his/her country of origin and residence' (THP/UNESCO, 2008: 34).

Building on migrant initiatives that support LED, migrant community-based organizations, together with non-governmental organizations in origin and destination countries, are in the process of discovering how LED relates to reintegration, or the 're-inclusion or re-incorporation of a migrant into the society of his/her country of origin' (IOM, 2005: 54, in Ochi, 2005: 2). This is a reflection of findings from studies indicating that 'the way for migrants to return to their countries voluntarily is when they could find the option of returning home more attractive than staying abroad' (Villalba, 2008: 1).

This research paper uses the United Nations definition of 'migrant worker' from the 1990 Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families: 'a person who is to be engaged, is engaged or has been engaged in a remunerated activity in a state of which he or she is not a national' (UN, in THP/UNESCO, 2008: 13). Today, around half of all migrant workers are women, with more women migrating independently and as main income-earners (Martin, 2005, in IOM, 2008: 10). While women work in all professions, female labor migration is concentrated in occupations associated with traditional gender roles, illustrated by the

increased demand for care services in low-skill jobs, such as domestic work and caring for children, the elderly and disabled persons.

While migrant workers are motivated to work abroad mainly because of economic reasons (Atikha, in Mavrinac et al., 2008; Villalba, 2007), results of some studies suggest that a significant portion of migrants' income goes to 'basic family maintenance' while 'productive savings... prove to be a hoped for, but for most, unrealized outcome of the migration experience' (Mavrinac et al., 2008: 2). Existing practice among migrants and support organizations indicate that one approach to increasing migrants' income to be remitted home has been through savings and credit schemes. Credit provision for LED has proved to be 'a political concept that has captured the imagination of the left by being redistributive and a direct approach to alleviating poverty, and to the right as facilitating the emergence of an independent, self-sustaining "penny capitalism"' (Mosley and Hulme, 1998: 783).

A common form of credit provision is through self-help groups (SHGs), defined as microcredit-based groups where individuals come together to access and repay loans as a collective. Members and supporters of SHGs assert that the groups have brought about a broad range of benefits: not only making credit accessible, but also creating inroads towards LED and women's empowerment. SHGs are presented as 'forums of solidarity that enable women to address discriminatory practices, gain access to credit to fuel entrepreneurship or meet consumption needs, as well as to seek access to services and spaces of governance' (Nirantar, 2007: 4).

This research paper acknowledges, but will not use, more duration-specific terms such as temporary migrant, and short-term or long-term international migrant. Practical experience from working with migrant communities as well as studies (Nititham, 2008: 18) suggest that Filipino migrant workers, whether residing in the destination country for a period of one or 20 years, maintain close ties with the Philippines and consider it their home, which influences their decision to become LED actors in relation to it.

There is an apparent gap in analyzing the contributions of LED initiatives by migrant domestic workers and support organizations, which help migrants in building livelihoods back home and play a role towards easing the pressure for them to migrate for work again. This research paper explores and analyzes the broader migrant civil society terrain, which in this context occurs in trans-local social spaces between the Philippines and the Netherlands, before attempting a closer examination of the main actors: TRUSTED¹ Migrants, Koop Natin (Our Cooperative), Commission for Filipino Migrant Workers (CFMW) and Unlad Kabayan (Progress for Filipinos) Migrant Services Foundation.

TRUSTED Migrants, a transnational self-help organization formed in 2002, seeks to improve the situation of migrant domestic workers in the host

¹ TRUSTED stands for Towards Respect United Strength Total Emancipation Development

society. Koop Natin, a credit cooperative with around 35 Filipino members, was started in 2004 to assist undocumented migrants who were not allowed to open bank accounts in the Netherlands. CFMW, established in 1979, is a Filipino NGO based in Amsterdam that focuses on self-organizing, education and campaigning for migrant rights and welfare. Unlad Kabayan is an entrepreneurial NGO established in the Philippines in 1996 that mobilizes migrant workers and their resources, and the assets of local communities.

In discussing LED programs and initiatives that have emerged from practices of such trans-local networks and actors, Gibson (2002: 77) argues that these have helped reshape the migrant domestic worker's 'economic subjectivity, dis-identifying with the subject position of feudal serf or domestic servant and re-identifying with the possibility of a role as manager or cooperator in a community enterprise. The pathway is untrodden and the unfolding story is one that calls for support'.

Evidence from the literature, research findings and practical experience suggests that while it is true that personal and family emergencies, and also restrictive migration policies in the host society, are among the factors that push migrants to return home, if lack of employment persists, migrant workers will eventually try their luck abroad again, particularly if they have not prepared for their eventual return by saving towards a means of livelihood back home.

While the Netherlands is not in the top 10 countries of destination of newly deployed Filipino migrant workers, there is a need to analyze emerging programs and initiatives by the Filipino community in the Netherlands supporting LED in the Philippines. Microfinance, as a collective action strategy among migrants and support organizations, is a key component in generating savings and investment to support LED, and examining the conditions for this to take place, and its potential and limitations, is a relevant area of study.

1.3 Objectives and research questions

This research paper seeks to make a contribution by exploring a fairly untrodden pathway, as Gibson (2002) calls it, and investigating the link between transnational migration and LED in the Philippines. In particular, the potential and limitations of migrant workers and support organizations in shaping the role of migrants are examined: shifting their identities as individuals that engage in low-skill work abroad to address the basic needs of their families in the origin country, to a collective that negotiates trans-local development visions as it builds its capacity to support LED initiatives in migrants' origin communities.

This research paper examines the context and process that have led to the emergence of such programs and initiatives that support LED in the Philippines. Also to be analyzed are the potential and limitations of organizing and capacity-building at the meso level in cultivating members of migrant NGOs and CBOs as LED actors, and the conditions for this to take place.

The main research question of the study is: *How does collective action among migrants and support organizations in the Netherlands lead to shaping their role as actors of local economic development in the Philippines?* The sub-questions below serve as a guide in answering the main research question:

- i) What do migrants do to support LED initiatives at home? (Organizing, capacity-building, credit, savings and investment)
- ii) What were the conditions that led to the process of migrants organizing themselves abroad to support LED initiatives at home?
- iii) Who among migrant NGOs and CBOs find currency in supporting LED initiatives at home, and what is their motivation? (Gender, age, work and residence status, etc.)
- iv) What characterizes the LED advocated for by the NGOs, and how capable and willing are the migrants in supporting it?

1.4 Research methods and limitations

To address the research objective, a four-way qualitative research strategy was used, comprised of literature review, analysis of secondary data, participant observation, and analysis of findings from field research seeking out migrants who are members of Filipino organizations in the Netherlands.

On the literature review, anthologies, journal articles, research and conference papers were visited to develop a theoretical framework exploring the linkages among the migration-development nexus, transnational social spaces, collective action, and community economic development. On secondary data, institutional reports from government agencies (Philippine Overseas Employment Administration), NGOs (Commission for Filipino Migrant Workers, RESPECT² Network, Unlad Kabayan, Migrant Forum in Asia) and international agencies (International Organization for Migration) were useful.

Participant observation began in May 2009 when I began volunteering with CFMW. In June 2009, I attended the annual general assembly of Koop Natin (Our Cooperative), a credit cooperative established in 2004 composed of an estimated 35 Filipino migrant members in the Netherlands, most of whom are members of TRUSTED Migrants, and became a member soon after.

Finally, I undertook field research in August-September 2009. In August, I facilitated a focus group discussion with six Filipino migrant women from TRUSTED Migrants in The Hague, to generate data related to this research and to help organize and train the participants at CFMW's request. I introduced the organization's reintegration program in partnership with Unlad Kabayan, a strategy called Migrant Savings and Alternative Investment for Community Development and Reintegration (MSAI-CDR). Pioneered by Unlad Kabayan in the Philippines in 1996, the program is introduced through training seminars for migrants and partner organizations in destination countries, to encourage the value and practice of disciplined saving. Savings groups are organized among the training participants to help them build capital and eventually invest in livelihoods and enterprises in the Philippines.

² RESPECT stands for Rights Equality Solidarity Power Europe Co-operation Today

To complement the focus group discussion, two types of semi-structured questionnaires were used. The first questionnaire was for members of TRUSTED Migrants and Koop Natin, while the second was for members of other Filipino organizations in the Netherlands. The objective was to compare the experiences of both clusters, as well as generate qualitative data on their work and living conditions, practice in collective action, and willingness and capacity to support LED in the Philippines. Among the respondents, seven were Koop Natin members, nine were choir members of a Catholic church in The Hague, and two were from a migrants' self-help organization in Rotterdam. The total number of respondents in my field research is 24.

It should be noted that I worked as advocacy officer for Unlad Kabayan previously, and that in 2007, I conducted introductory seminars on MSAI-CDR during visits to the Filipino community facilitated by CFMW. This later gave me access for my research.

In terms of limitations, the sample size of 24 respondents may not comprehensively represent the organized Filipino community in the Netherlands. The research is limited to Filipino migrant domestic workers and support organizations, and while the respondents obviously have not reintegrated in the Philippines, a majority of them evidently recognize the relationship between LED and reintegration, because 'the nature of low-skilled jobs undertaken... exacerbates women's need for reintegration' (Ochi, 2005: 2). To a large degree, the discourse on migrants as actors of LED in the origin country is viewed through the lens of reintegration (as illustrated in Mavrinac et al., 2008; Ochi, 2005; Ofreneo and Samonte, 2005; Villalba, 2002).

This research instead examines their initiatives as engaging in 'alternative economic activism' and reshaping their agency (Gibson, 2002; Gibson, Law and McKay, 2001: 367). To provide a contrast, cases of Filipino migrant workers who have returned to the Philippines to engage in LED will be visited briefly, to illustrate previous experience in Asia on reintegration and LED by migrants and support organizations.

Chapter 2

Concepts and analytical framework

2.1 The migration-development nexus and trans-local livelihoods

For the typical Filipino migrant living in the Netherlands – a domestic worker, an NGO worker, or a post-graduate student – the connections between migration and development are a daily occurrence. This is the case for migrants of any nationality. Migration and development are closely related when individuals, households and communities use migration as a survival and livelihood strategy; through well-targeted remittances (referring to money flows, knowledge and universal ideas); and through investments and advocacy by migrants and their transnational communities (Nyberg-Sorensen et al., 2002: 49).

The new economics of labor migration (NELM), which emerged in the 1980s and 1990s as a critical response to neo-classical migration theory (Massey et al., 1993: 436, in de Haas, 2008: 34), is said to have conceptual parallels with the livelihoods approach. In NELM, migration is not only viewed as a ‘household risk spreading strategy in order to stabilize income, but also as a strategy to overcome various market constraints... and may potentially enable households to invest in productive activities and to improve their livelihoods’ (Stark, 1980, in de Haas, 2008: 35).

For migrant domestic workers in particular, the links between migration and development are implicit in the push-and-pull dynamics between restrictions and opportunities that they experience while working in the host society. Migration in practice reveals that underlying the Filipino domestic worker’s ‘negotiation of constraints and opportunities is her struggle for capability to secure a livelihood in the context of globalization’ (Briones, 2009: 134).

The migration-development nexus is a highly politicized arena characterized by contradictory policy approaches that deter national coordination and international cooperation. Until the late 1990s, there was a division between migration and development policy fields. Controlling migration flows to the European Union and other OECD countries remain a highly prioritized issue for migration authorities. Meanwhile, development agencies are confronted with the question that if putting a stop to further migration is the central migration policy goal of the EU, how genuine can their partnerships be with developing countries?

With ‘security’ framing transnational migration (state security related to social cohesion and migrant integration in destination countries, and financial security for origin countries through remittances), Truong and Gasper (2008: 286, citing Duvell, 2003) argue that the discourse underplays how the ‘global political economy is built on the politics of differences between genders, races and nations, which are then translated into a system of different rights, wages, and levels of welfare and social reproduction’ among migrants and nationals of

destination countries, and among men and women. But migrants' movements have generated profound changes in social life, as shown through a gender and trans-local livelihood approach, or 'multi-faceted and multi-local processes of cross-border migration, people's experiences as migrants in forming communities in host societies while yet maintaining intensive everyday ties with their societies of origin' (Truong and Gasper, 2008: 288). This poses a challenge to the dominant assumptions behind the discourse.

In the 1970s and 1980s, transnational migration was regarded as a symptom of development failure: a 'territorial or geographical exit upon failure of the state or other institutions to deliver well-being and human security' (Hirschman, 1970, in Faist, 2008: 22). With much to be pessimistic about, transnational migration was theorized through the lens of dependency: South countries took a developmental loss with the emigration of the skilled, there was a lack of opportunities to use skills in destination countries, and remittances had limited impact on economic growth in origin countries (de Haas, 2007, in Raghuram, 2009: 103). The discourse shifted in the 1990s when international agencies led by the World Bank, non-governmental organizations and OECD governments began to strongly promote remittances as a solution to development. At present, transnational migration is being rediscovered as a strategic intervention or tool in facilitating development, offering new possibilities for alleviating worsening global inequalities.

In examining the 'new enthusiasm' surrounding transnational migration and how it relates to development, I borrow from Faist two arguments that he highlights and which serve as a 'hinge' to the discourse. First, financial remittances have a strong potential to bear on poverty alleviation and local investment, particularly since 'remittances very often are resistant or even counter-cyclic to economic recession' (Faist, 2008: 21). Contrary to this common perception on financial remittances, Bayangos and Jansen (2009: 5) state that these are also subject to shocks: "The ups and downs of capital flows and remittances have direct effects on aggregate demand, on liquidity of financial markets, on foreign exchange markets... in that way, volatility of financial flows creates significant challenges for monetary policy". Nevertheless, it stands that financial remittances flowing to developing countries through official channels (banks and money transfer companies) went up from US \$40 billion in 1990 to US \$167 billion in 2005, at least twice the amount of the OECD's annual budget for overseas development assistance (IOM, 2005: 270, in Faist, 2008: 22).

The second argument is that short-term migration is desired because temporary migrants are hoped to transmit a larger part of their income than permanent immigrants, and that ideas and knowledge circulate at a faster rate with short-term visits from migrants as development agents. This view, advocated by Kofi Annan's Global Commission on International Migration, gained much currency at the UN High-Level Dialogue on Migration and Development in New York City in 2006.

Faist argues that in general, these 'optimistic claims' relate to migration control. Political institutions such as the European Commission anticipate that economic growth combined with financial, knowledge and social remittances will lessen 'migration pressure' in origin countries in the long-term (EC, 2005,

in Faist, 2008: 22). Given the pervading dispute over the developmental effects of remittances, at the center of this optimistic strand in the discourse are transnational networks and migrant associations, who have captured the imagination of analysts from the academe and policy-makers. As Raghuram (2009: 104) points out, migrants have become ‘direct bearers of developmental objectives, reaching places to which other development machinery has little access and doing so without a range of intermediaries’.

Some observers point out, however, that the recognition of migrants as development agents ‘is based on the loyalties and engagement many of them show towards their countries and localities of origin – or at times a loyal sentiment “manufactured” on the part of origin governments through proactive fostering of such linkages and the creation of a sense of moral responsibility’ (Piper, 2009: 94). While the role of migrants in development has been amplified at debates in recent years, the silences on how conventional development policies have failed and how global inequalities persist similarly cannot be missed.

2.2 Collective action through microfinance

In this research paper, collective action³ is expressed by various alliances that mark the heterogeneous migrant civil society terrain, which occurs in trans-local social spaces in the Philippines, the Netherlands, and other countries around Europe. A number of actors are presented: migrant CBOs in the Netherlands (TRUSTED Migrants, Koop Natin), support organizations such as NGOs (Commission for Filipino Migrant Workers in the Netherlands, Unlad Kabayan in the Philippines) and Dutch trade unions (Abvakabo FNV and FNV Bondgenoten) as well as regional networks (the Europe-wide RESPECT). As is often the case in civil society, there are multiple memberships across organizations: a large number of Filipino members in TRUSTED Migrants are also members of Koop Natin, CFMW program officers are also members of Koop Natin, and all the above mentioned organizations (with the exception of Unlad Kabayan) are members and allies of RESPECT, considered a loose network of migrants and support organizations.

In discussing migrant collective action, Fox and Bada (2009: 2) introduce the related concept of migrant civil society, described as ‘migrant-led membership organizations and public institutions... [which] underscore the significance of migrant capacity for self-representation’. Drawing on experiences of Mexican immigrant organizations in the US, the authors present empirical evidence suggesting that, ‘rather than producing a contradiction of divided loyalties, migrants’ dual commitments tend to be mutually reinforcing... (as) efforts to help their hometowns in Mexico often lead to engagement in US society through similar civic and political efforts in their new hometowns in

³ See Udehn (1993) for a review of Olson’s influential work, which argues that Olson’s economic logic has resulted in collective action being seen as ‘a matter of either/or’, and calls for this to be replaced by the assumption of ‘mixed motivations’.

the US (De la Garza and Hazan, 2003, in Fox and Bada, 2009: 3). These are similarly reflected in this research paper through migrant stories drawn from focus groups that demonstrate how migrant visions of development are negotiated in the origin and destination countries, and are thus shaped by the trans-local context of the migration experience.

Microfinance, a strategy for collective action used by the credit cooperative *Koop Natin*, is examined here through the lens of self-help and gender (given the concentration of women in low-skill jobs such as domestic work). Historically, credit emerged in the 1970s from the struggles of economically marginalized women and was demanded as a right that women needed to improve their status. In southern states of India, pioneering NGOs used credit self-help groups (SHGs) as a means to organize poor communities (Nirantar, 2007: 6).

In practice, women's collective action and credit provision to the poor have been around for quite some time in India. But merging the two concepts has been relatively recent, coming out as a development strategy in the early 1990s. As Nirantar explains, these collectives, borne out of class-based struggles, the autonomous women's movement, and the struggles of Dalit or tribal communities, evolved over recent decades based on principles of solidarity and collective action.

However, self-help does have its peculiarities. In a discussion of self-help schemes being promoted among the poor, Berner and Phillips (2005: 27) point out that on one hand, this 'creates respect for poor people's capability and creativity, and modesty on the side of development "experts"'. On the other hand, community self-help, as illustrated by the origins of women's collective action and SHGs in India described by Nirantar, has been recognized as 'the default strategy of the poor', and the attention given to self-help by international development agencies such as the World Bank may be seen as 'masking defense against calls for redistribution'. It would not be far-fetched to think that promoting self-help would be in the interest of those trying to cover up a 'no-help' attitude.

The setting up of *Koop Natin* for Filipino migrants in the Netherlands can be considered a reflection of Philippine realities. In the Philippines, many rural people are members of credit, consumer, marketing and service cooperatives. In 2007, there were 59,765 registered cooperatives in the country, with members totalling almost three million (Griffiths, 2007, in CEC and Gibson, 2009: 2). In past decades, central government promoted producer marketing cooperatives with state-mandated structures in an attempt to manage small farm production, obtain agricultural products for export and improve livelihoods in rural areas. Recent years have seen the cooperative sector trying to provide a more autonomous, alternative voice (Teodosio, 2003, in CEC and Gibson, 2009: 2). With this revival of economic alternatives, a few NGOs have since focused on sustainable enterprise development as a strategy for LED.

While it is logical that collective action through microfinance creates spaces for participation, strategizing and negotiation, the literature reminds us that the perceived link between savings and credit provision and women's empowerment rests on three assumptions: first, that women would invest in

their own economic activity; second, that this would result in increased well-being for women and their families; and third, that economic empowerment would enable women to renegotiate changes in gender relations in the household, leading to social and political empowerment (Mayoux, 2001: 438-439).

These assumptions have been challenged to a large degree. In their research on gender, power and control over loan use in rural credit programs in Bangladesh, Goetz and Gupta (1996: 49) found that a significant proportion of women's loans were being controlled by male relatives. Out of qualitative studies of 253 loans to women by four MFIs (BRAC: 106, Grameen Bank: 53, TMSS: 39, RD-12: 55) the degree of women's control was broken down as follows: partial control at 24.1 percent, no control at 21.7 percent, significant control at 19.4 percent, full control at 17.8 percent, and very limited control at 17 percent. The findings come with the implication that the pervasive optimism for selecting women as main credit beneficiaries should be checked, given the risks women take in navigating horizontal and vertical relations within the household and the community.

2.3 LED and the focus on community economic development

Under the broad umbrella of the migration-development nexus, it is easy to overlook that different actors have differing conceptualizations of development, power and influence. The same can be said of migrants: current debates on migration and development seldom take into consideration that migrants are not a singular emerging actor, much less a homogeneous unit. As argued by Dannecker (2009: 119), 'development visions and the possibilities to localize these visions between highly-skilled migrants, labor migrants and refugees are rarely conceptualized, and gender relations are largely irrelevant in the current discussions'. I would contend that even within the category of labor migrants, or in the case of my research, migrant domestic workers and support organizations, development visions will vary.

Given that migration has been acknowledged as a diverse, complex phenomenon that cannot be disconnected from socio-economic and political processes, it is important to not only analyze migrant workers but to take into account the broader context of development in which migration comes into play. As de Haas (2008: 22) argues, 'the reciprocal effects of migration on the entire development context emphasizes the importance of including *non-migrants* in any migration impact analysis, as migration tends to affect sending societies *as a whole*' (emphasis in the original).

One of the NGO actors discussed in this paper, Unlad Kabayan Migrant Services Foundation, began in 1994 as a project of the Asian Migrant Center in Hong Kong, and is considered a pioneer in the Philippines for discerning and supporting the role of migrants as actors of local economic development in their origin communities. It began with the idea of directing the investments of migrant savings groups organized in destination countries into productive enterprises in the Philippines. Initially, the hope was that these enterprises would help migrants reintegrate into their local community economies

and not be forced into cyclical migration (CEC and Gibson, 2009: 2-3). But as we will see, these initiatives shape the roles in LED of other members of the local community as well.

LED represents an essential shift in the actors and activities we relate with economic development. Blakely (1989: 58-59) defines LED as process-oriented endogenous development harnessing the potential of local human, institutional, and physical resources. It involves forming new institutions, developing alternative industries, improving existing employers, among others, with the goal of increasing the number and variety of job opportunities available to local people.

In this research paper, collective action in trans-local spaces is presented as a key process that shapes the roles of migrants as actors of LED in their origin communities, in that they are 'encouraged to envision their entrepreneurial capacities and acquire new skills, and as a result are empowered to effect changes in social, economic and political structures (Gibson, Law and McKay, 2001: 380). Similarly, space is created for other actors to engage in LED: for instance, members of a migrant's home community may become involved as partners and managers of migrant-initiated enterprises. What then occurs is the stimulation of community economies: households in the community are imagined and enabled as consumers, micro-entrepreneurs and workers.

In the Philippine context, local communities in the agriculture-driven countryside have plenty of untapped resources and unrealized opportunities. The LED actors being analyzed in this research paper are presented as consciously gearing towards these sectors in an attempt to create community ventures while at the same time addressing social imbalances that lead many to migrate in the first place (Unlad Kabayan, 2010 forthcoming: 7). The hoped-for outcome of community economic development for particular actors in the transnational migration experience is perceived as offering 'a means of clarifying the relationship between development policy and practice and the underlying processes of uneven development that create exclusion and inequality for many just as they lead to enhanced opportunities for others' (Bebbington, Hickey and Mitlin, 2008: 5). To address the exclusion and inequality present in many local communities, Gomez and Helmsing (2008: 2492) present local economic (re-)generation as a theoretical intervention. Described as the reverse of market-driven development, local economic (re-)generation is about preventing other localities from being marginalized and promoting an inclusive LED process by stimulating local entrepreneurship and enhancing the capabilities of local people.

The LED category on community economic development is used here as a reflection of Unlad Kabayan's practice of building 'small enterprises gradually developed with local entrepreneurial experiences being summarized and developed into a theory of engagement in various communities' (Villalba, 2008: 2). It is focused on diversifying household economic activities with the aim of alleviating poverty and reducing vulnerability in a locality. Diversifying a household's source of income reduces the risk of depending on a single income-generating activity and leads to more developed economies. In the case of non-farm rural livelihoods, for instance, this is achieved when poor people are able to gain access to employment and assets, and benefit from institutional

and social relations, or when their livelihood strategies increase their security in terms of work and income (Gordon, 1999).

Community economic development, as explained by Helmsing (2003), is made up of four components: 1) Local safety nets, to enable a poor community to withstand economic shocks and reduce insecurity; 2) Housing and settlement upgrading, to design the space for basic services and allow for household economic activities to flourish; 3) Basic service delivery, wherein local government unbundles certain services and decides which components to privatize, to ensure that the services would be provided more efficiently; and 4) Stimulating the community economy, which takes into account that households function in the local economy in three ways: as consumers, micro-entrepreneurs and workers.

The first and fourth components described by Helmsing are particularly relevant in the case being analyzed in this research paper. The initiatives of Filipino migrant workers and support organizations being discussed here may be interpreted as part of the new generation of LED initiatives discussed by Helmsing. In the process of facilitating the delivery of the components of community economic development, the key concept in LED is its nature of being about partnerships (between migrant entrepreneurs, local government and CBOs, for instance) with the common goal of managing an area's existing resources.

2.4 Analytical framework: Migrant collective action for community economic development

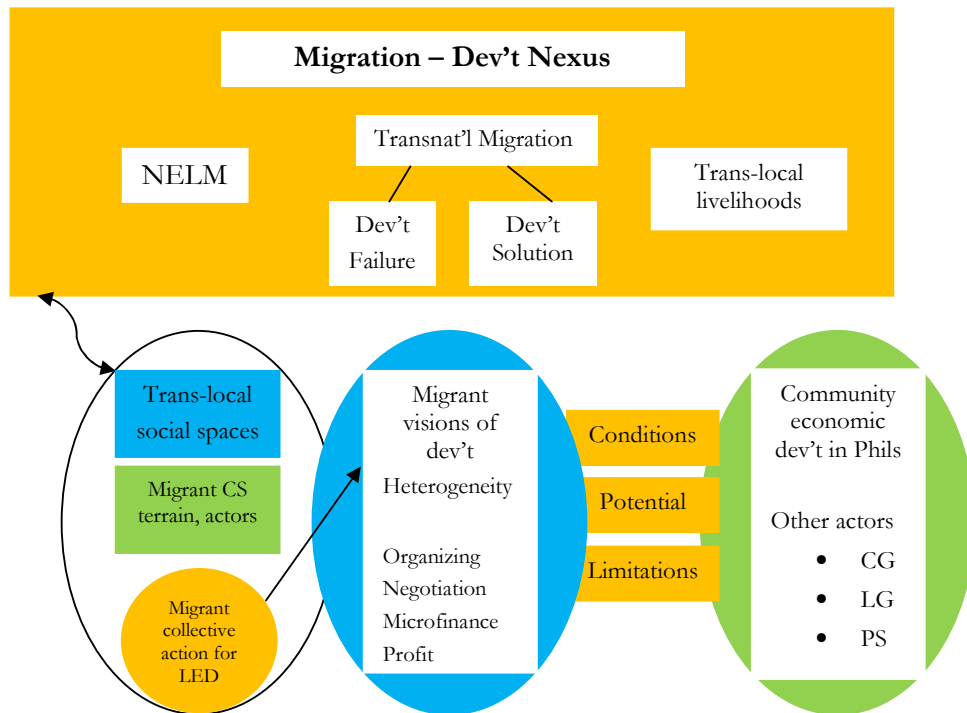
Figure 2.4 presents the analytical framework that describes and analyzes the process of shaping the role of migrants as actors in local economic development. This research paper puts into context and analyzes the migrant civil society terrain in which the actors pursue collective action for community economic development in the origin country. The case being discussed is located under the broad umbrella of the migration-development nexus, and takes into account various perceptions towards transnational migration: a symptom of development failure or a means towards development ("development solution"). The analysis is guided by the new economics of labor migration (NELM) approach and considers the case as based on practices of trans-local livelihoods.

The analysis further explores the conditions for migrant collective action to take place. Collective action is perceived as building on existing migrant visions of development. In combining the two with the objective of contributing to community economic development, factors to consider are the heterogeneity of migrants as a whole, and the negotiation that occurs among the actors as various migrant visions of development are being fulfilled. This research paper looks at the use of microfinance as a strategy for collective action, discusses the current practice of migrants that hint at their potential as actors in LED, as well as the different factors (profit) that motivate migrants to support LED in the origin country. Migrant collective action is characterized by the composition of ties, trust and embeddedness demonstrated by migrants, support organizations and trans-local social networks. It demonstrates a signif-

icant impact on the diversity of economic activities undertaken by migrants, how their interests in LED are sustained and how they further define their roles as actors in LED. The various conditions, potential and limitations of the case are visited throughout the discussion.

The case demonstrates how local government, NGOs and CBOs in local communities can be similarly involved as LED actors, which brings to mind de Haas’s argument that migrant workers alone cannot be studied and that non-migrants should be examined as well, together with the broader development context in which migration takes place. However, there is space for further study and more theoretical interventions to explore how other actors, such as central government and the private sector, relate to migrants and support organizations as actors in LED, which goes beyond the scope of this research.

Figure 2.1 Analytical framework: Migrant collective action for community economic development



Source: Own construction

Chapter 3

The migrant civil society terrain: Context and analysis

3.1 'Beyond heroes and victims': Philippine transnational migration

In the ASEAN region, the Philippines has the largest stock of migrant workers abroad (IOM, 2008: 444). In 2006, the total stock of overseas Filipinos was 8.2 million (an estimated 10% of the population) distributed as follows: 3.6 million permanent residents, 3.8 million temporary residents and 875,000 undocumented migrants (POEA, 2006). In 2007, the Commission on Filipinos Overseas placed the number of overseas Filipinos at 8.7 million, with more than a million temporary Filipino migrant workers leaving the country each year to work in over 190 countries, prompting observers to note that the Philippine system of transnational migration management 'has unrivalled sophistication, making it a model for other developing countries hoping to access the benefits of global labor mobility' (Agunias, 2008: 1).

Filipino migrant workers have been called 'heroes' of national development. In 1988, former Philippine President Corazon Aquino first coined the term 'national heroes' for Filipino migrant workers while speaking to a group of domestic workers in Hong Kong. This particular view of transnational migration of Filipinos in vulnerable, low-skill work through the lens of nationalism is 'symptomatic of the Republic of the Philippines' implication in a national labor export policy' (Gibson, Law and McKay, 2001: 367).

Labor migration from the Philippines, in the form of overseas contract work, began in 1972 when the government's Overseas Employment Program was established under the rule of dictator Ferdinand Marcos, with previous waves of labor migration dating back to the early 20th century. The country has been described as 'perhaps the prototype of a labor-exporting country' (Semyonov and Gorodzeisky, 2004: 6, in Rother, 2009), with the state deliberately assuming the role of 'labor broker' (Rodriguez, 1999, in Rother: 2009: 96). Today, deployment of migrant workers is still a national strategy for economic development in the Philippines. As of 2007, financial remittances to the Philippines reached US \$14.5 billion, the highest it has been since the 1980s (Bayangos and Jansen, 2009: 13).

President Aquino's term for Filipino migrants, 'national heroes', signals an unwavering confidence in their national developmental potential. As explained by Ofreneo and Samonte (2005: 6), 'With the number of the overseas labor sector being twice as large as the industrial work force, and the huge amounts of migrant inflows that are received annually on a regular basis, there is clearly a potential for this sector to contribute to the economic growth of the Philippines'.

In 1996, remittances comprised 5.2 percent of GDP. This figure has grown to around 10 percent in recent years (Bayangos and Jansen, 2009: 13-14). Three major factors have been highlighted to explain this trend (Tuano-Amador et al., 2007, in Bayangos and Jansen, 2009: 14). First, there has been a rising number of deployed workers and immigrants, as indicated by the stock of overseas Filipino workers and migrants. Second, the skill composition of Filipino workers and migrants has changed. From 1995 to 2007, there were more deployed Filipinos in the medical, healthcare, information technology, food and hotel services, despite the decline in the number of professional workers. Third, the Central Bank of the Philippines, together with commercial banks, has encouraged overseas Filipinos to channel their remittances through the financial system. The Central Bank's initiatives are meant to increase transparency and promote competition in the remittance market, improve access to financial services (such as financial remittances to migrant family members in remote areas of the country), encourage Filipino migrants and their families to increase savings and investment, and improve their overall financial literacy.

Meanwhile, Filipino migrant workers have also been called 'victims' of capitalist development. From the outset, many grassroots NGOs working with Filipino migrants have been critical of the discourse of migrants as 'national heroes'. Since the 1970s, migrant domestic workers and the adverse effects of transnational migration have been subjects of research, advocacy and debate (Gibson, Law and McKay, 2001: 369).

Much has been written about migrant remittances easing the pressure in the domestic labor market and making up for deficiencies of the Philippine state in matters such as social security, the economy and land reform. The state has used the strategy of commodifying the Philippine workforce to access foreign exchange through migrant workers' financial remittances, prompting CSOs to note that state policy can be encapsulated in four words: 'migration instead of development' (Rother, 2009: 96). The Philippine government continues to prioritize repayment of loans to the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, which has attracted disapproval from civil society at various levels. NGOs in Hong Kong, Canada and the Philippines argue that 'Filipina contract migrants are exploited victims in a global economy that is dominated by foreign agendas. In an analysis shared by many NGOs, the exploitation of these... women reproduces prior colonial and neo-colonial relations' (Gibson, Law and McKay, 2001: 370).

Aside from this, the Philippine government continues to attract criticism for the quality of social protection provided to this significant population. For over 25 years, the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) has collected US \$25 from every registered Filipino worker leaving the country, yet its welfare assistance has been assessed as too little and too selective, leaving most workers virtually unprotected while abroad and when they eventually come home. A study by the Center for Migrant Advocacy revealed how the OWWA used these contributions: reports from the Commission on Audit indicated that every year, the OWWA spent three times more for its personnel and operations compared to the social benefits provided

to distressed Filipinos abroad (Gonzales, in Social Watch Philippines, 2007: 75).

I agree with Gibson, Law and McKay that there is no right or wrong representation of migrants, although there are assumptions behind each representation accompanied by pervasive effects. As the authors (2001: 381) say, the hero image of migrant workers in the nationalist discourse implies that ‘there is little need or will to take responsibility for their diminished citizenship rights in their destination country. Nor is there a need to agitate to protect their economic and human rights’. As for the victim image of migrant workers in capital-centric discourse, the implication might be that they are ‘attributed with very little economic agency of a “progressive” nature’, and if represented as modern-day slaves that are highly exploited, that they cannot be imagined as pursuing economic agency.

3.2 ‘Europe without borders’ and ‘Fortress Europe’: Migration policy contradictions

Transnational migration is hotly debated in Europe. On one hand, the European Union has a rapidly aging population and high unemployment levels in many EU states, compounded by the lack of both professional experts and people willing to take on low-wage and low-status work. Migration is said to be a tool to overcome at least some of these problems in the short term.

On the other hand, there have been fears that open borders would create labor market distortions, collapse of social security systems, security risks, and erosion of national identities. Thus, policymaking in this field is slow and painstaking, as indicated by debates on a common European migration and asylum policy.

The Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) has become a standing inter-governmental forum on transnational migration, how it is linked to development, and the situation of migrants’ rights. It was the outcome of the first (and to date, only) United Nations High-Level Dialogue on Migration and Development, which took place in New York City in September 2006. The GFMD held its first conference in Brussels in July 2007, a second in Manila in October 2008, and the third in Athens in November 2009, with a few more meetings lined up in the near future.

The Forum convenes governments from all regions with the objective of improving dialogue, cooperation and partnership related to migration and development, to further build international discourse, policy and practice, and ‘to foster practical and action-oriented outcomes at the national, regional and global levels’ (GFMD, 2008). It has become a significant international space for preliminary negotiations leading to bilateral agreements, programs and projects on labor migration (MFA, 2009).

Consequently, the Forum has drawn flak from international civil society for its non-binding and voluntary character. The structure of the forum also sets serious limits on civil society participation: in 2008 in Manila, 220 delegates were selected from around the world for the official civil society forum, while space was provided for over 900 delegates at the inter-governmental forum, representing some 163 Member States and Observers of

the UN and 33 international organizations (GFMD, 2009, in Rother, 2009: 95-96). Another criticism is that by taking the forum out of the auspices of the UN and making it a meeting of governments, many perspectives are pushed to the margins, including that of migrants, their communities, and civil society in general. Representatives of international civil society maintain that these are major factors for the scant attention given to issues of migrants' rights and sustainable development at the GFMD.

Some observers think otherwise: the Washington-based think tank Migration Policy Institute notes that while many critics had dismissed the 2006 UN High-Level Dialogue as 'all talk and no action, it may yet be the beginning of a new era. Nearly all participating countries said they would like to continue a dialogue on migration and development but that such a forum should be state-led and should only promote cooperation, not produce binding agreements' (MPI, 2006, in Roldan and Gasper, 2010 forthcoming).

Two prominent metaphors have emerged in the discourse on migration policy in Europe: 'Europe without borders' and 'Fortress Europe'. Some authors argue that the metaphors are not as contradictory as they may seem, but are rather internal and external (Kunz and Leinonen, 2007: 137, in Pecoud and De Guchteneire, 2007). For the former, the EU has created opportunities for its citizens to move without restrictions from one Member State to another and enjoy Europe's multicultural complexity. But the abolition of national borders has not overly increased migration within Europe. For the latter, the EU is described as 'Fortress Europe' with regard to control, security and monitoring of its external borders.

Pecoud and De Guchteneire (2007: 6) note that borders in reality are symbols rather than structures that produce actual results: 'border controls are policies that generate visibility but few results and enable governments to develop a pro-control (or even anti-immigration) rhetoric while maintaining access to a foreign labor force'. A self-sustaining process may be the outcome: border controls produce problems such as human trafficking and trespassing, which make it necessary to put more controls in place. In the context of Europe, countries that are common destinations of undocumented migration, such as Italy and Spain, are obliged to show its citizens and other EU members that the situation is being dealt with.

Contradictions in migration policy become glaring when analyzed through the lens of the human rights provisions relating to it. In the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 13-2 states that 'Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country'⁴. But Pecoud and De Guchteneire (2007: 8) point out that while emigration is recognized as a human right, immigration is not. Obviously there is 'a fundamental contradiction between the notion that emigration is widely regarded as a matter of human rights while immigration is regarded as a matter of national sovereignty' (ibid, citing Weiner, 1996: 171). I agree with the

⁴ <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml#a13> [Accessed 14 October 2009]

authors that having the right to leave one's country has no meaning as long as one cannot enter another country.

Following this line of analysis, Battistella (in Pecoud and De Guchteneire, 2007: 11) observes that 'undocumented migration can be interpreted not only as a consequence of inadequate migration policies, but also as the expression of people's claim to their right to migrate'. This research paper illustrates how, in the process of claiming their right to migrate for better opportunities abroad, undocumented Filipino migrant workers are enabled to pursue possibilities for action, which result in a shift in their economic identities.

3.3 Invisible yet organized: Filipino migrant domestic workers and support organizations in the Netherlands

To a large degree, the Filipino community in the Netherlands is comprised of permanent residents, together with students, scholars, au pairs (defined as young⁵, single foreign nationals who join a cultural exchange program and help a host family with light housework during the one-year stay), refugees, land-based seafarers, oil rig workers, and undocumented migrants who usually engage in domestic work.

Nobody can give the exact figure of Filipino residents in the Netherlands. Figures from the Dutch Central Bureau of Statistics show that, as of July 2006, there are 13,499 registered Filipinos in the Netherlands, 67 percent (9,075) of whom are women. Regarding their civil status, 56 percent of first generation Filipinas are married, 80 percent have Dutch partners, while seven percent are divorced. In contrast, estimates from the Bayanihan (Neighbourly Cooperation) Foundation, a self-help women's organization based in Utrecht, put the number closer to 17,000 to 19,000, including undocumented migrant workers, land-based seafarers and offshore workers (Padilla, 2007: 196-197).

The Filipino community is said to be among the most organized migrant communities in the Netherlands. Bayanihan Foundation estimates that there are over 50 existing Filipino organizations: some focused on socio-cultural issues, others more political in character, while most are committed to the rights and welfare of the migrant community. They tend to depend on volunteers and Dutch supporters, and if not self-reliant, receive financial support from provincial and regional governments, funding agencies and faith-based organizations. Regarding ties to the Philippines, all of the groups maintain their links to their homeland, seen particularly in fundraising campaigns for relief, charity and in supporting small-scale development projects in the Philippines.

⁵ Eighteen to twenty-six years old, according to the Netherlands Au Pair Organization, http://www.napoweb.nl/en/download/av_napo_2008_en.pdf [Accessed 26 October 2009]

At present, one of the more active Filipino organizations in the Netherlands is the Commission for Filipino Migrant Workers. CFMW was established as a foundation in 1979 by concerned Filipino migrants and religious missionaries from various cities across Europe, including Dutch missionaries who had spent a number of decades working in the Philippines. It developed programs and services in response to major concerns confronting the Filipino community in Europe at the time: the threat of deportation and the ‘compulsory remittances’ required by Executive Order 508 of the dictator Marcos (Hacbang and Jusay, 2007: 108-109). After initial programs in Rome and London, the organization linked up with Filipino organizations in Rotterdam, Madrid, Stockholm, and other cities to consolidate advocacies and campaigns for migrants’ rights.

The current campaign for the rights of migrant domestic workers (arguably one of the more vulnerable sectors in the Filipino community in Europe) builds on CFMW’s earlier work. In 1998, the Europe-wide RESPECT Network was established, comprising of migrant domestic workers’ self-help organizations, migrant support organizations and trade unions. With CFMW coordinating the network, RESPECT facilitated consultations with migrant domestic workers of various nationalities in six countries (France, Greece, Italy, The Netherlands, Spain and United Kingdom) to develop the Charter for the Rights of Migrant Domestic Workers. The Charter encapsulates the campaign in three demands: the recognition of domestic work in the private household as proper work; the recognition and protection of the rights of migrant domestic workers; and the right of migrant domestic workers to an immigration status independent of employers.

Some gains by the network include the regularization of migrant domestic workers in several European countries (Greece in 1997, UK in 1998, and most recently in Belgium⁶) and continuing policy dialogues with the UN Human Rights Council’s Committee on Migrant Workers, among other international human rights bodies. However, the regularization process has been critiqued for being subject to unrealistic conditionalities, and that the European Union does not have a coherent strategy on immigration and domestic work despite the growing demand (RESPECT, 2009: 4).

In 2002, CFMW facilitated the setting up of TRUSTED Migrants, a transnational organization of migrant domestic workers with over 130 members from the Philippines, Ghana, Nigeria, Bolivia, Columbia and Mexico. From Amsterdam, smaller chapters of TRUSTED Migrants were started in Rotterdam and The Hague. In June 2006, after five years of engagement and campaigning by the RESPECT network and its allies, the Dutch trade union Abvakabo FNV opened its doors to both documented and undocumented migrant domestic workers, of whom there are 300 members in the trade union (CFMW, 2008).

⁶ <http://globalnation.inquirer.net/news/breakingnews/view/20090724-217048/Belgium-to-regularize-undocumented-migrants> [Accessed 20 October 2009]

Though criticized as self-serving in the sense that membership-based organizations are responsible for protecting and promoting its members' interests, as global actors in the social movement, labor and trade unions cooperate with NGOs because of ideological principles, areas of common concern, and because both actors 'simply cannot function in an environment where human and democratic rights are not safeguarded' (Spooner, 2005: 13).

When the Dutch trade union Abvakabo FNV was unable to guarantee social protection for members who were migrant domestic workers, TRUSTED Migrants was moved in December 2008 to FNV Bondgenoten, the largest Dutch trade union with over 470,000⁷ members. In May 2009, the Filipina chair of TRUSTED Migrants was voted into FNV Bondgenoten's board of cleaners to represent migrant domestic workers.

At present, the engagement with trade unions continues to be a steep climb for TRUSTED Migrants and its network allies. For instance, the tripartite governance structure of the International Labor Organization (governments, employers' and workers' groups) implies that migrants and support organizations have to team up with trade unions in the regularization campaign for migrant domestic workers, if it would like its demands to influence social protection mechanisms such as the proposed ILO Domestic Workers Convention. While trade unions see eye to eye with RESPECT on its first two demands (the recognition of domestic work in the private household as proper work, and the recognition and protection of the rights of migrant domestic workers), for the third demand on the right of migrant domestic workers to an immigration status, it does not.

Parallel to lobby and advocacy work, collective action is being done through microfinance to support varied local development initiatives in the Philippines. Koop Natin (Our Cooperative), a credit cooperative established in 2004, is composed of an estimated 35 Filipino migrants in the Netherlands, most of whom are members of TRUSTED Migrants. The organization, set up initially to assist undocumented migrants who were not allowed to open bank accounts in the Netherlands, estimates that around 95% of its members are undocumented. With the increased circulation of financial remittances from the cooperative, Koop Natin members are more able to ensure that their families have better access to social services, and are perceived to be relatively insulated in times of shock since financial remittances are supposedly less prone to local risks.

Koop Natin members are also able to support local development initiatives, usually microenterprises in the merchandising and manufacturing sectors (mini-groceries, bakeries, restaurants) and village public transport services. Apart from investing in these individual initiatives, a pioneering group of five women members invested in the credit fund of Unlad Kabayan in 2007, which provides loans to small-scale entrepreneurs in Lanao del Norte, a rural province south of the Philippines. Still, the credit cooperative is not without its

⁷ <http://www.fnvbondgenoten.nl/fnvbondgenoten/english/> [Accessed 9 November 2009]

problems. In my field research findings, while majority (seven out of nine members) of the respondents said they did not experience problems, one credit officer answered that loans were not being paid on time, while one new member said there was irregular communication and lack of information among members as a whole.

In the Netherlands, domestic work in the private household is not recognized as proper work, and therefore is not an accepted immigration status and is exempt from labor laws. Roles in domestic work include childcare, eldercare, cleaning and cooking. Migrant domestic workers originate from various regions: Asia, Africa, Latin America, and more recently Eastern Europe and countries from the Commonwealth of Independent States. Obviously, as a place of work, the private household is not typically accessible to labor unions.

Because of their status, undocumented Filipino migrants tend to engage in unregistered domestic work, or what is commonly referred to as 'black' work. Studies by Bayanihan Foundation have revealed how it was common for Filipino domestic workers to have a range of five to 11 employers at any one time. Most are concentrated in Amsterdam, The Hague, Rotterdam, Utrecht and other big cities. In recent years, there has been a growing number of male Filipino domestic workers; mostly those who came to work in the oil rigs but ended up in domestic work in contexts where heavy lifting is required (Padilla, 2007: 202). Anecdotal evidence indicates that their hard work, level of education and ability to communicate in English make Filipino domestic workers a favorite among the diplomatic corps.

A trend in child care over the past decade or so in the Netherlands is the hiring of nannies from South countries. While officially they are called au pairs (French for 'on a par' or 'on equal footing' with other family members, presumably like a guest), Bayanihan Foundation reports that 'in reality they are nannies and domestic workers blended into one, working day and night' (Oosterbeek-Latoza, 2007: 184).

Oosterbeek-Latoza further describes the au pair system as an internationally recognized educational program through which young people learn a new language and culture by living with a host family. In exchange for the hospitality, the young person helps in the household by performing light chores, such as babysitting and dishwashing. Although there is an agreement signed by the au pair and the host family, the contract is not a labor contract, and neither is the au pair hired as a domestic worker.

Whether visiting tourist, seafarer or au pair, migrants who have become undocumented are mostly those whose visas had already expired, but opted to stay to earn a higher income. However, comprehensive legal protection is not guaranteed for those who engage in domestic work. Written contracts; agreed wages, hours of work and rest; health insurance; freedom of mobility and the option to join organizations and trade unions, if not dependent on the employer's goodwill, remain largely hoped-for but lacking.

Despite being invisible as far as legal protection is concerned, the presence of Filipino domestic workers in the Netherlands has become increasingly visible. One reason for the growing demand for domestic work in many Dutch households has to do with the increased participation of Dutch women in the labor market, or the productive economy. Hiring migrant labor,

especially that of undocumented workers, is much cheaper than hiring local labor. In this regard, ‘the transnational, globalized economy is brought into the private home, not just in goods consumed there, but at its very core in the organizing and delivery of reproductive labor’ (Anderson et al., 2006, in RESPECT, 2009).

3.4 Political lines, diverging strategies: Limits and potential of migrant collective action

Generally, representatives of Philippine civil society, particularly NGOs, ‘no longer exist on society’s margins’ (Constantino-David, 1995: 154). The same holds for migrant civil society to some extent. It is consistent in claiming its position in international spaces such as the GFMD and has been a constant critical voice, whether as invited participants to the official civil society forum preceding the inter-governmental meeting, or as part of the international CSO parallel processes. These parallel processes, which have expanded in recent years, have monitored and critiqued the official process even prior to the UN dialogue in New York City in 2006 and the first GFMD in Brussels in 2007. One such parallel process to GFMD in Manila in 2008, the week-long Peoples’ Global Action on Migration, Development and Human Rights, drew almost 4,000⁸ delegates from NGOs, CBOs, migrant families, labor unions, the academe and faith-based organizations, among other groups, from the Philippines and other parts of the world.

Constantino-David characterizes Philippine community organizing work as different from the ‘Alinsky-type CO in the West’. With the expansion of the progressive movement in the early 1970s as a reaction to the Marcos dictatorship, Philippine CO became more political and ideological in character. It responded to a major shortcoming of community organizing: ‘its lack of a concrete vision beyond the resolution of localized issues’. However, as the author (1995: 157-158) explains, this political and ideological character also caused internal quarrels, until growing tensions led to divisions ‘drawn politically as each group attempted to balance CO as an essentially localist and issue-based approach with the demands of a growing national movement and the necessity for structural change’.

The political lines that were drawn in the Philippine NGO terrain in the 1970s are still evident in the parallel processes surrounding the GFMD today. In Manila in 2008, Rother (2009: 97) observed how two international CSO clusters organized separate parallel actions to the main inter-governmental forum. The Peoples’ Global Action chose a multi-stakeholder, ‘inside-outside’ strategy by being part of the official civil society preparations and forum and also organizing a week-long series of parallel events and demonstrations. Meanwhile, the International Assembly of Migrants and

⁸ Estimated figure from Migrant Forum in Asia, <http://www.mfasia.org/peoplesglobalaction/PGAMDHR.html> [Accessed 14 October 2009]

Refugees opted for an ‘outsiders by choice’ position: it condemned the GFMD process as a whole and organized its own forum and demonstrations separate from the Peoples’ Global Action.

How was it possible to attract nearly 4,000 delegates to the Peoples’ Global Action in Manila? I presume that some factors include democracy in the Philippines characterized by a vibrant civil society (that, despite being far from homogeneous, managed to link advocacies across sectors and mobilize constituencies, mostly from the labor union sector); a topic that resonated with a large segment of the country’s population, which possibly made mobilization more attainable as there was space to amplify advocacies of particular sectors; active transnational networks composed of migrants’ organizations and support groups that seek to influence dominant discourse and policy; and not least, vertical alliances (Bernier, 2001: 12) as shown by CBOs linking with NGOs, who in turn are able to provide the logistics in organizing parallel processes with the support of funding agency partners.

While it is evident that migrant civil society, despite the limitations, successfully puts up resistance in the face of dominance in this case, there are limits to the participation of some members such as CBOs and the migrants themselves, particularly if they are tied to their work in the destination country or if undocumented and therefore constrained by lack of mobility. An NGO colleague related how they wanted other delegates in Manila to visualize this dilemma during a Peoples’ Global Action workshop on the regularization campaign for migrant domestic workers in Europe. An empty chair, with an apron draped over it, was placed next to the resource persons at the front of the room. When a male domestic worker based in Hong Kong (a country that issues work and residence permits to migrant domestic workers and whose law recognizes their right to peaceful assembly and association, which sets it apart from other destination countries in Asia such as Singapore and Taiwan) tried to remove the chair, the NGO colleague explained that it symbolized the migrant domestic workers in Europe who were unable to come and speak for themselves.

Experience tells us that it is typical for migrant civil society to organize country or regional consultations to bring the network’s agreed agenda to major events in the political calendar such as the GFMD. Both documented and undocumented migrants use this space to share experiences and perspectives in policy development debates. However, the structural constraints that undocumented migrants have to overcome are multiplied: their visibility and possibilities for collective action are subject to serious limitations owing to their work and living status being invisible to the law. Migrant experiences and policy recommendations tend to be brought to the table by a core group of migrant representatives (documented, engaged in recognized work, spouse of citizen in the destination country, or first- or second-generation immigrant), if not by NGOs and other allies in the network. So while the GFMD structure is critiqued for effectively pushing civil society perspectives to the margins, the character, dynamics and overall plurality of migrant civil society remind us that the voices of a large part of its population similarly go unheard; perspectives tend to be articulated instead by a core group of NGOs and CBO leaders.

3.5 Building local assets: Community economic development in the Philippines

Political decentralization across Asia has posed new challenges to local governments, NGOs and other actors to find innovative ways to enhance local economic development. However, structural barriers persist as neo-liberal economic reforms are still advanced in dominant economic discourse. One example is the gradual departure of government from the provision of basic services and the currency being given to income generation through foreign direct investment and export-oriented industrialization. These reforms have been challenging for the most part to local government units in rural areas that do not have the appropriate infrastructure, resources or capacity to attract such investment.

For funding agencies that have worked through centralized governance structures as a rule, the challenge implies discovering ways to assist development projects at the local level (AusAID, 2001, in Cahill, 2005). For local government units in rural areas, decentralization has spurred the search for alternative sources of local income to decrease dependency on external funding sources. In the Philippines, the need for more local revenue has encouraged some local government units to go into partnership with local NGOs.

Development practitioners have given mixed reactions to these phenomena. In a discussion of how space affects power relations and the sustainability of LED interventions, Cahill reports the findings of an action research led by the Australian National University on alternative economic development in the municipality of Jagna, Bohol in the Philippines. As the research project promoted the concept and practice of a 'diverse economy' (Gibson-Graham, 1996, in Cahill, 2008: 300) and an assets-rich community, the resistance that confronted the research team was doubled: first, there were community members who saw themselves as powerless and second, local elites were determined to maintain control.

It is an understandable reaction from various actors of a local community, stemming from the common belief that a locality lacks investment capital, knowledge and skills to engage in LED and that people are poor because central government agencies are not doing their jobs. Citing findings from the Jagna case, though these are widely applicable elsewhere, Cahill (2008: 300) illustrates that by focusing on local needs instead of assets, past LED projects led by government and NGOs 'inadvertently strengthened a sense of impotence and dependence among many participants. The answer to local economic empowerment... was seen to lie elsewhere – in the export market, large-scale industrialization and in labor migration'.

Unlad Kabayan (Progress for Filipinos), a development NGO established in the Philippines in 1996, is considered 'having gone furthest in facilitating migrant-financed alternative enterprises' (Gibson, Law and McKay, 2001: 380) and in discerning the possibilities for migrants as LED actors in the origin country. The NGO's strategy, called MSAI-CDR (Migrant Savings and Alternative Investment for Community Development and Reintegration), supports sustainable economic alternatives to the transnational migration

experience. It encourages migrants (mostly in low-skill and vulnerable job categories) to pool their savings and invest in LED enterprises in the origin country: either those initiated by returning migrants or local projects assisted by the NGO. It also assumed the role of business incubator and focused on enterprises aimed at job-generation, social inclusion and environmental protection.

The enterprises assisted by Unlad Kabayan ranged from merchandising (school supplies, agricultural-veterinarian supplies), agriculture-related (organic poultry-raising, rice milling, integrated farming) and some manufacturing (noodle-making, yam processing). By 2000, the NGO was supporting migrant-initiated microenterprises all over the country: from Cagayan Valley in the north to Davao in the south. Not surprisingly, the organization's resources were stretched during this validation period of the MSAI-CDR strategy. As explained by the Communities Economic Collective⁹ and Gibson (2009: 3): 'The choice of locality for business development was largely driven by the allegiances of certain migrant savings groups to their home communities and Unlad Kabayan had little control over the geography of their activities'. Business operations were run along 'relatively traditional lines', with priority being given to releasing dividends from the investments made by migrant savers. Apart from this, there seemed to be little coherence linking the different enterprises together. At the time, working relations with local government units in the enterprise areas were either lukewarm or absent.

In recent years, however, the MSAI-CDR strategy has drawn stronger support from other actors. Local government units have teamed up with the NGO for poverty alleviation among local residents. In Linamon, Lanao del Norte, the mayor offered government facilities, resources and personnel to be trained by Unlad Kabayan for enterprise development. In Kolambagan, Lanao del Norte, the mayor wanted to create the means to assist a group of rebel returnees who had lost their lands and members of their families. Unlad Kabayan was called to train the CBO of rebel returnees in basic entrepreneurship, and in defining their potential business resources and the opportunities for investment in their locality (Villalba, 2008: 3).

While migrants engage in trans-local livelihoods in both origin and destination countries, it still stands that the work and living conditions of most migrant respondents in this research paper emphasize the sense of urgency to address their lack of stability and security in the destination country. Unlad Kabayan's approach 'takes a pragmatic view of labor migration, seeing it as a temporary move for economic reasons with the potential for domestic workers to accumulate substantial savings' (Gibson, Law and McKay, 2001: 380). The authors elaborate further that the NGO's strategy is anchored on the recognition of migrants' 'economic desire... [and] affirms their economic incentives to migrate [while] at the same time acknowledging the dynamic

⁹ The Community Economies Collective Kioloa Writing Group included members of Unlad Kabayan, the Bohol Initiatives for Migration and Community Development, and academic staff and graduate scholars from the Australian National University.

potential of overseas earnings' for themselves as well as local communities in the Philippines.

Given the heterogeneity and dynamics in Philippine civil society, the MSAI-CDR approach is not without its detractors. The authors briefly dwell on this and offer their theoretical intervention:

One of the most clearly voiced criticisms of the program is that it is endeavoring to turn returning migrants into capitalists and is thereby strengthening the bourgeois nature of Philippine society and hastening its incorporation into a global capitalist system. This analysis is caught within the static and teleological frame that sees all happenings that occur in the 'era of global capitalism' as evidence of the hegemonic power of capitalism. Our theoretical intervention proposes an unlinking of analysis from any notion of historical necessity or homogeneity. It thereby offers support for [Unlad Kabayan's] efforts in liberating subjects and complexifying futures (Gibson, Law and McKay, 2001: 381).

Chapter 4

Migrant collective action for LED: Findings and analysis

4.1 Migrant actors for LED: Identities and motivations

From my field research findings, the total number of 18 respondents to the two questionnaires was divided into two clusters: nine respondents were members of either TRUSTED Migrants or Koop Natin; the other nine were members of the church choir in The Hague. The objective was to compare the experiences of both clusters, as well as capture qualitative data on their work and living conditions, practical experience in collective action, and willingness and capacity to support LED in the Philippines. Six women from TRUSTED Migrants in The Hague participated in the focus group; the findings from their discussion were included in the TRUSTED/Koop Natin cluster where applicable (on work and residence status, type of work and assets). The findings are presented with the understanding that the 24 respondents in my field research may not represent all Filipino migrant domestic workers in the Netherlands, and with the objective of presenting a profile of the respondents that would contextualize their emerging identities and motivations.

Among the members of TRUSTED/Koop Natin, 11 respondents (73 percent) were undocumented, while four (27 percent) were documented. The numbers from the church choir were distributed more evenly: out of nine respondents, five (56 percent) were documented while four (44 percent) were undocumented. Most of the respondents were core members comprised of a majority of migrant CBO leaders, with a minority of NGO program officers and CBO members. Both clusters showed some evidence of relay migration (Arizpe, 1981, in de Haas, 2008: 22) as there were family ties among the members. The findings reflect how migrant respondents were able to leave the Philippines with the support of immediate and extended family members already residing in the Netherlands; some older family members have gone back to the Philippines for retirement, with younger family members migrating to the Netherlands to take their place. The respondents were predominantly women; there was only one male out of the 24 total respondents.

On their type of work, out of the 15 respondents from TRUSTED/Koop Natin, 10 (66 percent) are domestic workers, three (20 percent) are NGO program officers, one (seven percent) works as a cafeteria staff, and one male (seven percent) works as a carpenter. All nine respondents from the church choir are engaged in domestic work (including babysitting, eldercare and tutoring), although two (one hotel chambermaid who is a Dutch passport-holder, one diplomat's housekeeper who is a permanent resident) are engaged in 'white' or registered work.

Among the four respondents from TRUSTED/Koop Natin that disclosed the amount of their monthly income, the average was 1,270 euro, the lowest being 800 euro (a 25-year-old au pair who does part-time domestic work for three other employers), and the highest being 1,678 euro (a 50-year-

old domestic worker with only one full-time employer that she has worked with for seven years). Among the seven respondents from the church choir that disclosed the amount of their monthly income, the average was 1,386 euro, the lowest being 1,000 euro (two women, both married, a 36-year-old and a 44-year-old) and the highest being 2,000 euro (the 59-year-old working as a hotel chambermaid who also does part-time domestic work). Some respondents have said that it was possible that others with a monthly income of 1,000 euro (apart from the au pair, who are generally given a stipend of 340 euro each month, according to Oosterbeek-Latoza, 2007: 188) had under-declared the amount.

The relationship between capacity-building, diversity of economic activities and expressed interest to invest in LED becomes apparent upon comparing the responses of the two clusters when asked if they have received training in managing their income and supporting economic initiatives in the Philippines, and if not, if they needed such training. It is logical that TRUSTED/Koop Natin responded more positively because of its activities and interests. Unlad Kabayan has been in partnership with CFMW since the late 1990s in providing capacity-building to migrants and promoting savings and investment to support LED in the Philippines. Koop Natin, started in 2004, encourages its members to increase their economic activities; opportunities to support LED are likely to increase as well. As a faith-based social group, the church choir in The Hague has different activities and interests, and savings and investment among its members would most likely occur according to their own initiative. Figures 4.1 and 4.2 below present the responses of the two clusters.

Figure 4.1 TRUSTED/Koop Natin on capacity-building received in managing income and supporting LED

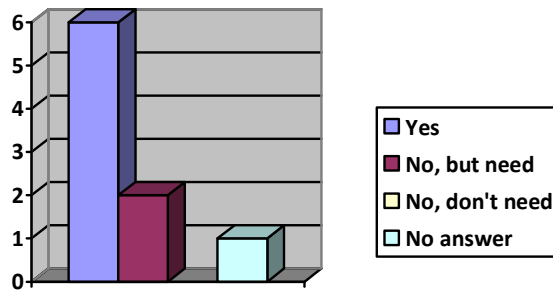
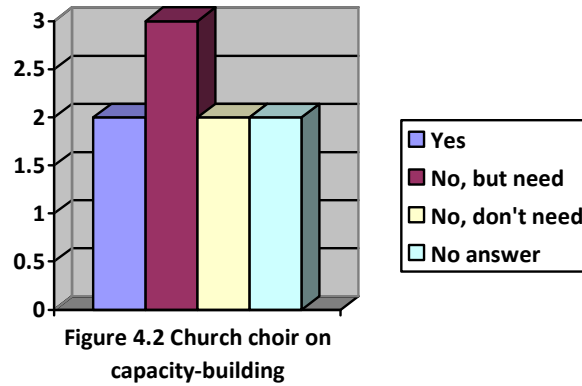


Figure 4.1 TRUSTED/Koop Natin on capacity-building

Source: Own construction based on field research findings

Figure 4.2 Church choir on capacity-building received in managing income and supporting LED



Source: Own construction based on field research findings

Despite initial answers from most of the respondents that they had no savings, the findings reveal that among those who provided answers, majority of both clusters (11 out of 13 respondents or 85 percent in TRUSTED/Koop Natin, eight out of nine respondents or 89 percent in the church choir) had assets such as land, leased housing, small shops, public transport services, savings and investment.

The table below presents the economic activities and assets of both clusters when asked how they supported LED and prepared for their future. The diversity of economic activities being undertaken by respondents from TRUSTED/Koop Natin is striking. Out of 13 respondents in the cluster, five (38 percent) leased housing, five (38 percent) had made investments, four (31 percent) owned land, two (15 percent) owned a shop, two (15 percent) owned public transport, and two (15 percent) had savings. Out of nine respondents in the church choir, five (56 percent) owned land, three (33 percent) leased housing, and two (22 percent) owned a small shop. Members in this cluster did not articulate if they also owned public transport services or if they similarly had savings and investment.

Table 4.1 Comparison of assets of TRUSTED/Koop Natin and church choir

TRUSTED/Koop Natin	Church choir
Housing	Land
Investments (in enterprises and credit fund)	Housing
Land	Shop (small grocery, restaurant)
Shop (small grocery, restaurant, bakery)	
Public transport services	
Savings	

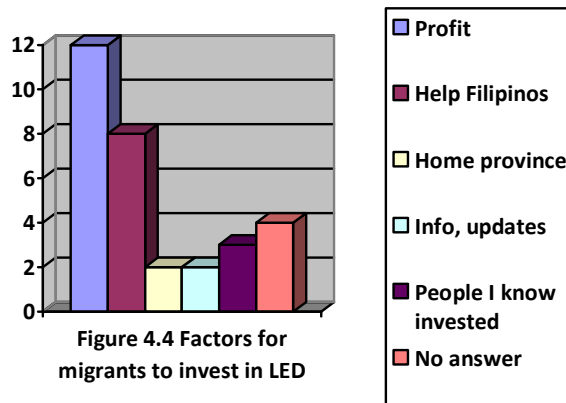
Source: Own construction based on field research findings

The investments reflected in the TRUSTED/Koop Natin findings are related to the collective action case for LED being discussed in this research paper. Three out of the five respondents with investments were part of the pioneering group of five women who invested in the credit fund of Unlad Kabayan in 2007. The pioneering group of migrant investors, whose ages range from mid-30s to early 60s, articulated mixed motivations for investing in the credit fund. To some, it was an investment that mixed profit with social value (since their investment would be used as loans supporting the microenterprises of Filipino families). For Fiona, 62 years old, it was about shared benefits: a means for migrants to save and for family members to be employed in enterprises. To others, it was a process of learning by doing and preparing for their own future. Loida, 50 years old, plans to retire in the Philippines within five years' time and is considering starting her own credit cooperative for returned migrants and their families in her hometown north of the Philippines. For Myrna, 42 years old and married to a Dutch national, the investment seems to be one of several other projects, including a feeding program for out-of-school youth that she recently started in her hometown south of the Philippines, which operates on small donations she has mobilized in her network in the Netherlands. Like Loida, she is also thinking of starting her own credit cooperative in her hometown.

Majority of both clusters expressed willingness to invest in LED initiatives in the Philippines. All nine respondents in TRUSTED/Koop Natin responded positively. Among the respondents in the church choir, seven responded positively, one said no, and one gave no answer. When asked about the negative answer, the respondent, a 44-year-old mother of three who has lived in the Netherlands for the past four years, related how she had lost her restaurant business and savings because of a pyramid scam in the Philippines years ago. Pyramid scams are investment networking schemes promoting fraudulent projects wherein investors are promised high returns and commissions when they recruit other investors, thus creating a 'pyramid' of investors for the project. Over three years, the respondent invested Php 40,000 each month in the sham project until her investment reached Php 1.44 million (equivalent of 20,431.33 euro at 1 euro = Php 70.48). As a result, the respondent has been wary of every investment-related project that came her way. The experience was one of the factors that made her decide to try her luck in the Netherlands.

It comes as no surprise that when asked what would motivate them to invest in LED projects in the Philippines, profit (or the financial stability of the enterprise and investment growth) was the biggest factor, followed by sustainability of the project and that it helps Filipino families and communities. Other factors (preference for the project location to be in the migrant's home province, regular information and updates sent to migrant investors, that people and organizations known and trusted by the migrant are also investors in the project) proved to be secondary.

Figure 4.3 Factors that would motivate migrants to invest in LED in the Philippines



Source: Own construction based on field research findings

This brings to mind an anecdote related previously by the executive director of Unlad Kabayan, that soon after the organization was established in 1996, other NGOs similarly began promoting LED projects among the Filipino diaspora in Europe, but were mobilizing donations rather than investments. The Filipinos in Europe reportedly laughed at the NGOs and asked them if they thought money grew on trees in Europe.

Unlad Kabayan was going through its own learning process at the time. Even as the organization conducted studies among local communities to establish potential LED projects that migrants could invest in, ‘indicative of the uneasy trust for the scheme at the time, only the two founding savings and investment groups entrusted their savings for investment purposes. The rest stuck to the savings schemes that primarily earned interest’ (Unlad Kabayan, 2010 forthcoming: 5). For the rest of the migrant savers, to see was to believe; they were waiting to see if Unlad Kabayan’s projects could happen on the ground.

De Haas points out that early on, Heinemeijer et al. (1977, in de Haas, 2008: 47) already made the observation that ‘development in migrant-sending regions is a *prerequisite* for return and/or investment rather than a consequence of migration’ (emphasis in the original). Individual migrants are said to have ‘real but fundamentally limited ability... to overcome structural constraints’. The author warns against overly positive discourse on migration and development that has come out in recent years, and puts emphasis on the more general development context, which determines ‘the extent to which the development *potential* of migration can be realized’ (emphasis in the original).

4.2 Migrant visions: Negotiating trans-local development

In an effort to go beyond representations of migrants as heroes and victims, I present the stories of Jane and Amy, two of the six Filipino migrant workers based in The Hague who took part in my focus group discussion in August

2009. These examples of multifaceted migration experiences subvert the discourse that, as Gibson, Law and McKay (2001: 372) argue, ‘exists to contain and “manage” [Filipina migrants]’.

By saying that ‘the local context as a field of negotiations, which may enable or disable possible activities or the articulation or localization of certain visions, has been ignored so far’, Dannecker (2009: 122) brings our attention to a gap in the literature, which this section will attempt to narrow. The mutual help relationships between Filipina migrants in the Netherlands and their network members in the Philippines that are touched upon in the stories also hint at what Mazzucato (2009: 1105) calls ‘informal insurance arrangements, where people pool their risks together so that when one or several members incur a shock, other members will help them recover from the shock’.

Box 4.1 Jane’s story: On gains, losses and family negotiation

Jane, 36 years old, completed a computer secretarial course in the Philippines, and is a mother of two. Her ex-husband takes care of the children back home. She came to the Netherlands in 2005 on a tourist visa upon the invitation of her sister and aunt, both Dutch passport-holders in The Hague. Jane had paid 3,000 euro for the sponsorship to come to the Netherlands, where she worked as a stay-in dog-sitter for one year. She worked Mondays to Saturdays from 13.00 until 17.00, received 500 euro a month, and was free to engage in part-time domestic work in other households during her spare time.

Box 4.1 Jane’s Story

At first, I planned to work here for just five years. I met my targets: I built an apartment for rent [back home], I bought three plots of land. But there was an emergency in the family, I had to spend for my ex-husband’s cancer treatment. I was forced to sell my land. Now all I have is the apartment. It was painful for me to sell the property I had worked so hard for. Five years is not enough. Now I’m giving it another five years. Even if my husband and I are no longer together, he’s still the father of my kids.

I spend for the education of my kids, but my ex-husband is in charge of day-to-day needs. I’ve sent him money for two tricycles and a multi-cab [village public transport], I’ve built the apartment. Whatever I earn now is mine to keep. I have a policy of not sending money every month to my siblings. I’ve sent them money for start-up capital for a small store, and that’s it. It’s up to them to make the money grow, that would be their contribution. If they spend the money for nothing, that’s their problem. If you teach them to become lazy, they will be a burden to you for life.

I keep my savings in my sister’s bank account [in the Netherlands], also in a joint account with my ex-husband at home. If they’re both gone, then I’m gone as well. I also have an investment that both of them don’t know about. I invested in a rice delivery service for office employees in the Philippines managed by a friend who is my business partner. I monitor the account [which is in the friend’s name] but the money is with my friend. I invested Php 30,000 (equivalent of 425.65 euro at 1 euro = Php 70.48) and my friend just adds more money into the account. The business has been going on now for two years.

Source: Own construction based on focus group discussion

Box 4.2 Amy's story: On life's ups and downs, and negotiating with employers

Amy, 36 years old, completed a Bachelor's degree in marketing in the Philippines. In 1998, she came to the Netherlands as a tourist sponsored by her mother and Dutch stepfather. In 2000, her stepfather passed away, and in 2006, with her papers 'still not in order', the IND (Dutch Immigration) denied her permit to stay upon deciding that her mother could not afford to sponsor her (as the mother lived through her husband's pension). Amy says that under the old law she would have been permitted to stay. Initially she performed domestic work for four employers; now she works for 10.

Box 4.2 Amy's Story

I should be done with cleaning houses before I turn 40. I don't want to be 50 years old still cleaning houses, by that age I should be secure in my life already. When I was growing up, even when my mom taught me to do household chores, we had our own household help. I had no idea I would be doing the same thing [in the Netherlands]. By 40 or 45 years old, hopefully my situation together with my mom would be sorted out. You can't wait around for a man [Dutch citizen] so you can have papers. Of course, I would like it [to be so], but you can't rely on this to happen, you have to improve the situation yourself.

I can say that my outlook in life has changed. Back home I was just waiting to receive my salary, but here the amount you earn depends on your own initiative, like how many households you can work for. [Given the lack of security in domestic work, there are exceptions.] I have the keys to my employer's apartment, so I can do extra work when they are away. Some of them I have worked with for 11 years, so there's trust. I know the security code of the house of another employer. I get paid half [vacation pay] when they are away.

I was brought to the Netherlands because I was broke. My mom had left me a business but I didn't manage it well. For three months my mom boycotted me [did not send money]. That's why I was forced to work by making spaghetti sauce [at an Italian restaurant in the Philippines]. I had applied to sell insurance and also at Easycall [mobile pager company], but nothing came of it. It's hard to find work back home when you don't have connections. I finished [with a degree] in marketing but I was working in the kitchen.

My mom was doing 'white' work in the Netherlands. She was a fish-cleaner in the market. But she was also a domestic worker. I never realized how difficult it could be. But I'm already saving – one part of my income goes to my expenses here, another part for emergencies, another part for the future. I bought two plots of land, one for a future business and one for selling again. I bought property near the beach and had an apartment built there. I'm thinking of renting it out to tourists.

Yes, our employers recognize our work. But after that, what? We have to think and act for ourselves. Can we allow ourselves to grow old with nothing?

Source: Own construction based on focus group discussion

From these stories, we can observe how Filipina migrants like Jane and Amy challenge the recurring victim representation. Jane demonstrates her agency by setting limits on how much and how often she sends financial remittances to her ex-husband and siblings. She articulates and negotiates her own development visions by setting herself apart from the typical Filipina migrant who regularly sends financial remittances to address the needs of both immediate and extended family members, thus ‘contest[ing] local practices directly’ (Dannecker, 2009: 124). Jane was also able to negotiate with her first employer so that she could perform domestic work in other households during her spare time. Amy’s ability to reduce the risks in her work by gaining the trust of her employers to get more work hours for herself, similar to the case study of Luz discussed by Gibson, Law and McKay (2001: 377), ‘illustrates a level of ingenuity and agency that ill befits the “victim” representation’.

Aside from demonstrating how ‘transnational identities are evolving due to transnational practices and cross-border mobility’ (Pries, 1999, in Dannecker, 2009: 121), these stories apply to Mazzucato’s discussion on how informal insurance arrangements work despite the absence of geographic proximity. Jane paid for her ex-husband’s cancer treatment and is responsible for the education of their children, and in return he takes care of them and the family’s day-to-day needs. The findings in this research paper reflect those of economists doing migration studies even before the new economics of labor migration (NELM) approach was introduced, with migration described as ‘an insurance strategy for households’ wherein ‘family welfare was a main motivator to remit’ (Johnson and Whitelaw, 1974, in Mazzucato, 2009: 1106). The passage below describes through the lens of NELM what transpires after the family assists in the migrant’s departure from the origin country. In offering an interpretation of trans-local mutual help practices, the author effectively merges NELM theory with risk pooling literature.

The migrant then sends remittances either as delayed payment for the initial investment the family has made... or as insurance to the family in times of shock (Gubert, 2002; Stark and Lucas, 1988). In this latter case, remittances help households deal with imperfect or non-existing insurance markets by way of providing households with an external source of income not prone to the same risks as locally earned income... NELM theory explains remittances as the outcome of a self-enforcing contractual arrangement between migrants and their families from which both parties expect to gain. (Mazzucato, 2009: 1106)

The question raised by NELM literature, on what binds migrants to this contract when they could simply cut family ties and keep their income for themselves, comes with three motivations, two of which apply to Jane and Amy’s stories. One is ‘altruistic feelings toward the family’, typically a compelling motivator for migrants, and the other is ‘co-insurance’, wherein the contract also benefits the migrant. The second motivation is particularly relevant to the situation of undocumented migrant domestic workers. While it is true that technology has made communication more convenient than ever, to a large degree migrants maintain ties with family members back home because ‘their insecure position in the host country society makes it important for migrants to maintain linkages with their support networks in case of need

or unforeseen crises' (Mazzucato, 2007; Levitt, 2001; Basch, Glick Schiller and Szanton Blanc, 1994, in Mazuccato, 2009: 1106).

The practice of engaging migrants in LED in the origin country, particularly the partnership of Unlad Kabayan, CFMW, TRUSTED Migrants and Koop Natin (keeping in mind the precarious situation of migrant domestic workers in the Netherlands), can be considered a method of pooling of risks within a transnational network. In Jane's story, one striking feature is her choice not to inform her ex-husband and siblings of her small investment in her friend's rice delivery business. Was she not afraid of losing her investment, considering the geographic distance of her friend/business partner, and the business itself? Drawing on findings from previous migrant interviews, Mazzucato (2003, in Mazzucato, 2009: 1112) explains that 'migrants have more *sanctioning power over a friend* who misbehaves than over a family member, since custom makes it difficult to sever relationships with kin' (emphasis in the original). Similarly, Unlad Kabayan acts as a mediating network member linking migrants to LED in the Philippines. It is a demonstration of Mazzucato's conclusion that institutional arrangements see to it that insurance contracts are monitored and enforced in spite of a trans-local context.

4.3 Trust and ties: Conditions for collective action

We have seen how trust figures strongly in mutual help relationships among migrants and their networks. In the previous section, Jane demonstrates a common strategy among undocumented migrants by keeping her savings in her sister's bank account in the Netherlands and in the joint account she shares with her ex-husband in the Philippines. She invested in her friend's rice delivery business and monitors the bank account despite the geographic distance, with the expectation that the business is doing well since it continues to operate after two years, and that her investment is intact. In light of the findings, in this section I discuss how trust, ties and embeddedness affect the conditions for collective action at the organizational level, which then shapes the role of migrants as LED actors in the origin country.

In his theoretical analysis, Nooteboom (2007: 30, citing Bradach and Eccles, 1984: 104) defines trust as 'a type of expectation that alleviates the fear that one's exchange partner will act opportunistically'. The author characterizes trust by explaining how it may be built personally based on relationships, and impersonally based on institutions. There are institutions that support trust, but in contexts where there are no such institutions, 'trust must be built entirely from relationships, and without institutional support that can be laborious and such trust can be fragile'. Meanwhile, drawing on field research findings, Uzzi (1996: 678) presents trust as a 'governance mechanism of embedded relationships... it promotes voluntary non-obliging exchanges of assets and services between actors... trust is personal and disposes one to interpret favorably another's intentions and actions'. Uzzi emphasizes a significant outcome of trust: benefits are carried on to transacting partners, which encourages the receiving partner to reciprocate when the opportunity comes up. From my field research, I have observed that the trust transferred by CFMW to visiting staff of Unlad Kabayan elicits trust towards the latter by members of TRUSTED Migrants and Koop Natin as well.

When asked ‘If you had steady income and security, would you still be a member of TRUSTED Migrants/Koop Natin?’ all nine members answered yes, with one elaborating, ‘Yes, because TRUSTED is people’. Embeddedness is reflected in the emphasis on ‘people’, and the implicit solidarity and sense of community experienced in the group. To explain this, Uzzi proposes the structural embeddedness approach, which combines organization theory with social network theory (Romo and Schwartz, 1995, in Uzzi, 1996: 675), and argues that ‘the structure and quality of social ties... shape economic action by creating unique opportunities and access to those opportunities’.

During participant observation, I noticed how the word ‘trust’ came up frequently, particularly in the context of Koop Natin. In assessing the group’s composition of ties, I would say that its members have similar characteristics (activities and interests, or the ‘bonding capital’ identified by Putnam, 2000, in Nooteboom, 2007: 33), in that they are predominantly Filipino women migrants, ranging in age from their 30s to 50s, mostly undocumented, and are motivated to send home financial remittances for family welfare, but are also interested to invest in LED in the Philippines and to profit from it. The ties within the group are relatively strong based on the features enumerated by Gilsing and Nooteboom (2005, in Nooteboom, 2007): duration (Koop Natin was started in 2004, TRUSTED Migrants in 2002 and CFMW in 1979), frequency of interaction, investment in the relationship, trust and personal bonding. The respondents (of which six out of nine, or 67 percent, were core group members) displayed awareness of the group’s objectives and main achievements, with some describing gains in more detail than others.

Box 4.3 Responses to ‘What to you are the main achievements of TRUSTED/Koop Natin?’

‘For TRUSTED, setting an example on migrant domestic workers’ self-organization. For Koop Natin, the great help that it provides to each member financially.’ – Loida, 50 years old

‘Giving information to migrant domestic workers, to help us have a chance [in the regularization campaign].’ – Lyn, 25 years old

‘Undocumented migrants are able to give financial support especially if they need a bigger amount to send to their families. Migrants are able to organize themselves.’ – Fiona, 62 years old

‘Empowerment and support to each other.’ – Jessica, 35 years old

‘Koop Natin helps in our economic activities back home. It provides education and assistance for small business and financial support.’ – Myrna, 42 years old

‘Self-representation of migrants, self-organizing, negotiation with Parliamentarians and trade unions, some economic empowerment for migrant domestic workers, and making them more visible in Europe.’ – Riza, 30 years old

‘I think one of the best achievements of TRUSTED is joining the union, and making the situation of migrants, undocumented and documented, known to the public.’ – Jing, 28 years old

Source: Own construction based on field research findings

Given that there are benefits to trust, there are also limits. It may be possible to trust in someone's competence or intentions in certain situations, though not in others 'that go beyond competence or beyond resistance to temptations or pressures of survival... when expectations are disappointed, there is a problem of causal ambiguity' (Nooteboom, 2007: 36). Another limitation given by the author is that trustworthiness is 'subject to contingencies of survival'. There are people who may have the tendency or may choose to be trustworthy, but have to resort to taking advantage of others out of sheer survival. It is a sobering reminder that despite people's good intentions, in many cases Nooteboom's observation holds true that 'prosperity enables people to be trustworthy'.

4.4 Building on practice: Cases from Hong Kong and Taiwan

At present, migrant collective action towards LED is practiced among Filipino migrants and support organizations in countries of origin and destination in Asia. This section visits the case of Filipino migrant workers who have returned home to engage in LED. It is presented as the outcome of collective action pursued by migrants that have been organized by Unlad Kabayan and two NGOs, Asian Migrant Center in Hong Kong and Hope Workers' Center in Taiwan. We are encouraged to draw conceptual parallels between the Asia and Netherlands experiences; the former points to possibilities of how the latter may continue to evolve. Sobering realities and limitations of the Asia experience will also be discussed.

The Asian Migrant Center (AMC) was established in Hong Kong in 1989 to help address the problems experienced by migrant domestic workers of various Asian nationalities. It provided the usual range of services such as crisis counselling and paralegal assistance. It soon shifted its focus on two strategies: facilitating the growth of domestic worker unions and encouraging migrants to participate in its reintegration program. AMC considers these strategies crucial to organizing migrant domestic workers, particularly on 'raising their consciousness with regard to the politics of domestic work' (Gibson, Law and McKay, 2002: 378).

The migrants were gradually organized by AMC into savings groups; once a group had amassed enough savings to be used as start-up capital for a joint enterprise, it decided on an enterprise to invest in. AMC also conducted training seminars for migrants on computer skills, basic accounting and entrepreneurship. In 2002, it assisted a group of Filipino domestic workers in starting an organic integrated crop and livestock farm in a rural town south of the Philippines. One of the members has returned home to manage the enterprise in consultation with Unlad Kabayan and AMC.

The Hope Workers' Center (HWC) shares a similar story. It was established in Taiwan in 1986 initially to educate local workers and lobby the Taiwanese government on workers' rights and welfare. It eventually shifted its focus on migrant workers when more and more factory workers and care workers of various Asian nationalities sought out the center for crisis

intervention and case work. Its reintegration program shares similarities with AMC's; both programs found their origins in partnership with Unlad Kabayan.

In 2003, a Filipino care worker who had been drawn to HWC's reintegration program went back home to put the concept into practice: Evelyn, the care worker, bought foreclosed property in her hometown south of the Philippines with investments she had mobilized in her network in Taiwan. With these investments, and eventually others coming from Filipino migrant workers in Taiwan and South Korea facilitated by Unlad Kabayan and HWC, Evelyn oversaw the building of a rice center on the foreclosed property. The rice center is comprised of several inter-related microenterprises: rice milling, trading of unhusked rice, agricultural/veterinary supply store, farm credit and farm machinery services. The passage below gives an initial picture of how Evelyn and her fellow migrant investors have contributed to the local economy.

In 2007, the business had a net worth of Php 3.5 million (Aust\$ 91,000 or 91,000 euro), annual sales worth Php 4.4 million and made a net profit Php 207,000 (Aus\$ 5,440 or 3,000 euro). In the rural Philippines context these are sizeable amounts. The Centre employs 11 people full time, one part-time and eight seasonal workers; services the needs of 129 local farmers; and is a focus of investment by 66 overseas migrant workers. (CEC and Gibson, 2009: 5)

These experiences in Asia have captured the imagination of development practitioners around the world for 'a politics based on a vision of [migrant workers] as full of potentiality rather than lack' (Gibson, Law and McKay, 2001: 380), and for its pragmatic view of transnational migration as a livelihood strategy of migrant workers and emerging evidence of how this stimulates local economic development in the origin country. In 2007, the Unlad Kabayan executive director was awarded Social Entrepreneur of the Year in the Philippines by Ernst and Young, a prominent global corporate evaluator and advocate of entrepreneurship (CEC and Gibson, 2009: 3; Villalba, 2008: 3). Tempering the recognition of being a pioneer in this field, however, are difficult lessons learned over the years by migrant LED actors together with Unlad Kabayan, AMC and HWC. Many migrants consider investment as something they can put in and take out as they wish, similar to a savings account in a bank. Others anticipate a swift return on investment and insist on 'instant and substantial' dividends: 'while they lack an understanding of mainstream business principles, they know even less about how an alternative economy might work and how they could be contributors to and beneficiaries of alternative wealth-creating and distributing businesses' (CEC and Gibson, 2009: 5).

Another lesson is dealing with the expectation that a large number of migrant workers will be able to reintegrate in their origin communities and local economies to work in the enterprises they had invested in. As explained by CEC and Gibson, generating jobs in small enterprises is difficult, and while returned migrants might aim for a management role, they usually do not have the particular skills necessary to take over management of the enterprise. As the story of Evelyn's rice center illustrates, some migrants have been able to return to run an enterprise profitably; however, the number remains small.

Another expectation is that the migrant savers are the 'best judge' of what kind of enterprise to set up or invest in. More and more, Unlad Kabayan has taken on the role of identifying business opportunities, directing the interests of migrant investors and acting simultaneously as business incubator. Over the years, migrants and support organizations have understood the imperative of including non-migrants in the developmental equation, in that 'migrant investment needs to be combined with local communities willing to spearhead enterprise development and take on the responsibility of making these work' (CEC and Gibson, 2009: 3).

Chapter 5

Conclusion

This research paper explored a fairly untrodden pathway by investigating the link between transnational migration and local economic development in the Philippines. The potential and limitations of migrant domestic workers and support organizations in shaping the role of migrants in LED in the origin country were analyzed against the backdrop of various opposing views in the migration-development debate. While the research paper discusses a particular process of migrant collective action towards community economic development, it has been necessary to include a discussion of the broader situation of migrant civil society and the actors involved in the process of migrant collective action, to contextualize and locate it in the debate.

The analysis in this research paper was informed by a discussion of concepts that took into consideration the consensus and differences among various perspectives. Migrant workers have been proclaimed in international debates as emerging actors in development. While this research paper takes the pragmatic stance that migrant domestic workers, with the support of their organizations and networks and under certain conditions of collective action, are full of potential as LED actors, since migration affects sending societies as a whole, an inclusive LED process that involves non-migrants is necessary.

To analyze the broader situation, I discussed how borders and restrictive migration policy, while considered less than effective, simultaneously develop the rhetoric of anti-immigration in Europe while maintaining access to a foreign labor force. Contradictions in migration policy become more evident when we analyze how emigration is considered a human right while immigration is regarded as a matter of state sovereignty. Undocumented migration is perceived as a symptom of inadequate migration policy and an expression of people claiming their right to migrate.

The increasing demand for their services in the Netherlands, and the presence of migrant civil society actors and networks that simultaneously resist and seek to influence dominant migration and development discourse, make for the invisible yet organized nature of Filipino migrant domestic workers. While both the documented and undocumented use spaces in major events in the political calendar such as the Global Forum on Migration and Development, the undocumented status of migrant domestic workers limit their possibilities for collective action. Perspectives and demands tend to be brought to the table by a core group of NGOs and migrant CBO members. Parallel to lobbying and advocacy work, trans-local livelihoods abroad and at home are being maintained by migrant domestic workers. However, their precarious situation in the Netherlands compels them to prepare for their eventual return and engaging in community economic development in the Philippines.

On the emerging profile of migrant workers motivated to support LED, the findings suggest that they are predominantly Filipino women migrants, ranging in age from their early 40s to early 60s, both documented

and undocumented. There is a striking difference when their assets are compared with that of other migrant workers who have not pursued collective action for LED with support organizations in a similar context. The migrant workers in the emerging profile are a heterogeneous group and have mixed motivations for supporting LED. Still, they articulated that profit (or the financial stability of the enterprise and investment growth) was the biggest factor, followed by sustainability of the project and that it helps Filipino families and communities. There is potential for the pioneering group of women migrant investors in LED to be joined by newer investors in the group. In this sense, migrants can be viewed as ‘bridgeheads’ facilitating new members; however, they have also been perceived as ‘gatekeepers’ that restrict others from joining in (Bocker, 1994, de Haas, 2003; in de Haas, 2008: 20).

The findings suggest that trust, based on embeddedness and the composition of ties in the organization and network, figures largely in the process of migrant collective action for LED. Based on their stories, we observed how opportunities facilitated by trust leads to migrant domestic workers exercising economic agency and demonstrating their potential as LED actors. However, trust has its limits: in situations where something goes wrong, there can be causal ambiguity; trust is also difficult to rely on when situations go beyond a person’s competence and when trustworthiness is displaced because of pressures of survival.

Earlier experiences in Asia, which hint at possibilities on how the process in the Netherlands may continue to evolve, tell us that there are still considerable limits. Migrant workers are still in the process of being educated on savings and investment. For this reason, and for their mixed motivations in supporting LED to begin with, as yet migrant workers do not necessarily see eye to eye with support organizations on what characterizes LED. And while Filipino migrant workers in Asia have already reintegrated in the Philippines to engage in LED in their origin communities, the number is evidently still small. Small enterprises can only provide a small number of jobs, and while returned migrants may aim for a management role in enterprises that they have supported, their skills and background imply that they may not be suited to the role of enterprise manager.

Nevertheless, it is encouraging that migrants and support organizations have evolved in the process of migrant collective action towards LED, and arrived at lessons on the necessity of involving non-migrants and other actors in promoting an inclusive LED process. There is space for further study and theoretical interventions to explore how other actors, such as central government and the private sector, relate to migrants and support organizations as actors in LED, which goes beyond the scope of this research.

References

- Agunias, D.R. (2008) 'Managing Temporary Migration: Lessons from the Philippine model', *Insight*, Washington DC: Migration Policy Institute.
- Bayangos, V. and K. Jansen (2009) 'The Macroeconomics of Remittances in the Philippines'. Working paper no. 470, The Hague: Institute of Social Studies.
- Bebbington, A., S. Hickey and D. Mitlin (2008) Introduction in *Can NGOs make a difference? The challenges of development alternatives*, in A. Bebbington, S. Hickey and D. Mitlin (eds.), London and New York: Zed, 3-37.
- Berner, E. and B. Phillips (2005) 'Left to their own devices? Community self-help between alternative development and neo-liberalism', *Community Development Journal*, 40 (1), 17-29.
- Berner, E. (2001) 'Networks, strategies and resistance: The concept of strategic groups revisited' (English translation obtained from the author), in Schrader, Kaiser and Korff (eds.), *Markt, Kultur und Gesellschaft*, Muenster: Lit, 113-132.
- Blakely, E.J. (1989) 'Chapter 6: The meaning of local economic development in *Planning local economic development: Theory and practice*. Newbury Park: Sage, 57-70.
- Briones, L. (2009) 'Reconsidering the migration-development link: Capability and livelihood in Filipina experiences of domestic work in Paris', *Population, Space and Place*, 15, 133-145.
- Cahill, A. (2008) 'Power over, power to, power with: Shifting perceptions of power for local economic development in the Philippines', *Asia Pacific Viewpoint*, 49 (3), 294-304.
- Cahill, A. (2005) 'Engaging communities for local economic development: Lessons from the Philippines'. Paper presented at the 'International Conference on Engaging Communities', Brisbane, 14-17 August.
- CFMW, Commission for Filipino Migrant Workers (2008) 'Migrants' raised voices in the public arena: Migrant domestic workers' perspectives'. Organizational report submitted to funding agency partner Mama Cash, Amsterdam.
- Community Economies Collective and K. Gibson (2009) 'Building community-based social enterprises in the Philippines: Diverse development pathways', in A. Amin (ed.), *Plural Economy, Plural Provision: The Social Economy in International Perspective*, London: Zed Press.
- Constantino-David, K. (1995) 'Community organizing in the Philippines: The experience of development NGOs', in M. Mayo and G. Craig (eds.), *Community empowerment: A reader in participation and development*, London: Zed, 154-167.
- Cronin, A. (2002) 'Focus Groups (Chapter 10)' in N. Gilbert (ed.), *Researching Social Life, Second Edition*. London/Thousand Oaks/New Delhi: Sage Publications, 164-177.

- Dannecker, P. (2009) 'Migrant visions of development: A gendered approach', *Population, Space and Place*, 15, 119-132.
- De Haas, H. (2008) 'Migration and development: A theoretical perspective'. Working paper no. 9, Oxford: International Migration Institute, James Martin 21st Century School, University of Oxford.
- Faist, T. (2008) 'Migrants as transnational development agents: An inquiry into the newest round of the migration-development nexus', *Population, Space and Place*, 14, 21-42.
- Fox, J. and X. Bada (2009) 'Migrant civic engagement'. Research paper series on Latino immigrant civic and political participation no. 3, Washington DC: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars – Mexico Institute.
- GFMD, Global Forum on Migration and Development (2008) Available from: <http://government.gfmd2008.org/forum_info/objectives.html> [Accessed 30 March 2009]
- Gibson, K. (2002) 'Women, identity and activism in Asian and Pacific community economies'. *Development*, 45 (1), 74-79.
- Gibson, K., L. Law and D. McKay (2001) 'Beyond heroes and victims: Filipina contract migrants, economic activism and class transformations', *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 3 (3), 365-386.
- Goetz, A.M. and R.S. Gupta (1996) 'Who takes the credit? Gender, power, and control over loan use in rural credit programs in Bangladesh', *World Development*, 24 (1), 45-63.
- Gomez, G.M. and A.H.J. Helmsing (2008) 'Selective spatial closure and local economic development: What do we learn from the Argentine local currency systems?' *World Development*, 36 (11), 2489-2511.
- Gordon, A. (1999) 'Non-farm rural livelihoods: Policy Series 4'. Chatham, UK: Natural Resources Institute.
- Hacbang, N. and F. Jusay (2007) 'Filipino migrant workers in Europe: Organizing strategies, agendas and campaigns', in F.M. Hoegsholm (ed.), *In de olde worlde: Views of Filipino migrants in Europe*, Quezon City: Philippine Social Science Council, 102-127.
- Helmsing, A.H.J. (2003) 'Local economic development: New generations of actors, policies and instruments for Africa', *Public Administration and Development*, 23, 67-76.
- IOM, International Organization for Migration (2008) *World Migration 2008: Managing Labor Mobility in the Evolving Global Economy*, Geneva: IOM.
- Mavrincac, S. et al. (2008) 'Migrant women, financial education and the implication of savings for sustainable return'. Working paper no. 1, Singapore: aidha.
- Mayoux, L. (2001) 'Tackling the down side: Social capital, women's empowerment and microfinance in Cameroon', *Development and Change*, 32, 435-464.
- Mazzucato, V. (2009) 'Informal insurance arrangements in Ghanaian migrants' transnational networks: The role of reverse remittances and geographic proximity', *World Development*, 37 (6), 1105-1115.

- MFA, Migrant Forum in Asia (2009) *Mobilizing migrant community and civil society voices for the 2nd Global Forum on Migration and Development: The Migrant Forum in Asia experience*, Quezon City: MFA.
- Mosley, P. and D. Hulme (1998) 'Microenterprise finance: Is there a conflict between growth and poverty alleviation?', *World Development*, 26 (5), 783-790.
- Nirantar (2007) *Examining self-help groups – Empowerment, poverty alleviation, education: A quantitative study*, New Delhi: Nirantar.
- Nititham, D. (2008) 'Revealing Sites of Possibility with/in Diasporic Methodology'. Paper presented at the University College Dublin School of Sociology conference on 'Exiles and emigrants: Intercultural dialogues in Ireland and Europe', 6-9 May 2008, Dublin.
- Nooteboom, B. (2007) 'Social capital, institutions and trust', *Review of Social Economy*, 65 (1), 29-53.
- Nyberg-Sorensen, N., N. van Hear and P. Engberg-Pedersen (2002) 'The migration-development nexus: Evidence and policy options', *International Migration*, 40 (5), 49-73.
- Ochi, M. (2005) 'Return migration of Filipina overseas workers: Some implications from reintegration programs'. Paper presented at the 'Mobilites au Feminin' conference, Tangiers, 15-19 November 2005.
- Ofreneo, R.E. and I.A. Samonte (2005) 'Empowering Filipino migrant workers: Policy issues and challenges', International Migration Papers no. 64, Geneva: International Labor Office.
- Oosterbeek-Latoza, D. (2007) 'The Filipina au pairs in the Netherlands', in F.M. Hoegsholm (ed.), *In de olde worlde: Views of Filipino migrants in Europe*, Quezon City: Philippine Social Science Council, 184-195.
- Pecoud, A. and P. De Guchteneire (2007) *Migration without borders: Essays on the free movement of people*, New York: UNESCO and Berhahn Books.
- Padilla, M. (2007) 'In the service of our *kababayans*: Bayanihan Philippine Women's Center' in F.M. Hoegsholm (ed.), *In de olde worlde: Views of Filipino migrants in Europe*, Quezon City: Philippine Social Science Council, 196-216.
- Piper, N. (2009) 'The complex interconnections of the Migration-Development Nexus: A social perspective', *Population, Space and Place*, 15, 93-101.
- POEA, Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (2006) *Overseas Filipino Workers Global Presence: A Compendium of Overseas Employment Statistics*, Manila: POEA.
- Raghuram, P. 'Which migration, what development? Unsettling the edifice of migration and development', *Population, Space and Place*, 15, 103-117.
- RESPECT Network (2009) 'Acting together for the protection of the rights of migrant domestic workers: Migrant domestic workers' perspectives'. Paper submitted to the United Nations Human Rights Council, Committee on Migrant Workers, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Geneva, 14 October.

- Roldan, B. and D. Gasper (2010 forthcoming) 'The Global Forum on Migration and Development: "All talk and no action", or "a chance to frame the issues in a way that allows you to move forward together?"', in Truong, T.D. and D. Gasper (eds.), forthcoming anthology on the GFMD, New York: Springer.
- Rother, S. (2009) 'Inside-outside or outsiders by choice? Civil society strategies towards the 2nd Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) in Manila', *Asien Aktuell*, 111, 95-107.
- Santo Tomas, P. (1999) 'Enhancing the capabilities of emigration countries to protect men and women destined for low-skilled employment: The case of the Philippines', *International Migration*, 37 (1).
- Social Watch Philippines (2007) *Missing Targets: An alternative MDG midterm report*, Quezon City: Social Watch Philippines.
- Spooner, D. (2005) 'Labor unions and NGOs: The need for cooperation' in D. Eade and A. Leather (eds.), *Development NGOs and labor unions: Terms of Engagement*. Bloomfield: Kumarian: 11-32.
- Stewart, D.W. and P.N. Shamdasani (1990) *Focus Groups – Theory and Practice*. Applied Social Research Methods Series, 20, 33-101.
- THP, The Hague Process/UNESCO (2008). 'People on the Move: Handbook of selected terms and concepts', The Hague: THP/UNESCO.
- Truong, T.D. and D. Gasper (2008) 'Trans-local livelihoods and connections: Embedding a gender perspective into migration studies', *Gender, Technology and Development*, 12 (3), 285-302.
- Udehn, L. (1993) 'Twenty-five years with the logic of collective action'. *Acta Sociologica*, 36, 239-261.
- Unlad Kabayan Migrant Services Foundation (2010 forthcoming) *Unlad Kabayan: A dozen years of MSAI experiences*, Quezon City: Unlad Kabayan.
- Uzzi, B. (1996) 'The sources and consequences of embeddedness for the economic performance of organizations: The network effect', *American Sociological Review*, 61, 674-698.
- Villalba, M.A. (2008) 'Entrepreneurship and social enterprise in community development: The Unlad Kabayan experience'. Paper presented at the Southeast Asian Geography Association (SEAGA) conference, Quezon City, 4 June.
- Villalba, M.A. (2007) 'Migration and integration from an international perspective: Challenges and opportunities for adult education'. Paper presented at the DVV International conference on 'The right to education in the context of migration and integration', Bonn, 15-16 November.
- Villalba, M.A. (2002) *Philippines: Good practices for the protection of Filipino women migrant workers in vulnerable jobs*, Geneva: International Labor Office.
- Woodhouse, P. (2007) 'People as Informants' in A. Thomas and G. Mohan (eds.), *Research Skills for Policy and Development: How to Find Out Fast*. London/Thousand Oaks/New Delhi: Sage Publications in Association with the Open University, 159-179.

Appendices

Annex I

Questionnaire to members of TRUSTED Migrants/Koop Natin and their potential role in supporting LED in the Philippines

This questionnaire seeks data from members of TRUSTED Migrants/Koop Natin for use in writing a research paper for Master of Arts in Development Studies. The information you provide here will only be used for research, and your identity and other details will be kept confidential.

A. Basic information

1. Gender
 - a. Male
 - b. Female

2. Age:

3. Education:

4. Marital status:

5. Spouse and children (*if any*)
 - a. In Philippines
 - b. In NL
 - c. Other:

6. Province or city in Philippines:

7. Type of work in NL:

8. How many employers do you work for in NL?

9. Is it a stable job?

10. Work / residence status in NL:

11. How long have you lived in NL?

12. How did you migrate to NL?

- a. Au pair
- b. Tourist visa (invited by family or friends)
- c. Tourist visa (invited by employer)
- d. Student / scholar
- e. Church worker
- f. Work permit

Other

13. Why did you migrate?

.....

B. Income, savings and expenses

14. Monthly income (in euro):

15. Every month I spend euro for my own expenses in NL (estimate)

16. Monthly savings, if any (in euro):

17. Where do you keep your savings (*NL account, safe place at home in NL, account in Philippines, etc.*)?

.....

18. Every month I send home euro to my family in Philippines (estimate)

19. This remittance is used for (You can choose more than one, as long as it applies to you):

- a. Education of children
 - My own children
 - Children of other family members
- b. Build or improve house
- c. Everyday expenses of immediate family (*food, electricity, water, etc.*)
- d. To help other family members or friends (*relatives, etc.*)
- e. Family emergencies (*death, hospitalization, etc.*)
- f. Savings for capital of future business
- g. Small family business (*already set up and 'running'*)

What kind of business?

Other:

C. Future plans

- 20. What are your plans to prepare for the future?
 - a. Go back home to Philippines within 5 years
 - b. Go back home to Philippines, but not sure when
 - c. Stay in NL, visit Philippines occasionally
 - d. Stay in NL, retire in Philippines eventually

21. Are you making progress on your future plans?

- a. Yes

How?

.....
.....
.

- b. No

Why?

22. If you had steady income and security in the Philippines, would you still work in NL?

- a. Yes
- b. No

D. How TRUSTED Migrants/Koop Natin empower me and help me support local economic development in the Philippines

23. When did you join TRUSTED Migrants/Koop Natin?

24. Are you a member or officer?

25. Why did you join, and what were your expectations in joining?

.....

26. What to you are the main achievements of TRUSTED Migrants/Koop Natin?

.....

.....

27. Has being part of TRUSTED Migrants/Koop Natin empowered you as a Filipino in NL?

a. Yes

How?.....

b. No

28. If you had steady income and security, would you still be a member of TRUSTED Migrants/Koop Natin?

.....

29. Principal amount invested in Koop Natin:

30. How much did you earn (dividends, rebates, etc.) in Koop Natin last year?

.....

31. For what purpose do you use your added income from Koop Natin?

.....

.....

32. Have you experienced problems in being a member of Koop Natin?

a. Yes

Please specify:

b. No

33. Do you want to see changes or improvements in Koop Natin (better management of funds, more options to invest in Philippines, etc.)?

a. Yes

How?

.....

b. No

34. Do you have other sources of additional income, aside from your main work income and Koop Natin?

a. Yes

Please specify:

b. No

35. Has TRUSTED Migrants/Koop Natin given you training on how to manage your income and/or support economic initiatives in the Philippines?

- a. Yes
- b. No

- No, but I need this kind of training
- No, I don't need this kind of training

36. If yes, please specify (*You can choose more than one*):

- a. Instilled awareness on your role in local economic development in Philippines
- b. Training on how to save your income and preparing for the future
- c. Education for your family in Philippines on managing remittances
- d. Information and advice on business opportunities in Philippines
- e. Training on starting and managing a business

Other:

.....
.....

37. What will convince you to invest in local economic development projects in the Philippines? (*You can choose more than one*)

- a. If project is financially stable and will make my investment grow
- b. If project helps Filipino families and communities in a sustainable way (provides jobs, environmentally friendly, managed competently and transparently, etc.)
- c. If project is located in my home province or region
- d. If information and updates on the project and my investment will be sent to me regularly
- e. If people/organizations I know and trust are involved in the project (fellow migrants are also investors, NGO partners promote the project, etc.)

Other:

.....

Annex II

Questionnaire for Filipino migrants in the Netherlands and their potential role in supporting LED in the Philippines

This questionnaire seeks data on Filipino migrants in the Netherlands for use in writing a research paper for Master of Arts in Development Studies. The information you provide here will only be used for research, and your identity and other personal details will be kept confidential.

A. Basic information

1. Gender
 - a. Male
 - b. Female

2. Age:

3. Education:

4. Marital status:

5. Spouse and children (*if any*)
 - a. In Philippines
 - b. In NL
 - c. Other:

6. Province or city in Philippines:

7. Type of work in NL:

8. How many employers do you work for in NL?

9. Is it a stable job?

10. Work / residence status in NL:

11. How long have you lived in NL?

12. How did you migrate to NL?
 - a. Au pair
 - b. Tourist visa (invited by family or friends)
 - c. Tourist visa (invited by employer)
 - d. Student / scholar

- e. Church worker
- f. Work permit

Other

13. Why did you migrate?

.....
 .

B. Income, savings and expenses

14. Monthly income (in euro):

15. Every month I spend euro for my own expenses in NL (estimate)

16. Monthly savings, if any (in euro):

17. Where do you keep your savings (*NL account, safe place at home in NL, account in Philippines, etc.*)?

.....
 .

18. Every month I send home euro to my family in Philippines (estimate)

19. This remittance is used for (You can choose more than one, as long as it applies to you):

- a. Education of children
 - My own children
 - Children of other family members
- b. Build or improve house
- c. Everyday expenses of immediate family (*food, electricity, water, etc.*)
- d. To help other family members or friends (*relatives, etc.*)
- e. Family emergencies (*death, hospitalization, etc.*)
- f. Savings for capital of future business
- g. Small family business (*already set up and 'running'*)

What kind of business?

Other:

C. Future Plans

- 20. What are your plans to prepare for the future?
 - a. Go back home to Philippines within 5 years
 - b. Go back home to Philippines, but not sure when
 - c. Stay in NL, visit Philippines occasionally
 - d. Stay in NL, retire in Philippines eventually

- 21. Are you making progress on your future plans?
 - a. Yes
How?
.....
 - b. No
Why?
.....

- 22. If you had steady income and security in the Philippines, would you still work in NL?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

D. Being a member of your organization

23. When did you join (name of organization)?

24. Why did you join, and what were your expectations in joining?
.....

25. What to you are the main achievements of (name of organization)?
.....
.....

26. Has being part of (name of organization) empowered you as a Filipino in NL?

- a. Yes
How?
- b. No

27. If you had enough money and security, would you still be a member of (name of organization)? Why?

.....
.....

E. Your potential role in supporting local economic development in the Philippines

28. Do you support enterprises to help create jobs for your family or community in the Philippines (*send money home for small enterprise capital, invest part of income in enterprises, etc.*)?

a. Yes

Please specify

.....
.....

b. No

29. Has any organization provided you with training on how to manage your income and/or support economic initiatives in the Philippines?

a. Yes

b. No

- No, but I need this kind of training
- No, I don't need this kind of training

30. If yes, please specify (*You can choose more than one*):

a. Instilled awareness on your role in local economic development in Philippines

b. Training on how to save your income and preparing for the future

c. Education for your family in Philippines on managing remittances

d. Information and advice on business opportunities in Philippines

e. Training on starting and managing a business

Other:

.....
.....

31. Are you willing to support economic initiatives to help create jobs for your family or community in the Philippines?

a. Yes

b. No

32. What will convince you to invest in local economic development projects in the Philippines? (*You can choose more than one*)

- a. If project is financially stable and will make my investment grow, so I will earn more
- b. If project helps Filipino families and communities in a sustainable way (provides jobs, environmentally friendly, managed competently and transparently, etc.)
- c. If project is located in my home province or region
- d. If information and updates on the project and my investment will be sent to me regularly
- e. If people/organizations I know and trust are involved in the project (fellow migrants are also investors, church or NGO partners promote the project, etc.)

Other:

.....
.....

Annex III

Migrants' views towards local economic development and reintegration – A focus group discussion

Introduction

'Migrants' views towards LED and reintegration' is a one-hour focus group discussion seeking to establish the views of undocumented migrant domestic workers in the Netherlands towards the idea of preparing to come home for good to the Philippines.

Context

Studies conducted in the early 1990s among migrant communities in Hong Kong, Malaysia and the Philippines suggested that 'the way for migrants to return to their countries voluntarily is when they could find the option of returning home more attractive than staying abroad' (Villalba, 2008: 1). However, preparing to come home for good proved to be a process that was not so easily achieved. While migrant workers are generally motivated to work abroad because of economic reasons (Villalba, 2007; Atikha, cited in Mavrinac et al., 2008), results of more recent studies suggest that a significant portion of migrants' income goes to 'basic family maintenance' while 'productive savings... prove to be a hoped for, but for most, unrealized outcome of the migration experience' (Mavrinac et al., 2008: 2).

This focus group will explore if the earlier experience among migrant communities in Hong Kong, Malaysia and the Philippines is still being reflected at present among those in the Netherlands. This focus group can provide insight on the issue of reintegration for migrant domestic workers, inform the development of reintegration programs and be used to complement other research tools being used to explore the issue, such as interview checklists for semi-structured interviews or questionnaires for structured interviews.

Objectives

1. To explore the mixed motivations of migrants in the transnational migration experience, and draw experiences on supporting LED and potentials and challenges to 'coming home for good'
2. To find out how framing the reintegration debate through LED (i.e., setting up a means of livelihood that migrants can return to) can convince or compel the participants to prepare for their reintegration
3. To determine if there is an emerging 'profile' among migrants that is more inclined to find currency in and support LED and reintegration (gender, age, education, marital status, etc.)

Time: 1.5 hours

Needed

- 5-8 participants
- 1 facilitator
- 1 note-taker/time-keeper
- Venue that is familiar and accessible to participants, conducive to recording, with good lighting
- Chairs for participants and facilitator formed in a semi-circle, facing a wall or sheet where the images will be projected
- Chair and desk for note-taker/time-keeper to one side nearby
- Overhead projector
- Laptop or desktop computer
- 5-7 presentation slides with photos relevant to the topic (images of Filipino would-be migrants queuing at the airport, workplace abroad, Dutch families, family back home, income, savings and remittances, forms of communication such as laptop, mobile phone, etc., entrepreneurs managing microenterprises back home)
- Copies of the focus group schedule
- List of participants
- Name tags for participants
- Voice recorder with extra batteries
- Notepads and pens for facilitator and note-taker/time-keeper
- Light refreshments

[Focus group program starts in the following page]

Focus group program

Time	Activity	Objective	Description	Materials	Suggested questions for discussion
0-0.10	Opening	<p>Introductions among participants, facilitator and note-taker</p> <p>To gather data that would inform Objective 3</p>	<p>The facilitator thanks everyone for coming to the focus group. Gives brief self-introduction, introduces the note-taker, and explains that the latter is there to jot down issues and highlights during the session.</p> <p>The facilitator explains the general purpose of the research (to explore the views of migrants towards reintegration and LED). If necessary, explains what reintegration and LED mean. Also assures participants that their identities will not be revealed, and that the data gathered from the focus group will be</p>	<p>Voice recorder (all throughout)</p> <p>Notebooks and pens to jot down issues and highlights (all throughout)</p>	

			<p>treated as confidential</p> <p>The facilitator asks each participant in the circle to introduce themselves, and to state how long they have been in the Netherlands, their age, occupation, marital status and level of education in the Philippines.</p>		
0.10-0.20	Images from the migration and reintegration experience	To use quick 'visual prompts' that would serve as a background on the topic	The facilitator asks the members of the group to say what they see in the images, or share what they think the images are about	<p>Overhead projector</p> <p>Laptop or desktop computer</p> <p>5-7 presentation slides with photos related to migration and reintegration</p>	
0.20-0.40	The reality of being a migrant	<p>To 'ground' the participants in 'reality', to assure them that the topic is familiar to them and that their experience is valued, and to ensure that all participants speak out at the onset</p> <p>To gather data that</p>	<p>The facilitator asks all the group members to describe their experiences on the topic</p> <p>The facilitator 'shifts the discussion from experiences to generalizations and back again, and inquires into</p>		<p>Why did you leave the Philippines?</p> <p>Why did you choose to come to the Netherlands?</p> <p>What is it like to be a Filipino migrant in the</p>

			would inform Objective 1	both abstract principles and practical actions' (3.302 slide presentation on focus groups, 2009: slide 11)	Netherlands? Where do you see yourself 5 years from now? 10 years from now? What are your thoughts about home? Are you preparing for your eventual return to the Philippines? (If no, why not? If yes, how?) Are there constraints to going back to the Philippines? What would convince you to go back to the Philippines?
0.40-0.55	Preparing for the journey back home	To gather data that would inform Objective 2 To explore the link between income, savings and remittances to chances for reintegration			(After acknowledging the contributions of the group members to the discussion, and summarizing the main points)
0.55-0.60	Closing	To summarize the main points of the discussion, and to ask for feedback from the group members	The facilitator draws the discussion to a close on a positive note (acknowledging that the members have contributed much to the		

		<p>To thank the group members for participating in the discussion</p>	<p>discussion)</p> <p>The facilitator gives the main points that came up in the discussion, and asks the group members if they have any reflections or would like to say anything more</p> <p>The facilitator thanks the group members for participating in the discussion, and discusses briefly about the outcome of the focus group and what it will be used for, and whether subsequent meetings will be necessary (ibid: slide 12)</p>		<p>Would anyone like to add something that has not been mentioned?</p>
--	--	---	---	--	--