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**UNDOCUMENTED FILIPINA MIGRANT DOMESTIC  
WORKERS IN THE NETHERLANDS**

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## ***ABSTRACT***

The labour export policy of the Philippines is a means to overcome the country's chronic financial crisis. The remittances of overseas Filipino workers constitute a significant part of the foreign exchange earnings of the government. The link between labour export programs and increasing dependency on migrant remittance fostered by failed development policy and prolonged crisis in the country, has turned development policy into a form of 'feminisation of survival'.

In the Netherlands as a recipient country, The Dutch government, has no explicit policy on the import of domestic workers nor a clear bilateral agreement with the Philippine government. The state is not acknowledging the need for domestic workers and not legally recognising domestic work as work and the state does not take its accountabilities to protect undocumented migrant domestic workers, it doesn't even recognize their existence. Therefore, undocumented migrant domestic workers are left without any basis for claiming their rights as workers.

The aims of this study is to gather empirical data regarding the experiences and situations of undocumented Filipina migrant domestic workers in the Netherlands. Results of the research will be used as basis for evaluating, revising or developing intervention programs for the undocumented Filipina migrants. The data may be used for advocacy, education, and consciousness-raising both in the Netherlands and in the Philippines by non-government organisations (NGO's), peoples' organisations (PO's), and other agencies concerned with migration issues.

The international migration of women as domestic workers may be analyzed within the frameworks of the gendered international division of labour in the global capitalist system where developing countries like the Philippines supply cheap labor to developed countries so that human reproduction will not suffer while the latter engages in "productive" work and the pursuit of more profits. The problems and difficulties confronted by undocumented migrant domestic workers have a structural roots.

Domestic work is not recognised as work and those who perform it are not considered as objects of legislation as workers. They face triple discrimination for performing a type of work that is not recognized by the state, for being undocumented migrant workers whose contributions and presence does not acknowledge by the Dutch government and for being citizens of a country that cannot protect their rights and well-being despite their being the family breadwinners and the modern-day heroes.

The invisibility of domestic work, the absence of the social obligations of the host country, the lack of protection from the home country and the strict and harsh migration policies of the Netherlands compound the vulnerability and insecurity of undocumented Filipina migrant domestic workers.





## **Chapter One**

### **Introduction**

#### **Statement of the Research Problem**

Recent patterns of female international migration point to an emerging international division of labour in reproduction where race, class, ethnicity and age intersect and produce diverse forms of labour relations. The cross national transfer of reproductive labour under a wage contract or a marriage contract is linked with its social necessity of more women in the industrialised country entering paid labour (Truong, 1996). For many decades now, the Philippines is a major supplier of economic migrants many of whom perform work under genderized position (flexibility, irregularity of employment contract, piece work etc.) and do not achieve the status and rights of workers.

The explosion in Philippine migration started in 1979 and annual deployment had since increased consistently, from 837,929 in 1999 to 841,628 in 2001 (Tujan, 2001). Overseas migrant workers, including seafarers, are scattered over 181 countries in the world (Migrante, 1999). In general, overseas workers may be classified into two categories: (a) those who are permanently living in other countries (immigrants) and (b) those who are temporarily living in other countries (migrants). Migrants come from different sectors of the society such as peasants, workers, professionals and low-level employees of the government and private companies. Research findings show that on the whole, most migrant workers (male and female) are found in the following occupations: service industry, seafarers, nurses, domestic helpers, nannies, construction workers, and factory workers (Migrante, 1999).

Since the early 90's, feminisation of migration is a global trend and it is markedly seen in the Philippines. There has been an increasing trend of female migration compared to men. In 2002, 73% of the overseas Filipino workers (OFW) are women (Migrante 2002). Women migrate for different purposes such as for employment, education and government service. In so far as employment is concerned, women are found in the skilled, semi-skilled and 'unskilled' sectors of work. However, only a few occupy skilled positions in the international labour market (e.g. transnational corporations and other types of business activities). A majority migrate as domestic helpers, au-pairs, nannies, or entertainers to Western Europe,

Middle East, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, Japan, and North America. Many migrate through illegal means. There is a noticeable increase in the number of women who were victimised by commercial marriages or the mail-order-bride scheme. Undocumented workers or those without legal papers or with expired visas also constitute a big number of migrants.

To many analysts, the labour export policy of the Philippines turns Filipinos into economic commodities and a means to overcome the country's chronic financial crisis. The Philippine government refers to migrants or overseas Filipino workers as "modern day heroes" since it is the remittances of these overseas Filipino workers, sent through both formal (e.g. banking system) and informal channels (e.g. door to door service, mail, returning families and friends) that constitute a significant part of the foreign exchange earnings of the government. As coined by Saskia Sassen, the link between labour export programs and increasing dependency on migrant remittance fostered by failed development policy and prolonged crisis in the country, has turned development policy into a form of 'feminisation of survival' (Sassen, 2000).

From the perspective of the Netherlands as a recipient country, Filipino workers are found in a wide range of economic activities in the formal and informal sectors. The care sector (private care in the homes, and managed care in institutions) seems to have absorbed a large number of migrant women including Filipino women. The labour gap in the care sector has emerged in connection with two distinct phenomenon, namely, the Dutch emancipatory policy that was introduced in the 1980's which resulted in many women entering the labour market, and the emerging demographic pattern of an ageing Dutch society. In addition, the restructuring of the state has led to a reorganisation of the care sector that will now devolve the responsibility of caring for the elderly, the sick and of children to the family and the community (Risseuw, 2003).

The Dutch government, however, has neither an explicit policy on the import of domestic workers nor a clear bilateral agreement with the Philippine government for this purpose. The au pair program was used as one of the mechanisms to fill the labour gap in the Netherlands. Technically, the au-pair program is a cultural exchange for young women foreigners who come to improve their linguistic and professional knowledge as well as acquiring better knowledge on the general culture of the host country in exchange for certain services (Villarreal, 1994), but a study shows that women who came as au pairs become domestic

workers. Dutch households are also utilising undocumented migrant women as domestic workers, this kind of set-up spares employers of their responsibility of paying counterpart taxes and of providing social security, insurance and other benefits that a regular employee in the Netherlands enjoy as rights. It also spares the state of its accountabilities to protect migrant domestic workers as it doesn't even recognize their existence. Furthermore, the state is not acknowledging the need for domestic workers and not legally recognising domestic work as work. Given this situation, domestic workers are left without any basis for claiming their rights as workers.

The Labour of Foreign Workers Act (Wet Arbeid Buitenlandse Werknemers, WABW) policy of the Netherlands only covers 'company related' migrants. They are foreigners outside the EU hired by the Dutch to fill in positions in which no Dutch or citizen from any EU country is qualified to fill (Doomernik et. al., 1997). Hence, this only pertains to highly skilled positions. Undocumented migrants in legal term are "illegal." The Dutch operationally defines 'illegal' as those present in the Netherlands without residence permits, those who go against the Labour of Aliens Act (Wet Arbeid Vreemdelingen, WAV), and those who do not pay taxes. These may occur singly or in combination (ibid).

The term "undocumented" will be used in this research instead of the legal term "illegal" because it is more politically correct. The term "illegal" is demeaning and connotes some criminal act. On the other hand, undocumented workers are simply those who work and stay in the host country without proper documents (Javier, 1999). The population of undocumented Filipinas in the Netherlands has dramatically increased, it was estimated at round 6,000 over the years (Ledesma, 1996). They enter the Netherlands through the au-pair program, as tourists or as mail-order brides to be domestic workers and upon the expiration of their visas, turned into undocumented migrant domestic workers.\* Because of their undocumented status, most of them have no access to any social or welfare benefits and services, no health care or medical assistance, no access to affordable and safe housing, no freedom of movements or freedom to choose employment. They were exposed to a range of conditions that make them vulnerable to abuse. They suffer from legal isolation, social isolation, i.e., racism, difficulties in language, customs and weather conditions, loneliness caused by the separation from one's country and loved ones, and economic hardship and lack

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\* However, there are also students who overstayed to work and Filipina-Dutch citizens by virtue of marriage who do domestic work on a part-time basis

of decent standard of living in the Netherlands. In short, they have no claim to any of their rights as migrant workers or as human beings. A study conducted by Batis Center of Women in 1995 on situation of Filipina migrants in Japan shows that undocumented migrant workers cannot fight for their rights, defy their employers and seek assistance from authorities because they were not covered by the labour protection law of Japan.

However, it is not enough to say that legislation on the import of domestic labour can guarantee improvement on the condition of undocumented domestic workers. The experiences of Sri Lankan female domestic workers in the United Arab Emirates show that, despite the fact that they are considered legal workers and are contracted through state authorisation, they still experience abuse such as non-payment of wages, restriction of freedom, physical and sexual abuse (Premasiri, 2003). Thus, undocumented migrant women are more vulnerable to abuse, exploitation, and humiliation compared to documented ones.

### **Objectives and Research Questions**

This study aims to gather empirical data regarding the experiences and situations of undocumented Filipina migrant domestic workers in the Netherlands. Results of the research will be used as basis for evaluating, revising or developing intervention programs for the undocumented Filipina migrants. The data may be used for advocacy, education, and consciousness-raising both in the Netherlands and in the Philippines by non-government organisations (NGO's), peoples' organisations (PO's), and other agencies concerned with migration issues. The study therefore asks:

- a) What do the life stories of undocumented Filipina migrant domestic workers tell us about their experiences of abuse and coping strategies in the Netherlands?
- b) Given the discrepancy among emancipatory policy, care policy and migration policy in the Netherlands, under what conditions will their situation be improved as well as their vulnerability to abuse be reduced?
- c) How does women's migration affect or benefit the Philippines and the Netherlands?

### **Relevance of the Research**

The reason for studying undocumented Filipina migrant domestic workers is borne out of the researcher's experience and involvement in NGOs and POs (people's organisations) that

stand up for women's rights, empowerment and well being in the Philippines. This study is also an attempt to contribute to the continuing research on women and migration. Documenting the experiences of undocumented Filipina migrant domestic workers in the Netherlands will provide *Migrante*, a non-profit migrants' organisation based in Amsterdam and other organisations involved with migrants' issues with empirical data that can be used to raise awareness on and advocate for the issues of undocumented migrants, to deepen people's understanding on women's issues in relation to migration and to campaign for the well being of undocumented migrant workers.

### **Research Method**

This research utilised both primary and secondary data to analyse the condition of undocumented Filipina migrant domestic workers in the Netherlands. Primary data were gathered through in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and questionnaires and secondary data consisted of the historical context of Filipina migration. Three concepts formed the core of the analytical framework for this study. The trend of more women absorbed in the global market for reproductive labour was linked to the concept of feminisation of survival, gender and domestic work. It has been used as a take off to analyse the issues faced by undocumented migrant domestic workers in the Netherlands

A total number of 29 undocumented Filipina migrant domestic workers based in Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Utrecht, Den Haag and Leiden were involved in this study. A focus group discussion (FGD) was held with 20 respondents who also filled out questionnaires. The FGD sessions were run in 4 separate days between 2 to 6 hours. Before beginning the FGDs, participants were briefed on the nature of the research and signed an informed consent form. Six undocumented women did not participate in the FGDs nor individually interviewed but filled out the questionnaire.

Three women underwent in-depth interviews. In choosing the women to be interviewed, certain criteria were considered. First, the length of stay in the Netherlands (1-2 years, 5-6 years, 10+ years). This was considered because there may be differences in the richness of experience in terms of being undocumented. It is assumed that those who have been in the Netherlands for a long time have richer experiences. Second, the women's geographical origin in the Philippines (North Luzon, NCR, South Luzon, Visayas, Mindanao). The

researcher wants a major region in the Philippines to be represented. Third is civil status (single, married, and widow). Women may have different and varied issues and priorities as a function of their civil status. In order to see these variation, civil status was considered. The women were interviewed individually for approximately 2 hours. The interviews took place at a time and place that were convenient to the respondents.

For the data gathering, organisers and contact persons from the NGO Migrante helped in the logistics in terms of recruiting and informing respondents since they already have regular contact and have established a relationship with the undocumented Filipina migrants. They helped in facilitating FGDs, distributing and collecting questionnaires. The researcher conducted all in-depth interviews.

In the presentation of the research findings, pseudonyms will be used to protect the identity of the undocumented migrant domestic workers who were involved in this study.

### **Scope and Limitation of the Research**

This research study will focus on the analysis of the life stories of undocumented Filipina migrant domestic workers in the Netherlands with regard to their vulnerability as a result of a systemic problem in the Netherlands and the Philippines. The study will look on specific policies in the Netherlands but it will not go into a broader policy debate. The study is limited to 29 undocumented migrant domestic workers based in Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Utrecht, Den Haag, and Leiden.

## Chapter Two

### **Gender, Domestic Work, Female International Migration and the Philippines Experience: Historical Context and Analytical Concepts**

#### ***Introduction***

This chapter provides the context of Filipina migration and offers some key analytical concepts to help explain the phenomenon of female migration specifically as regards to the reproductive sphere i.e. Filipina domestic workers. It will trace the Philippines' experience on migration in order to establish a link between their specific features and the current situation regarding undocumented migrant domestic workers in the Netherlands. It will link the issues of gender power and the feminisation of survival with issues of viewing and valuating domestic work as related to women.

#### ***Female International Migration from the Philippines to Europe: The Genesis of an Inter-State System of Hierarchical Exchange***

The first wave of Filipina migrants came to Europe in the 60's to work as nurses, midwives, and in other health-related professions with the expansion of national health services especially in Northern European countries such as Germany, Austria, Britain, Switzerland and the Netherlands (Ledesma 1994). During the first three decades after WWII, Europe actively recruited and opened its doors to over 30 million people from former colonies and other third world countries to augment the labour shortages of European countries in the reconstruction work of rebuilding Europe from the ashes of war (ibid)

In the 70's, Filipinas came to work as chambermaids in hotels and as waitresses in restaurants coinciding with the expansion and boom of the tourism industry in Europe. Meanwhile, in the Philippines, political repression was intensifying as Martial Law was declared by former President Marcos in 1972 to suppress the growing protest movement of the people. Furthermore, as the economic crisis intensified, government policy officially sanctioned the export of its human resources to generate foreign currency needed to pay off the country's increasing external debt and balance of trade deficits, and to respond to the growing unemployment problem (ibid).

Towards the end of the 70's, a period of recession and high unemployment, the work permit scheme earlier implemented by many European countries that allowed the inflow of much-needed migrant labour was officially stopped. Many stayed illegally after their tourist visas expired. A significant number of migrants entered without any documents through the many hidden and secret backdoors of Europe, shuttled by an international network of illegal recruiters hidden in trucks, vans, cars, train compartments, empty freezer containers, across snow-capped mountains, burning deserts and treacherous waters (ibid). Filipinas have become fodder for a multi-billion dollar industry of trading human beings. Of the estimated half a million Filipinos in Europe, around 80% are Filipina migrant workers. Approximately 10% of Filipinos are employed in the medical and health-related fields and 90% are working in the service sector as domestic workers, entertainers, waitresses, chambermaids, and 'mail-order housewives' (ibid).

In the Netherlands, the import of Filipina migrants begun in the managed care sector and was followed in the textile sector. Some 50 Filipina nurses arrived in Utrecht, Rotterdam, Amsterdam, Eindhoven, and Leiden in 1964 to work in university-affiliated hospitals as guest workers. Three years later, the first batch of midwives arrived (CFMW, 1995). In 1966 and 1970, two batches of Filipinos arrived in the Netherlands and worked at the Berghaus textile company as contractual factory workers. Most of them came from rural areas in the Philippines. Though salaries were much lower than their Dutch counterparts, they accepted the terms offered because salaries in the Netherlands are far better than what they received in the Philippines. In 1971, the textile company stopped its hiring and most of the Filipina factory workers migrated to Canada while others married and settled in the Netherlands (ibid).

The 1990's brought many Filipinas as domestic helpers for families in the Netherlands through the 'au-pair' system (Villarreal, 1994). The penetration of migrant workers in the informal labour market of domestic services in the Netherlands has been explained as an outcome of the demand side, i.e. the emergence of an ageing population, the increasing integration of Dutch women in the labour market, the unwillingness of residents to do menial and risky jobs, and the local workforce's search of better paying jobs (CFMW, 1995).

The Filipinos in the Netherlands have grown in great numbers, accelerating in the mid-seventies, and reaching its peak during the early eighties. At the end of 2002, according to



the CBS (Central Bureau of Statistics, Nederland) a total of 11,100 Filipinos are living in the Netherlands. Eighty five percent of the total population are women and majority are partners of Dutch nationals. They are mostly engaged in domestic work, in prostitution, and in other service sector (CFMW, 1997).

The growth of Filipinos in the Netherlands appears to be part of the broader process and pattern of international migration in the Philippines where women constitute a large number of the migrants. At the household level, female migration has become a popular strategy to make a living. The steady remittances of migrant workers have, over time, structured the attitudes of the government such that, rather than addressing structural causes of high unemployment and social inequalities in the country, it had relied on its labour export policy to manage its economic and political crisis.

First world countries once extracted natural resources from third world countries, it now also extracts parental affection and love and care seem to become the 'new gold' in the labour market.

### ***Feminisation of Migration and Survival***

The Philippines is one of the labour-rich countries of the world and it implements an aggressive labour export policy to employ its surplus workforce and address unemployment and to generate foreign revenues that it needs to save its crisis-ridden economy (Ledema, 1997). The country has been suffering from a fiscal crisis since 1981 because (a) the government is into a chronic deficit spending (b) government revenues are falling, (c) government debt is ballooning and has reached \$US 60 billion in 2003, and consequently (d) debt payments (excluding principal payments) is eating up as much as 85% of government revenues and a third of the national budget (Casino, 2004). The recurring fiscal crisis in the country is a symptom of an unsustainable and maldeveloped third world economy that is worsen by the new conditions of globalisation; the colonial pattern of trade and investments where the country continues to be the dumping ground of excess goods and capital of industrialized nations, the source of cheap labour, raw materials and semi-manufactures; and the semi-feudal economic structures which is an export oriented, import-dependent, foreign investment and debt driven economy.

The government's solutions to the fiscal crisis have been to increase revenues through higher taxes, fees and tax reforms; to reduce spending through cutbacks in social services though unemployment is high; and to lay-off government workers. The resulting condition adversely affected women and had pressed additional responsibilities on them. Migration has become a viable alternative for survival, for making a living and for generating revenues, whether documented or not, for the ailing economy. This is what Sassen calls the institutionalised dynamics in migration that brought about the feminisation of survival (Sassen, 2002). The large amount of remittances from migrant workers has become the number one dollar earner for the country. It is now estimated at \$US 8 billion annually, surpassing the income generated from traditional industries (Migrante 2002).

In the 1970s, Philippine labour migration was predominated by male workers who went to the Middle East to work on construction projects. The temporary decline of the construction sector after 1985, however, contributed to the shift in the pattern of labour migration. Women workers were being recruited for overseas jobs regarded as 'typically female': domestic workers, entertainers (often a euphemism for prostitution), restaurant and hotel staff, assembly-line workers in clothing and electronics but the demand for women was compounded by an upsurge in the demand for domestic servants especially in such countries as Hong Kong and Singapore. This led to a feminisation of contract labour flows from the Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand, the Republic of Korea and Sri Lanka (Castle, 1998). More recently, there has been some migration of both highly-skilled Asian workers and of low-skilled workers, such as Filipino domestic servants to Italy. The term overseas Filipino worker or OFW is now usually associated with women while the term 'Filipinos' has become synonymous with 'domestic helpers', sex workers and mail-order bride (Edwards & Roces, 2000).

Many Filipina migrant workers are highly educated and skilled, with most of them having professional qualifications or with at least two years of third level education, however, such strong educational qualifications do not translate to parity in employment. The work they take up in the services and care sectors are not commensurate to their levels of education, skill and to their experiences (Eviota, 1992). This is a consequence of the internationally accepted stereotype of domestic work, the gender division of labor and the systematic and institutionalised oppression of women in the social structure. Reproductive work is given a low valuation and status and thus regarded as socially inferior and lowly paid.

### *Gender and Domestic Work*

Gender is a way in which social practices are ordered. Harding (1986) provides an analysis of gender as multifaceted. According to her, gender is individual, structural, and symbolic, and it is always asymmetrical in hierarchical societies. In gender processes, the everyday conduct of life is organised in relation to a reproductive arena, defined by the bodily structures and processes of human reproduction. Gender is configured in practice and its link with the reproductive arena is social. It manifested in individual life course, the basis of the common-sense notion of masculinity and femininity; in ideology or culture organised in symbolic practices; and in institutions (ibid).

Gender relations are present in all types of institutions. The household is the basic structure of all institutionalisation of men-women relations, its structure is therefore hierarchical. Gender power is constituted by a division of labour that defines certain kinds of work as domestic, private, unpaid and usually women's, while public, paid work are usually men's (Mies, 1986). The social construction of females and their relationship with domestic work in the private sphere operates on gender relations of power.

Under capitalism, women are typically defined as housewives who perform entirely in the domestic sphere, which means they are non-workers. Domestic work is invisible, it is not a shared work because women's household, child-care work as well as the rest of their domestic work does not appear as work or labour, it is seen as an extension of their physiology work (Mies, 1986). Domestic production and related tasks done by women in the household are not viewed as substitutes for market oriented goods and services, they are not defined as economic activity, not included in national accounts and labour force statistics because it is seen as falling outside the production boundary regardless of what it contributes to the economy as a whole (Beneria, 1992).

However, it is important to look at the gendered nature of the state, which Connell refers to as a gender order. The state is complex in nature, it institutionalises hegemonic masculinity and spend great energy to control and exercise its power (Connell, 1994). The interplay of gender relations and the gendered dynamics of the state is well played out in the process of female migration. Its changing role as a significant actor in the migration process is crucial. The Philippine context illustrate how the state played an active role in promoting the export of

female labour as part of its overall development strategy program by ensuring the implementation of overseas employment and now become one of the primary exporter of human resources among sending countries.

However, despite state's gender repressive character, its role is also significant for women's issues. The state is a strategic venue to lobby for protective mechanisms on issues of female migration through its enlightened politicians or lawmakers persuaded by NGO's and other gender aware organisations in passing a more gender sensitive policies and laws.

From this perspective, female migration can be analysed as a gendered process. The processes leading and perpetuating migration are affected by gender relations and the gender division of labour that is asymmetric, hierarchical, and exploitative. It operates within the sphere of production and the sphere of reproduction (domestic sphere), which is often in women's disadvantage. Women migrants are often concentrated in menial and low paid occupations, with difficult working conditions, and little or no prospects for upward social mobility. They dominate in the reproductive labour as domestic servants, nannies, nurses or care providers, and entertainers or in the prostitution, which exposes them to sexual exploitation. Thus, women face stereotypes that stem from cultural values and norms that often devalue women and their work (Battistella & Paganoni, 1996).

### ***Concluding Remarks***

The complexities of female migration, whether by legal or illegal means, must be looked on the dynamics of the interrelated forces of macro and micro dimensions which influenced women to migrate. At the micro level, it involved looking on individual woman's aspiration and personal motives in migration, though the major influential factor in women's migration is economic, psycho-social is also an important factor where it is a way women moved out from the repressive relationship within the household. It is also a form of their personal empowerment brought about by their changing role as the primary earners in the family.

At the macro processes which include the historical and structural perspective stresses the conditioning factors in migration decision of women. The capitalist mode of development is relevant, the increasing demand for domestic workers in the industrialized countries, the

worsening economic conditions in the home country, and the role of the state in promoting female migration are significant in the push and pull of female migration.

Thus, the issue in domestic work is the question of sharing between men and women in the household which reflect a certain level of gender rigidity in domestic work in the division of labour. Domestic work that is generally stereotyped as women's reproductive work therefore unrecognised and undervalued as productive labour. It escapes official/government scrutiny and supervision. Thus, governments conveniently exempt themselves from providing its workers fundamental rights normally enjoyed by workers in other industrial/productive labour sectors.

To address female migration is to consider a systemic approach as well as concerted policies, which begin with the inclusion of domestic work in the protective mechanisms of national legislation and adherence to a common framework on recognition and protection of the rights of women migrant domestic workers.



## Chapter 3

### Documenting the Undocumented: Life Stories of Filipina Migrant Domestic Workers

#### *Introduction*

This chapter presents the findings of the focus group discussions, interviews and questionnaires that had been undertaken with 29 undocumented Filipina migrant domestic workers in the Netherlands. It presents the demographic profile, work profile, personal profile, the working and living conditions, the problems and coping mechanisms and the future plans of the women involved in the study. The empirical data gathered would be used to further analyse the living and working conditions of undocumented migrant domestic workers using the analytical framework mentioned in the earlier chapter.

#### **Data from the Questionnaire**

##### *Demographic Profile*

A total of 26 respondents filled out the questionnaire. Their age range is 22 to 65 years. Of the total, 54% are single, 35% are all married to Filipinos in the Philippines, 11% are separated from their Filipino husbands, and (44%) have children left behind in the Philippines.

<b>Civil Status</b>	<i>frequency</i>	<i>percentage</i>
Single	14	54
Married	9	35
Separated	3	11
TOTAL	26	100

The majority of the respondents (81%) have finished college level education and worked as professionals in their fields before coming to the Netherlands while 8% had vocational training.

<b>Educational Attainment</b>	<i>frequency</i>	<i>percentage</i>
High School	3	11
College	21	81
Vocational	2	8
TOTAL	26	100

When they came to the Netherlands, 58% of them held a tourist visa and 39% came as au pairs. In terms of geographical origin, 57% came from Northern Luzon, 24% from Southern

Luzon, and 19% from the Visayas region. When asked how they were able to afford the fare to the Netherlands, they said that their employers or would-be employers paid for their tickets. An equal number made a loan from relatives and family members gave some amount of money to cover for the fare. It appears that the Filipino value and sense of family is seen in this instance. A little less than a third reported that they paid for their fare through their own savings.

<b>How they afforded the fare</b>	<b>frequency</b>
Own savings	8
Made a loan	6
Family chipped in	6
Others	12

Note: Respondents were asked to check all that apply

For the OTHERS category, 10 cited that it was the employer who paid for their airfare. This is true for those who came as au pairs. The other 2, their employers brought them to the Netherlands. Only 17% of them have gone back to the Philippines after they have first arrived in the Netherlands. The average number of years in the Netherlands is 4 years. Thirty percent (30%) of the undocumented women share an apartment with a friend or friends. Twenty two percent (22%) live with their employers while others share a room or live with their relatives or children. A small percentage lives alone in an apartment or room (9% and 4%, respectively).

### *Work Profile*

House cleaning is the bulk of work they do for the households they service. Doing the laundry/ironing is the second and babysitting is the third. A few of the women cook and take care of the garden as part of their job; they are usually those who live with their employers.

<b>Type of Work they do</b>	<b>frequency</b>
House cleaning	25
Laundry and ironing	15
Gardening	5
Caring for pets	2
Babysitting	13
Cooking	5

Note: Respondents were asked to check all that apply



Apart from servicing households, the women have no other income generating activities. Hence, domestic work is their major source of bread and butter.

The mean number of their workdays is 5 days. The number of households they service in a day range from 1 to 4.

Total Number of Households Served	<i>frequency</i>
1	6
2	9
3	6
4	3
No Response	2
TOTAL	26

The mean number of hours they spend for each household is 5 hours. This figure includes the number of work hours per day of those who stay with their employers who technically work longer hours. However, the frequently occurring response is between 3 to 4 hours per household. The women earn an average of 8 Euro per hour. Those who stay with their employers have fixed income, with free lodging and meals but earn less. When their income is computed per hour, it is as low as 1 Euro per hour.

Number of Hours per Household*	<i>frequency</i>
3	8
3.5	4
4	5
5	2
6	1
7.5	1
8	3
10	1
11	1
TOTAL	26

Note: Those who answered from 6 to 11 hours were full-time or stay in with their employers.

Of those who responded to the question about being able to save, 92% responded in the affirmative.

Do you send money?	<i>frequency</i>	<i>percentage</i>
Yes	24	92
No	1	4
No Response	1	4
TOTAL	26	100

Ninety two percent of them send money to the Philippines. Half of the women remit money on a monthly basis. The average amount they send home is 341 Euro.

<b>Frequency of Schedule</b>	<i>frequency</i>	<i>percentage</i>
Monthly	13	50
Every 2 months	1	4
Quarterly	2	8
Semestral	1	4
As the need arises	6	23
Others	1	4
No Response	2	8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>100</b>

Comparing the married and single women on the number of workdays in a week, it was found that married women significantly have more workdays than single women do. Similarly, married women send more money than single women do. It can be surmised that the 9 married women work double time to earn more to send more money to their families in the Philippines because they have more dependent, they support their own children and their husbands (5 women have a jobless husbands, 4 have husbands working but the salaries are not sufficient), they also support their parents and siblings.

The frequently cited reason for sending money to the Philippines is education of child(ren) or sibling, followed by daily expenses of the household, and equally, for the medical expenses of ill family members and expenses for house construction.

<b>Reason for Sending Money</b>	<i>Frequency</i>
Education of child/sibling	16
Daily expenses	15
Medical expenses	9
Construction expenses	9
Payment of loan	4
Payment for a big expense	1

Note: Respondents were asked to check all that apply

When asked to rank the purposes for sending money, the top ranked purposes are consistent with the first two frequently cited reasons -- education of child(ren) or sibling and day to day expenses of the household.

<b>Reason for Sending Money</b>	<b>Mean Rank</b>
Education of child/sibling	1.11
Daily expenses	1.82
Payment of loan	2.00
Medical expenses	2.14
Construction expenses	3.00

It appears that education is very much valued though it has been noted that a college degree does not guarantee getting a good job with decent pay. Perhaps, they believe that it will still increase the chances of their children getting a good job and consequently, a comfortable life.

### *Personal Profile*

What are the things they spend on? Looking at the frequencies, all women ticked phone credits as a personal expense. It implies that connecting with friends and family is highly valued. Understandably, they would want to call home and check on their families. Connecting with most if not all, fellow-Filipino friends, is probably important because they are their anchors in a foreign land. Some women consider them as their family in the Netherlands. The next item they spend on is food, a basic necessity. This is followed by transportation, an important factor in their work.

<b>Personal Expenses</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Call card and cell phone load	26
Food and grocery	20
Transportation	17
Remittance	16
Clothes	14
Personal hygiene	12
Rent	12
Household things	5
Shoes	3
Bags and accessories	3
Entertainment	1

Shoes, bags and accessories, and entertainment are the items they least spend on. Perhaps, they are considered luxuries. Instead of spending money on themselves, they save it and add it to the amount they send home.

With regard to the activities they do, a great number of hours (in a month) are spent on visiting friends or having get-togethers. Shopping, community or organisation activities, and going to church are frequent responses as well. Ironically, the next activity that they spend

most hours on is cleaning their house. One may say that they live and breathe domestic work.

News of illness in the family is the most frequently cited source of stress (73%). Sixty nine percent (69%) are stressed about their own health, 38% on the possibility of their undocumented status being discovered by the authorities and 31% on the possibility that someone may tell on them. The consequences of the last 3 sources of stress have great impact on their family, the main reason for coming to the Netherlands and risking being undocumented.

### ***A Glimpse of the Life Stories of the Undocumented Migrant Women***

#### ***Lisa, A Survivor of Her Time***

She is 56 years old, the eldest among five siblings. At the age of 10, her parents died in an encounter between the military and the New People's Army. After the incident, She and her siblings were distributed to the relatives of their mother. After finishing in primary level of education, she became the domestic helper of her aunt while her cousins go to school. At 15 years old, Lisa left her aunt and went with her friend to work as a domestic helper in Manila (Philippines' capital city). She worked in a Chinese-Filipino household on a very low salary but she left after 3 years because her female employer physically and verbally abuses her. She went back to Isabela and stayed with her paternal grandparents. Lisa asked her grandfather to sell his carabao and his little portion of land so she can use the money to apply for Hongkong as a domestic worker. She was 19 when she started working in Hongkong until 28 years old. She sent to buy a piece of land where they built a house and for the studies of her three sisters.

She went back to the Philippines and got married at the age of 29. She had three children and an irresponsible jobless husband. In order to survive, she decided to leave her children and went again to Hongkong. After a year, her husband left the children and lives with other woman. One of her sisters took over the care of her children. After 2 years in Hongkong, her employer did not extend her contract and she thought of going home but this means the end of her dreams for her children. From Hongkong she applied for a tourist visa in the Netherlands in 1990 and became undocumented after her 3 months visa expired. She works as domestic worker in Rotterdam on a part-time basis. The usual work she does is cleaning the house, baby sitting, cooking, and taking care of the sick and the elderly. She shares a small room owned by a Filipina who married to a Dutch national together with the 3

undocumented women because they can't afford to rent a bigger but more expensive room. She works from 7 o'clock in the morning until 11 o'clock in the evening. According to her, she doesn't know anymore the meaning of rest or day off and being a woman to her is to do domestic work.

In 2000, Lisa needed to undergo medical operation due to her myoma. She was denied from the hospital because she could not produce legal papers. Fortunately one of her employers who is a lawyer and became her friend helped her to get medical assistance. The worst experience she had was when one employer attempted to rape her. The employer said, *"what do you like, I will report you to the police that you are 'illegal' and be deported, or give me what I want?"* Lisa tried to resist but he punched her on the stomach. Lisa said, *"I fought back and kicked him and was able to escape, I will kill him first before he will succeed to abuse me."* She wanted to report to the police but was afraid that instead of getting assistance, it might backfire on her and she'll be put in prison, or get deported.

Lisa has not gone home for 14 years but she maintains communication with her children through letters, phone calls, e-mail, and text messages. Despite her efforts to maintain her relationship with her children, she fears that she doesn't know how to relate exactly with her children when she goes home and live with them. Her youngest son was only three months old when she left. She missed a lot of special events in her children's lives. However, since she felt that her body could not take the toll anymore and her operation always hurt and feels that she is getting weaker to work, she has to go home soon. She is quite secured now because had small savings in the bank to start for a small business, already bought her own house, and land for farming, two jeepneys for public transport but still not so sure of what would be her life in the Philippines however, she wants to spend the rest of her life in the Philippines with her family.

### ***Mina, A Strong Woman and her Unselfish Love***

She came from a rich family in Cabanatuan City. She is 43 years old and the eldest daughter among the 3 siblings. Her father was a medical doctor and her mother, a businesswoman. She grew up in a very luxurious life with maids, cars, and money. She finished Bachelors of Science in Hotel and Restaurant Management and Master in Management as well. She worked in the multi-national companies and firms and eventually put up her own business after she got married in 1997. Because of the economic crisis in the Philippines and the family business partner deceived them with money, the family business got bankrupt in 1999. Her mother got a loan in the bank and the family house became the collateral. Because they can no longer pay for the annual interest of the loan, the bank will forfeit

their house. But the family was more plunged to deeper financial crisis when her mother was robbed and took all her money together with her father having a heart ailment. Her sister and brother cannot help because they have their own families, and since she's the eldest and doesn't have children, she decided to go abroad to solve the problem.

She asked help from her cousin in the Netherlands but her cousin discouraged her and said that there is no better opportunity of job in the Netherlands considering the kind of migration policy in the country. The only work available is domestic work where many Filipino women are doing but most of them are undocumented and very vulnerable to abuse. Despite this information, Mina was so persistent to leave the country and find her luck. She said; *"bahala na ang Diyos, kapit na lang ako sa patalim"* ("I'm leaving everything to God, I will hold to anything even with the edge of knife").

In 2003, she left the Philippines with only 70 US dollars in her pocket that only lasted for a day. She temporarily stayed with her cousin who is doing a house sitting. After three days she was interviewed for possible employment but the Dutch woman turned her down. The woman contends; *"you are not capable to baby-sit and show affection towards my children because you doesn't have children of her own."* Three months have passed and Mina has no work. At that time, they also need to vacate the house where they were staying because the owner will be back soon. She cried everyday because she misses her husband and family, she couldn't buy the food she likes to eat and the things she wants. She pitied herself.

Finally, she got a cleaning job that was recommended to by her cousin's friend. She felt humiliated and hardly accepts the truth that she ended up being a *"muchacha"* or servant (on her own word) when she lived like a princess in the Philippines before. Mina's employer looked down saying that maybe she's uneducated that's why she ended up as domestic worker to which Mina rebutted by saying; *"it does not mean that because she is a domestic worker, she is uneducated, it was just so happened that she belonged to a poor country and that the people are forced to find a greener pasture abroad."* She also experienced being turned down by a hotel when she applied for a work because they said her education from a third world country is low standard, even she got a high degree in the Philippines.

During her first year in the Netherlands, her life was confined to work; She starts working from 6:00 in the morning until 11:00 in the evening in order to finished paying the interest of the loan. She decided to stay for five years until she's done paying everything in order to save their house. But because she is undocumented, she could not demand for a higher wage, one of her employers is paying her only

five Euro per hour. She is afraid to get sick because she doesn't have medical insurance, she feels deprived of going home for vacation to be with her family, she is also afraid of the news that by 2005, the Dutch government will implement the ID system, she is very afraid of police even though she did nothing wrong.

### ***Nena, A Young Woman with Convictions***

She is 27 years old. Her grandparents adopted her when she was still a baby; her mom was too young to have her by then. She finished her midwifery course in Bicol. On her college graduation day she found out that the 'sister' she knew who attended her graduation was her real mother which by then had already her own family in Manila. When she took her board exam in Manila, she stayed with her mother's family but felt not belong to the family. She held several jobs before joining a medical mission group for 2 years. They went to the farthest part of the country to give medical support to poor people. She enjoyed the work and felt fulfilled because she learned a lot about herself and about life. However, as a mission worker, she only receives allowance that is not enough to support herself.

Nena decided to go to the Netherlands under the au-pair program. She thought that she could attend informal education in the country, study the language, and have some fun together with her host family. To her surprise, all her expectations were not met, and the first thing her host family did when she arrived was to orient her about the household machines and eventually did all domestic work. She only receives 150 allowance per month. After 1 month, she decided to leave because she cannot endure the hard work. She got another host family with three children but had a hard time in taking care of the children taller and bigger than her, who don't listen to her and even shout and physically hurt her. When her host family went to Italy for holiday, they took her with them; she took the chance to escape and stayed temporarily with a Filipino friend in Rome until she found a room for her to stay. Near her apartment is a convent where one of the nuns came from Nena's town. She became a convent volunteer in return for food. She applied as domestic worker but denied several times because she can't speak in Italian. When she finally found a work, she got an employer who owned 2 huge houses that she found it too hard to clean. She was even forced to use a housemaid uniform inside and outside of the house. Nena wanted to refuse but she can't do anything but to abide. She felt degraded that while putting on the uniform, tears fell from her eyes.

She decided to look again for another employer and got one with 2 children. She has a co-worker who is also a Filipina. They share in all the housework. They work continuously from 6:00 in the morning

until 11:00 in the evening. As a result her body is always painful. She said; *"I spent my first Christmas away from my family serving the visitors of my employers until 2 in the morning."* She bore all the pain and humiliation in Italy hoping for amnesty but unfortunately, her papers was not included in the processing for amnesty because her employer did not submit the needed documents. She planned to go home but thought of having any future in the Philippines and doesn't like to depend on her family and so she decided to go back in the Netherlands three days before her Dutch visa expired.

In the Netherlands, her friend gave her a part-time job. She took care of a sick old woman three times a day. The women paid her 45 Euro a day. Her salary was just enough to buy food and pay for her room. After a month, she became jobless because the woman recovered. She only earns some money if she substitutes for her friend. In order to survive Nena goes to different friends for a meal. After six months, through networks and recommendations, she got a lot of part time work until she has so much on her hands but being undocumented always put her into vulnerable position. The Filipino woman whom she rents a room had a Dutch boyfriend. They quarrel violently especially when the boyfriend is drunk. She got so frightened because in the event that a neighbour will report to the police and the police will come in their house, the police might find out that they were renting a room to an undocumented. She also found that her landlady owed money to someone but is unable to pay. The lender threatened that she's going to report to the police and that she has an undocumented tenant. In the middle of the night Nena moved out from the house and asked help from one Migrante organiser. She let her stay in her house until they found safe apartment and share a room with other Filipinos.

Everyday, she thinks of going back in the Philippines because she feels tired of doing the same workday in and day out, she found it too routinely and felt stuck with domestic work. She describes her current situation by saying *"Para akong kotseng walang gasolina pero pilit pa ring pinapatakbo"* (I'm like a car without gasoline but still being forced to run). She even wondered if she still knows and has the skills of her real profession. She said, even if she is already adjusted in the Netherlands, she is still afraid of the possibility of the police to take her, put her in jail, and deports her.

However, despite the hardship of being undocumented, she finds empowering to be of help to her family back home, she send money for her half sister's studies in college and joining the migrants' organisation (Migrante) where she met the group of Filipino migrants. She considered the organisation as her family away from home. She attends activities of the organisation such as Dutch lessons, small group discussions on the national situation, seminars and fora, cultural activities, medical mission for



undocumented migrants, etc. and assumed responsibilities in the organisation and spent her day off for volunteer work.

She wants to go home by 2005 and try to apply in Canada but doesn't want to stay forever in a foreign country, grow old being a domestic worker, being treated as servant and where her human dignity and rights are violated because she is undocumented migrant. She wants to save enough money in the bank, buy her own house and lot in the Philippines, study again and take a masters degree, and put up a Lying -in- Clinic, and use her profession in her home country.



## Chapter 4

### Analysis and Discussion

#### *Introduction*

This chapter identifies major issues arising from the findings of the research and provides an analytical discussion on Filipina migration to the Netherlands from the standpoint of the gender dynamics in the sending and recipient countries, and how undocumented migration affects the living and working conditions of the undocumented Filipina domestic workers.

#### **Problems Confronted by Undocumented Migrant Women**

The international migration of women as domestic workers may be analyzed within the frameworks of the new, and definitely gendered, international division of labour – a major aspect of the global capitalist system - wherein developing countries like the Philippines supply cheap labor to developed countries so that human reproduction will not suffer while the latter engages in “productive” work and the pursuit of more profits. The problems and difficulties confronted by undocumented migrant domestic workers thus have structural roots.

Domestic work is not given importance, if not recognised as work and so those who perform it are not considered as objects of legislation as workers. They face triple discrimination: 1) for performing a type of work that is not recognized or not given the same status as productive work, 2) for being undocumented migrant workers whose contributions and presence the Dutch government does not acknowledge, and 3) for being citizens of a country that cannot protect their rights and well-being despite their being family breadwinners and modern-day heroes.

***Abuse in the Work Place.*** Undocumented migrant domestic workers are more vulnerable to abuse and discrimination because of the nature of and dynamics in their work place i.e. the household or the private sphere. Many employers, knowing that their domestic worker is an undocumented migrant women, do not execute or provide an employment contract which could have been the instrument to protect the rights and well-being of the migrant worker. As agreements regarding employment and related arrangement are made very informally, Dutch employer are not legally bound to fulfill their obligations to their domestic worker and the

latter cannot enjoy the benefits and rights of a regular worker such as to litigate; to unionize and bargain; to demand for just and higher wages; and to medical and accident insurance benefits. The undocumented migrant workers' job security is tied up to their employers who now hold the absolute power to fire them anytime.

Undocumented migrant domestic workers are not employed and remunerated according to their professions and skills. From the 29 undocumented migrants interviewed, 81% have finished college level education and worked as professionals in their fields before coming to the Netherlands while 8% had vocational training. A woman who has a hotel and restaurant management degree in the Philippines and who applied for work in a hotel in the Netherlands was not accepted because the Dutch management believed that the standard of her education in the Philippines is not the same as with the Netherlands and also because she is an undocumented migrant. Another one was denied employment when her employer found that she doesn't have a child in the Philippines. According to her, the employer said; *"how can you take care of my child if you have not experienced being a mother?"* The other striking point about this statement is that, regardless of their educational achievements, Dutch employers assess the women migrant's skills for child care based on their experience of motherhood.

***Emotional Burden.*** Undocumented migrant domestic workers experience different kinds of emotional burdens. All the women interviewed said that the most difficult struggle they encountered while in the host country are the feelings of homesickness, loneliness and even depression due to separation from their families and friends. In the case of Gina, she suffers guilt feelings from leaving her children behind in the care of other people when she is taking care of other people's children. She has remained an undocumented migrant worker in the Netherlands for 8 years now and according to her; *"I am a single parent with 2 children. When I left my children, my daughter was only 2 years old and my son 1 year old. My mother takes care of them but if one is sick, I get so upset that I cannot sleep, I cannot eat, I suffer homesickness and loneliness. I am taking care of other's children while I cannot take care of my own children... this is my guilt feeling in life."* Another woman named Lina said; *"it's not easy for me being away from my family but it would be easier to overcome my homesickness and loneliness if only my family is supportive and understand the reason why I have to leave them."* Her eldest son became very problematic that he has been involved in many troubles in school and managed to get dropped out of different schools. Her husband,

on the other hand, is busy with his vices and doesn't care about the children. *"My husband puts all the blame on me. He said that I abandoned them, he even accused me of having an affair with another man and of having a good time without even knowing my sufferings here."*

Emotional stress is gendered and it seems to have its roots in the imbibed expectations of women's gender roles. In the case of the women involved in this study, emotional stress like guilt is caused by their perceived non-performance of their stereotypical roles in the family.

**Shelter.** Shelter is a basic need of all people yet, undocumented migrant domestic workers hardly have access to housing as they lack a legal identity to secure one. The standard of living in the Netherlands is high and most of them can't afford to get a decent place to live given their small income as domestic workers and their many financial obligations to their families in the Philippines. Being undocumented likewise limits their choices of housing options. Two women experienced being charged with the exorbitant amount of 150 Euro per month for water and electricity and 350 Euro for a small room; *"We know we were already being abused but because it is very hard to look for a room and we don't have legal papers, we can not complain or report him (house owner) to the housing authority."* The same women experienced moving out in the middle of the night during winter when their landlady had a violent fight with her Dutch husband. They feared being found out in case the police come to investigate.

**Health Care.** In July 1998, the Dutch government promulgated the law on "Koppelingswet", which is a law that links or connects the right of a person to services to their legal status. Government's provision of social services, therefore, is restricted to citizens and legal migrants (Javier, 1996). The 'Koppelingwet' translated as the 'Linkage Law' clearly deprives undocumented migrants domestic workers of a right and access to health insurance and services. Three women experienced being denied medical attention because they did not have legal papers. In the case of Lina, she was refused by several hospitals despite the seriousness of her heart condition. Fortunately, her former employer helped her and brought her all the way to Belgium to be operated. The story of Lina illustrates how people and social service institutions close their doors to people without identity. Since all of the women interviewed have no legal identities, they fear getting seriously ill or meeting any kind of accidents. As they put it, *"bawal magkasakit o maaksidente"* ("getting sick or into an

accident is forbidden”). Also, getting sick implies a loss of income and failing to send remittances to their families.

### **Women’s Ways of Coping**

The experiences of undocumented women migrants are full of challenges - they deal with their fears, worries and concerns as undocumented workers and as their families’ providers and nurturers each day. Their coping strategies are seen in the following;

***Faith Related.** Gina, who has been an undocumented migrant worker for 9 years now, said; “My faith is what sustains me to become strong despite the difficulties I’m encountering here in the Netherlands and the problems back home. I always pray to God to help me overcome my homesickness, loneliness and worries about my status and the condition of my family in the Philippines. Attending church activities makes me spiritually and emotionally strong, I forget my problems whenever I am in the church.”*

Faith or religion is a sensitive element when used to understand and explain the experiences of abuse and coping processes of undocumented migrant domestic workers. Though it provides a source of strength for women and enables them to remain strong in the face of difficulties and problems, it is also important to put religion in its proper context. Lisa’s employer attempted to rape her and according to her; *“I know God will not forsake me, what happened to me was only a trial, maybe God just wanted to teach me a lesson because he loves me. I am entrusting everything to his hand”*. Faith is an effective and important coping mechanism for undocumented migrant women but when women’s perception of their reality or situation are clouded by certain religious concepts and they refrain from thinking critically, then faith as a coping mechanism poses a serious problem in the way of women’s empowerment. Specifically with regards to abuse, religion as a patriarchal institution has historically been used to perpetuate the subordinate status of women as it propagates the notions of obedience and subservience of women.

***Behavioural.** Lea is 24 years old and has been an undocumented migrant worker for 3 years now. She said; “when my father was seriously sick, I wanted to go home to take care of him but I can’t because I need money for his medication. Instead of drowning myself with tears and sadness, I worked very hard so as to keep myself busy and at the same time, to earn more*

money. I accepted all works offered even in my day offs and sent all my money in the Philippines. Sending money is my way to ease my loneliness besides seeing my friends after work.”

Another story is about Maya, who said; *“Because my husband is also in Dubai, I’m always worried about my 2 daughters who were left behind. They can be raped or killed while going home late from school. I call home frequently and send SMS everyday to check if they are in good condition or I just listen to their stories. It does not matter if it’s expensive as long as I can maintain my bond with my children. I give all they want just to compensate for my absence and to let them feel that I love them though I am physically miles away.”*

**Cognitive Reframing.** Despite their insecurities in the host country, foremost among the concerns of the undocumented migrant domestic workers is the security of their families in the home country. Maria is the oldest among the undocumented women interviewed. She is 65 year old and has been working as an undocumented migrant for 6 years now. Asked about what prompted her to stay long and cope with her difficulties despite her age and her status, she said; *“I have a sick husband who needs continues medication and dependent children in the Philippines. The difficult condition in the Philippines sustains me, I think it is better to be undocumented here than to live the difficulties of life in the Philippines. I think my condition is better than other people who suffer more. My difficulties here and my problems in the family is a challenge, to be more stronger for the sake of my loved ones.”* The re-channeling of difficulties by the undocumented women is one of their important coping mechanisms. They deal with their difficulties by looking at it as a challenge instead of a burden and they regard their existing difficulties and challenges as a necessary part of the pursuit of a greater objective or end. The need to be strong for the sake of their families illustrates how women have internalized and seriously regard their changed role as family providers.

**In Solidarity with Filipino Migrants.** Filipinos have a strong group orientation, be it family, clan and community, and this is manifested in their preference for doing things together either work or leisure. Filipino migrants in the Netherlands have carried with them this strong group orientation and they show gestures of solidarity towards fellow Filipino migrants whom they call “kababayan”. A Filipina/o is always delighted when she/he meets other Filipinos in the train, bus, park, shopping center and other places. A usual dialogue is: *“Filipino ka?” “matagal ka na dito?” “saan ka sa atin” “sige, magtawagan na lang tayo”*

(translation: “Are you a Filipino?”, “How long have you stayed in the Netherlands?”, “From what part of the Philippines are you?” and “Let’s call each other up” after which phone numbers will be exchanged).

Filipino migrants specially undocumented ones understand that living in another country could be difficult and stressful. They adjust and integrate in Dutch society by organizing themselves in different ways: political, cultural, religious, work-oriented, sports, music, among others. Different individuals and group sponsor activities so that Filipinos can celebrate Philippine events and festivals here in the Netherlands e.g. Fiestas, Valentine’s Day, Flores de Mayo, Independence Day, Halloween, Christmas Day. These activities are good venues and opportunities for Filipino migrants to meet, establish or renew friendships, have fun and form support or solidarity groups. Filipinos in the Netherlands communicate with each other by putting up newsletters or bulletins. Bayanihan, a Filipino value that pertains to communalism or a communal spirit enables Filipinos in the Netherlands to come together and help each other in times of need. It is also important to mention that almost all of them are proud of being ‘law abiders’ - they respect and obey laws, dutifully punch their strippenkaart - even if they are not recognised in the host country. For them, it is an expression of being good ‘citizens’ and a way to prevent unnecessary confrontation with authorities.

It is interesting to note that the undocumented migrant domestic workers’ coping strategies are relational rather than individualistic. They seek out and relate to a God, their friends and families and their country women/men. Inspiration is derived from fellow Filipinos and the ability to help, support and take care each other like family.

### **The Effects of Female Migration in Philippine Society**

Women’s labour migration helps keep the Philippine economy afloat as 34-54% of the Filipino population is sustained by remittances from migrant women (Parrenas, 2002). The exodus of Filipino women to developed countries to fill up the labour gaps in domestic work has generated tremendous social changes in the Philippines.

*Joan is a 37 year-old woman who has 3 children and who has remained undocumented for 5 years now. According to her; “I left my 3 children to my husband hoping that he will take care of them the way I did when I was still in the Philippines. Unfortunately, I always received reports from my 12 years old eldest daughter that their father always came home at*



dawn because he stayed out late with his friends. When he is home, he keeps on sleeping or drinking beer. My children have to take care of all household concerns specially my eldest daughter. I really pity my children...(crying) if only I am there, then I can take care of them. I cannot depend on my husband in terms of looking after his children's needs. Because of this, I have to ask my mother to stay in our place and take care of my children."

The country suffers from a care drain as a result of the feminization of migration. Under the existing gender division of labor, women are tasked to look after their family's welfare and the entire household. As female migration becomes the main source of family survival and as women assume the role of family provider, no corresponding efforts are made to review the gender division of labor and no corresponding adjustments in expectation are set for men to assume primary responsibility for reproductive functions.

Linda is 42 years old and has been an undocumented migrant domestic worker for 12 years now. According to her; *"Before I came to the Netherlands, I was a full-time mother and wife. My husband works as a contractual dispatcher in a shopping mall in Manila. My in-laws did not like me, they believed that their son would have had a better future had he not marry me. I was financially dependent to my husband, I felt so powerless...all decisions in the family should come from him together with his parents and siblings. When my husband lost his job, I decided to go abroad. But just recently, we got separated...and he got another wife... they said that I abandoned my family. The truth is... my husband and his family just can't accept that I am now the provider, I gained a lot of self confidence and now making decisions for myself and my children..."*

The feminization of migration impacts on the concept of masculinity. In a country where the gender division of labor is well-defined and notions of masculinity and femininity are distinct e.g. men are the breadwinners, the changing roles of women leave men grappling with their new roles or insecure about their masculinity. In Linda's case, her husband resolved his insecurities by proving his masculinity (spending the remittances on vices and women) and laying the blame on Linda for not conforming to the stereotyped image of a good wife and mother.

Women tend to be blamed for the deterioration of families and the suffering of children as a result of migration. In 1995, former president of the Philippines Fidel V. Ramos called for

the return of migrant mothers because he believed women's migration destroys families. He implied that women's migration is morally acceptable only when it is undertaken by single or childless women (Parrenas, 2002). There are actual instances when children suffered from serious emotional and psychological problems like in the case of Lina's son but to center the blame on women/mothers is to ignore the role of other players, especially the state, in responding to the care crisis created by the feminization of migration. When it is the state who also benefits from the remittances of female migrant workers, interventions that truly address the effects of female migration (as opposed to perpetuating discrimination against women or exacerbating their vulnerable conditions abroad) must be initiated by the state. For one, the state should mandate men to take a share in the care giving responsibility within the household. Why do fathers who provide for the financial/material needs of his children but who do not perform care-giving functions regarded as "ideal fathers" yet women who provide for the financial/material needs of her children but who is not able to perform nurturing functions not considered as "ideal mothers"?

Who take care of the children, the sick and the elderly back home while migrant women are away? Most of the men who were left behind pass the care-giving responsibilities to women relatives such as grandmothers, aunts, mother-in-laws or to elder daughters who are forced by their situation to mature early and act as substitute mother to their younger siblings. In fairness to some, there are also fathers who were forced to perform care-giving responsibilities. In the case of the elderly and sick members of the family, men are much less involved and still, it is the female members of the family who bear the burden of care giving. Jenny, who is an undocumented migrant domestic worker for 8 years now, is the eldest of 3 siblings. According to her; *"Our parents figured in a car accident. My dad died while my mother became an invalid for almost 10 years now. My sister and I take care of our mom. After college, I decided to go here in the Netherlands to work so we needed someone to take care of my sick mother but of course we can't afford to get a private nurse. My uncle who stands as our father said that my sister should stop from her studies to take care of my mom but not my brother."*

In the Philippines, it is not usual to put a sick or elderly family member in care centres because it is considered as lacking of love and respect for that person. Aside from this cultural aspect, there is also an economic dimension as most households cannot afford the

better services offered by private care centres. Jenny's sister was denied her right to study just to care of her mom while no such expectations were made on her brother.

### *The Issues of Care in the Netherlands and the Undocumented Filipina Migrants*

Throughout Europe, the family is still an important provider of care. However, all countries are currently trying to redefine and restructure the division of care responsibilities, seeking to establish a new balance among care providers which are the family, the market and the state (Bettio & Plantenga, 2004). The Dutch particularly depend on informal care and by informal is meant unregulated, mostly unpaid, activities in behalf of children and elderly relatives and obviously women devote a substantial part of their time to care work (Bettio & Plantenga, 2004). There is a systematic reliance on the private family for the provision of care work and services. The family is considered the natural provider for children and caregiver for the elderly and the welfare state actively encouraged the family to perform this role based on the principle of subsidiarity or receiving part of financial burden rather than direct interventions of supporting the family in the care tasks or to influence the equal sharing of unpaid care work between men and women (Bettio & Plantenga, 2004).

The welfare state's arrangements on care system provides good help in dealing with the overall burden of care work, but it does not necessarily resolve or lessen women's double burden. How the state deals with the issue of care work does not exactly address the existing problem of domestic and care gap in the Netherlands. The demand for care has increased and resulted to care deficit. Dutch households are increasingly utilizing migrant women most of whom are undocumented in assuming and performing domestic and care work in the Netherlands.

While Dutch women actively participate in the labor market alongside men and became productive, there are undocumented migrant women who left their families in the Philippines to play the role of surrogate mothers and domestic workers to Dutch families. It is important to note that the female employers of the 29 undocumented migrants interviewed are working women. The Dutch government directly benefits from this surrogate labor of invisible caregivers and sometimes, undocumented migrant domestic workers yet it continues to deny them fundamental rights to legitimately live and work in the country. The story of Rose who takes care of 2 children (now aged 2 and 4) since they were born illustrates the significant

role of migrant domestic workers in the Dutch household. According to Rose, she can either live with her children in the Philippines in desperate poverty or make money by living apart from them. Her female employer is a single parent and works as a flight steward. Due to the absence of support of the children's father and the minimal intervention of the state, Rose's employer had to work to provide for all her children's needs.

### **Migrant Women's Notions of Empowerment and Agency**

Is the prevailing family and national reliance to female migration bring empowerment to women? One question in the focused group discussion was; *"Despite disempowering condition in the Netherlands, how does migration become a source of empowerment?"* Jessica who is 39 years old and who has remained undocumented for 10 years now said; *"I was forced to go to Netherlands knowing that I will become undocumented because the income of my husband is not enough with 4 children studying. Despite my condition here, I am happy and have no regrets because I was able to provide for the needs of my family. In fact, I gained a lot of respect from my husband, my parents and sibling. In a way, since I became the main provider to my family, I always have the 'say' on crucial decisions in the family. This made me confident, independent and empowered".*

Migrant domestic workers achieved their success by assuming the cast-off domestic roles of middle and upper class white women and the role that have been previously rejected by men in the Netherlands. They find their own liberation in becoming breadwinners and improving their families' material lives. Migration, despite its negative effects on women, has also provided them a source of empowerment. Jessica was able to exercise bargaining power in the very patriarchal Filipino households because of her changed status as financial provider. What is significant and common to all of the women involved in the study is that, their notion of empowerment is always linked with their obligations to their families (when they are able to provide the whole family with their needs e.g. when their children or siblings finished their education or the sick member of the family is being provided with her/his medical needs). They also assess their empowerment by comparing their experiences before and after migration. Despite an undocumented status, being in the Netherlands had made them feel that they can do something about their difficult situation at home than when they have stayed and simply bear that difficult circumstance.

During the FGDs, the women claimed they don't see themselves as disempowered even if they have experienced disempowering conditions and are continuously exposed to serious insecurities, exploitation, harassment and other vulnerabilities. They seek control over such conditions, build their individual and collective coping mechanisms and they developed their strategic collective actions to negotiate with power. Filipino migrants in the Netherlands are organised in many ways either through political or religious organisations. One example is the group of undocumented migrants in Amsterdam organised by Migrante who do not regard themselves as victims who are waiting for others to help them but who consider themselves their own main actors. They organised themselves and formed their own support system, enlightened themselves e.g. on migration, economic, social and political issues both in the Netherlands and the Philippines and actively campaigned and advocated for the issues of migrants in the Netherlands.



## Chapter Five

### Conclusions and Recommendations

Experiences of discrimination and abuse among Filipina undocumented migrants in the Netherlands has something to do with the subordinate character of domestic work that made them vulnerable to abuse and discrimination. In the Dutch law, undocumented migrant domestic workers are non-existent, have no rights, and were defined as 'illegals' because they do not have residence or work permits. Their input in the Dutch economy is not recognised and invisible. The Dutch economy is benefiting from the labour of these undocumented workers who are employed in an oppressive and exploitative condition, engaged in poorly paid, dirty, dangerous and unskilled work which local residents have shunned. Dutch women enjoy the changed role and advance their career or undertake wage labour outside households alongside with men because undocumented migrants play an important role as substitute workers and mothers in the household. If all undocumented domestic workers will not work for a day, the economy of the host country will be affected. Employers have to absent themselves from work to do the household chores, take care of their children and of sick members of the family. However, the restrictive immigration policy of the Dutch government hardly offers undocumented migrants any possibilities for getting permits to stay and work.

Moreover, the contributions of undocumented migrants to the home country are significant in sustaining many Filipino families and the crisis-ridden Philippine economy with their foreign currency remittances. The price can be high because they end up separated from their families for years and endure the difficulties due to their undocumented status. The Philippines is undergoing a care drain brought about by the huge movement of women in migration. First world countries once extracted its natural resources, now it extracts parental affection as well. Today, as love and care become the 'new gold' in the labour market, many Filipino children pay the price and migration has become a 'dark child's burden' and their mothers' burden as well.

It is important for the Philippine government to address the social problems brought about by the phenomenon of female migration. Concrete intervention programs is needed to deal with the psychological and emotional effects of migration to migrant women and their families'

back home. If the Philippine economy cannot provide an equitable employment for women in the country then it should secure a bilateral agreement with the receiving countries like the Netherlands to protect its migrant workers. The invisibility of domestic work, the absence of the social obligations of the host country, the lack of protection from the home country and the strict and harsh immigration policies of the Netherlands compound the vulnerability and insecurity of undocumented Filipina migrant domestic workers.

Legislation that would protect migrant domestic workers will provide additional buffer or fallback when undocumented women find themselves in difficult and abusive situations, however, it is not enough as an intervention. Also, interventions for undocumented migrant domestic workers should go beyond the NGOs and both the Netherlands and the Philippine government must address the issue and hold itself accountable for the plight of migrant domestic workers.

### **Recommendations**

1. A systematic approach is required as well as a concerted policy that begins with the inclusion of domestic work in the protective mechanisms of national legislation and the adherence to a common framework on the protection of the rights of undocumented migrants. The Government of the Philippines must pursue an explicit bilateral agreement with the Government of the Netherlands for the protection of domestic workers. Said bilateral agreement must proceed from a recognition of the existence and the rights of undocumented migrant domestic workers in the Netherlands, as affirmed by the UN Convention on the Protection of Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families and the UN Convention on Human Rights. Among the recommended provisions of the bilateral agreement are (a) the granting of amnesty and regularization for undocumented migrants who have worked in the Netherlands for a long period of time; (b) the protection of migrant domestic workers from labor-related and gender-related abuses; and (c) the awarding of work permits and, subsequently, the provision of remunerations and social security and other benefits consistent with those under Dutch law to migrant domestic workers.



2. Likewise, programs that aim to address the social costs of migration, especially the needs of the families of domestic workers, must be enhanced and implemented by the Philippine government.
  
3. Efforts geared towards promoting the rights and welfare of migrant domestic workers must be strengthened. Non-government organisations and institutions concerned with migrant issues in the Netherlands could focus on (a) pressuring the governments of the Philippines and the Netherlands to address the issue of undocumented migrant workers through a bilateral agreement or other such measures; (b) pressuring both countries to ratify the UN Convention on the Protection of the Rights of Migrants and Members of their Families and/or to comply to such international standards as the CEDAW and; (c) organizing migrant domestic workers towards enabling them to invoke and exercise their rights, either as individuals or as a collective, which are embodied in the CEDAW, the UN Convention on the Protection of Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families and the UN Convention on Human Rights; (d) emphasizing the link between the migrants' issues, initiatives and struggle and the overall struggle of the Filipino people for jobs and justice, food and freedom, land and liberation, national freedom and democracy in its consciousness-raising initiatives and (e) integrating a gender perspective in the content of existing consciousness-raising activities so that women's empowerment is made an explicit objective and goal.



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## Appendix

### Questionnaire

Kindly answer the following questions as candidly as you can. Please do not leave any question unanswered. There are no right nor wrong answers. Be assured that your responses will be kept with the strictest confidentiality.

*Sagutin nang malaya ang mga sumusunod na tanong. Mangyari lang pong sagutin ang lahat ng tanong. Walang tama o maling sagot. Asahan na lahat ng iyong mga sagot ay mananatiling kumpidensyal.*

#### Part 1 (Unang Bahagi)

1. Your age: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Edad*
2. Your status: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Estado:*

<input type="checkbox"/> Single <i>Walang asawa</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Separated <i>Hiwalay sa asawa</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Married <i>May asawa</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Widowed <i>Balo</i>
3. Religion \_\_\_\_\_  
*Relihiyon*

<input type="checkbox"/> Catholic ( <i>Katoliko</i> )	<input type="checkbox"/> Aglipayan ( <i>Aglipay</i> )
<input type="checkbox"/> Protestant ( <i>Protestante</i> )	<input type="checkbox"/> Islam ( <i>Muslim</i> )
<input type="checkbox"/> Born Again Christian ( <i>Kristiyano</i> )	<input type="checkbox"/> Others, pls. specify: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Iglesia ni Kristo ( <i>Iglesia ni Kristo</i> )	<i>Iba pa, paki-sulat:</i> _____
4. Your sibling position \_\_\_\_\_  
*Posisyon sa magkakapatid*

<input type="checkbox"/> Eldest ( <i>Pinakamatanda</i> )	<input type="checkbox"/> Youngest ( <i>Pinakabata</i> )
<input type="checkbox"/> Middle child ( <i>Gitnang anak</i> )	<input type="checkbox"/> Only child ( <i>Nag-iisang anak</i> )
5. From what province in the Philippines do you come from? \_\_\_\_\_  
*Saang probinsiya sa Pilipinas ka galing?*
6. Your highest educational attainment: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Pinaka-mataas na antas na pinag-aralan:*

<input type="checkbox"/> High School ( <i>Sekondarya</i> )
<input type="checkbox"/> College ( <i>Kolehiyo</i> )
<input type="checkbox"/> Vocational/Technical ( <i>Bokasyonal/Teknikal</i> )
7. Do you have children? \_\_\_\_\_  
*Mayroon ka bang anak?*

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <i>Oo</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> No (Pls. go to 9) <i>Wala (Pumunta sa 9)</i>
---	--
8. If yes, how many? (*Kung oo, ilan?*) \_\_\_\_\_
9. Length of stay in the Netherlands: \_\_\_\_\_ years, \_\_\_\_\_ months  
*Panahong nasa Netherlands: taon buwan*
10. What job(s) did you hold before you came to the Netherlands? Please list.  
*Anong trabaho mo bago ka pumunta sa Netherlands. Paki-lista.*
11. How much salary (in pesos) did you receive in your previous job? Please estimate your average salary if you held more than 1 job.  
*Magkano ang suweldong tinanggap mo sa dati mong trabaho (sabihin sa piso)? Kung higit sa isa ang hinawakan mong trabaho, paki-sulat ang average mong suweldo.* \_\_\_\_\_
12. When you first came to the Netherlands, what type of visa were you holding?  
*Nang una kang dumating sa Netherlands, anong klaseng bisa ang hawak mo?*

<input type="checkbox"/> Tourist visa ( <i>Turista</i> )	<input type="checkbox"/> Student visa ( <i>Estudyante</i> )
<input type="checkbox"/> Entry visa	<input type="checkbox"/> Au pair visa
<input type="checkbox"/> Fiance visa	<input type="checkbox"/> Others, pls. specify _____
	<i>Iba pa, paki-sulat:</i> _____

13. How were you able to afford the fare when you first came to the Netherlands? Check all that apply.  
Paano mong natustusan ang pamasaha tungo sa Netherlands? Lagyan ng tsek ang lahat na angkop.

- From my own savings  
*Sariling ipon*
- Sold a thing or things of value (e.g., property, jewelry)  
*Nagbenta ng bagay na may halaga (hal., lupa, alahas)*
- Pawned something of value  
*Nagsangla ng bagay na may halaga*
- Made a loan, please specify from whom. Please check all that apply.  
*Umutang, paki-sabi kung kanino. Lagyan ng tsek ang lahat na angkop.*
- \_\_\_\_\_ relative (*kamag-anak*)
- \_\_\_\_\_ bank (*bangko*)
- \_\_\_\_\_ friend (*kaibigan*)
- \_\_\_\_\_ institution (*institusyon*)
- Family members chipped in, please specify relationship. Please check all that apply.  
*Nag-ambag-ambag ang mga ka-pamilya. Paki-sabi ang relasyon, lagyan ng tsek ang lahat na angkop*
- \_\_\_\_\_ parents (*mga magulang*)
- \_\_\_\_\_ uncle or aunt (*tiyo o tiya*)
- \_\_\_\_\_ grandparents (*lolo at lola*)
- \_\_\_\_\_ siblings (*mga kapatid*)
- Others, pls. specify  
*Iba pa, paki-sulat* \_\_\_\_\_

14. Have you gone back to the Philippines since you arrived in the Netherlands?  
*Bumalik ka na ba sa Pilipinas mula nang dumating ka sa Netherlands?*

- Yes                       No (Pls. go to 16)  
*Oo                              Hindi (Pumunta sa 16)*

15. If yes, how many times?  
*Kung oo, ilang beses? \_\_\_\_\_*

16. Where do you live at present? Check one.  
*Saan ka nakatira ngayon? Tsekan ang isa.*

- Live alone in an apartment  
*Nakatirang mag-isa sa isang apartamento*
- Live alone in a rented room  
*Nakatirang mag-isa sa inuupahang kuwarto*
- Share an apartment with a friend(s)  
*Nakatira sa apartamento kasalo ng kaibigan o mga kaibigan*
- Share a room with a friend(s)  
*Nakatira sa inuupahang kuwarto kasalo ng kaibigan o mga kaibigan*
- Live with my son/daughter or relative  
*Nakatira kasama ng aking anak o kamag-anak*
- Live with my employer  
*Nakatira sa aking amo*

17. How many days in a week do you work?  
*Ilang araw sa isang linggo ka nagtatrabaho? \_\_\_\_\_*

18. How many households do you service in a day?  
*Ilang bahay ang sineserbisuhan mo sa isang araw? \_\_\_\_\_*

19. What type of work do you do in the households that you service? Please check all that apply.  
*Anong ginagawa mo sa mga bahay na pinagtatrabahuhan mo? Lagyan ng tsek ang lahat na angkop.*



- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Laundry and ironing<br><i>Naglalaba at namamalantsa</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> Caring for pets<br><i>Nag-aalaga ng mga hayop</i>         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cleaning<br><i>Naglilinis</i>                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Baby sitting<br><i>Nag-aalaga ng bata</i>                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gardening<br><i>Nag-aalaga ng mga halaman</i>           | <input type="checkbox"/> Caring for the elderly<br><i>Nag-aalaga ng matanda</i>    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cooking<br><i>Nagluluto</i>                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Others, pls. specify:<br><i>Iba pa, paki-sulat: _____</i> |

20. How many hours do you work per household?  
*Ilang oras ka nagtatrabaho sa bawat bahay? \_\_\_\_\_*

21. How much do you earn per hour? (In €)  
*Magkano ang sahod mo bawat oras? (Sabihin sa €) \_\_\_\_\_*

22. Do you get "benefits" from your employers (e.g., employer provide snacks)?  
*May natatanggap ka bang "benepisyo" mula sa iyong amo (hal., binibigyan ka ng merienda)?*  
 Yes                       No (Pls. go to 24)  
*Oo                              Hindi (Pumunta sa 24)*

23. If yes, what are these? Please list.  
*Kung oo, anu-ano ang mga ito? Paki-lista.*

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

24. Do you do other activities on your days off or free time that are income generating (e.g., selling phone cards)?  
*Mayroon ka bang ibang raket na ginagawa kapag may libre kang araw o oras (hal., nagtitinda ng phone cards)?*  
 Yes (Oo)                       No (Wala)

If yes, please list  
*Kung oo, paki-lista \_\_\_\_\_*

25. Are you able to save?  
*Nakakapag-ipon ka ba?*  
 Yes                               Not really (Pls. go to 27)  
*Oo                                      Hindi (Pumunta sa 27)*

26. If yes, what is your average savings in a month?  
*Kung oo, magkano ang average na naiipon mo sa isang buwan? \_\_\_\_\_*

27. Do you send money to the Philippines?  
*Nagpapadala ka ba na pera sa Pilipinas?*  
 Yes                               No (Pls. go to 30)  
*Oo                                      Hindi (Pumunta sa 27)*

28. If yes, how often do you send? Check the most frequent schedule.  
*Kung oo, gaano kadalas kang magpadala? Lagyan ng tsek ang pinaka-madalas na iskedyul.*  
 Every month                      *(Buwang-buwang)*  
 Every 2 months                      *(Tuwing ikalawang buwan)*  
 Quarterly                              *(Tuwing ika-3 buwan)*  
 Trimestral                              *(Tuwing ika-4 na buwan)*  
 Semestral                              *(Tuwing ika-6 na buwan)*  
 As the need arises *(Kung kinakailangan lang)*  
 Others, pls. specify  
*Iba pa, paki-sulat: \_\_\_\_\_*

29. On the average, how much money do you usually send? (In €) \_\_\_\_\_

Mga magkano ang kalimitan mong ipinadadala? (Sabihin sa €) \_\_\_\_\_

30. For what purpose is the money you send to the Philippines? Choose the top 3 reasons and rank them with 1 as the highest.

*Para saan ang ipinadadala mong pera sa Pilipinas? Piliin ang tatlong pinaka-dahilan at lagyan ng ranggo; ang 1 bilang pinaka-pangungahing dahilan.*

- \_\_\_\_\_ education of children or siblings  
*edukasyon ng mga anak o kapatid*
- \_\_\_\_\_ loan payment  
*pambayad utang*
- \_\_\_\_\_ everyday expenses of the household (e.g., rent, utilities, food)  
*pang araw-araw na gastusin sa bahay (hal., upa, tubig at kuyente, pagkain)*
- \_\_\_\_\_ medical expenses of the family  
*gamot at iba pang pinagkakagastusang medikal ng pamilya*
- \_\_\_\_\_ construction expenses for a house  
*pagpapatayo ng bahay*
- \_\_\_\_\_ payment for a big expense (e.g., car, property)  
*pambayad sa malaking pinagkakagastusan (hal., kotse, lupa)*
- \_\_\_\_\_ others, pls. specify:  
*iba pa, paki-sulat: \_\_\_\_\_*

31. Below is a list of things that you might spend on. Go through the list and choose the top 5 things you spend for. Rank them accordingly with 1 as the item that you spend most on, 2, the next thing you spend most on, and so on. Put the number on the blank beside the item.

*Sa ibaba ay listahan ng mga bagay na maaari niyong pagkagastusan. Basahin ang talaan at piliin ang 5 bagay na lagi niyong pinagkakagastusan at iranggo. Lagyan 1 ang pangunahing pinagkakagastusan, 2, ang sumunod na bagay na pinagkakagastusan at ang iba pang susunod. Isulat ang bilang sa patlang sa tabi ng bagay.*

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| _____ food and grocery<br><i>pagkain at grocery</i>      | _____ household things<br><i>kagamitang pambahay</i>                         | _____ rent<br><i>upa</i>   |
| _____ cigarettes<br><i>sigarilyo</i>                     | _____ call cards   | _____ utilities<br><i>tubig, kuryente, telepono</i>                |
| _____ clothes<br><i>damit</i>                            | _____ cell phone load  | _____ remittance<br><i>padala sa Pilipinas</i>                     |
| _____ shoes<br><i>sapatos</i>                            | _____ transportation<br><i>pamasahe</i>                                      | _____ entertainment (e.g., movie)<br><i>pang-aliw (hal., sine)</i> |
| _____ bags and accessories<br><i>bag at mga palamuti</i> | _____ personal hygiene products<br><i>syampu, sabong<br/>pampaligo, atbp</i> | _____ others, pls. specify:<br><i>iba pa, paki-sulat: _____</i>    |

32. The following are some activities that you might do on your free time. Please estimate the **number of hours** you spend for **each activity** in a month. Please write on the space before each activity.

*Ang sumusunod ay mga bagay na maaari niyong gawin sa libre niyong oras. Tantsahin ang bilang ng oras na ginugugol niyo sa bawat gawain sa loob ng isang buwan. Isulat ang oras sa patlang sa tabi ng bawat gawain*

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| _____ go shopping<br><i>mamili</i>                            | _____ clean my apartment/house<br><i>maglinis ng aking tinitirhan</i> |
| _____ watch movies<br><i>manuod ng sine</i>                   | _____ visit the doctor<br><i>magpunta sa doktor</i>                   |
| _____ visit friends<br><i>bisitahin ang mga kaibigan</i>      | _____ go to church<br><i>magsimba</i>                                 |
| _____ go to the grocery/market<br><i>magpunta sa palengke</i> | _____ exercise, sports<br><i>mag-ehersisyo</i>                        |

\_\_\_\_\_ walk in the park, picnic  
*maglakad sa parke o mag-piknik*

\_\_\_\_\_ attend activities of an organization or  
 community  
*dumalo sa gawain ng organisasyon o  
 komunidad*

\_\_\_\_\_ others, please specify:  
*iba pa, paki-sulat:*

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Part 2 (Ika-2 Bahagi)

The following are some stresses that you may experience here in the Netherlands. Please read through the list, choose the 5 stresses that you experience most then rank them from 1 to 5. Write 1 on the blank space before the item that stresses you the most, 2 beside the second most stressful situation and so on.

*Ang sumusunod ay mga stress na maaari niyong maranasan dito sa Netherlands. Basahin ang listahan at piliin ang 5 bagay na nagbibigay ng higit na stress sa iyo. Iranggo ang sila mula 1 hanggang 5. Isulat ang 1 sa tabi ng bagay na pinakanagbibigay ng stress, 2 as susunod na bagay at ituloy.*

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Sound of an alarm whether coming from an ambulance, police car, fire truck or building  
*Tunog ng alarma na galing sa ambulansiya, kotse ng pulis, bombero o gusali.*
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Sight of a police officer or tram/train ticket inspector  
*Kapag nakakakita ng pulis o inspektor sa tren o bus*
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. News of illness in the family in the Philippines  
*Balita na nagkasakit ang isang kapamilya sa Pilipinas*
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. My own health  
*Sariling kalusugan*
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Not enough money to pay for rent and other basic expenses  
*Walang sapat na salaping pambayad para sa upa at iba pang pang araw-araw na gastushin*
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Being discovered that I don't have the proper documents by authorities  
*Madiskubre ng awtoridad na wala akong wastong dokumento para magtrabaho rito*
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Having too much work to do  
*Masyadong maraming gawain*
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Not finding enough households to service  
*Hindi makahanap ng sapat na bilang ng kabahayan para pagsilbihan*
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Possibility of contracting serious illness  
*Posibilidad na magkaroon ng matinding sakit*
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. No knowledge of support groups  
*Walang kaalaman tungkol sa mga grupo na maaring maka-suporta*
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Low wages  
*Mababang sahod*
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Verbal and/or physical abuse by employer  
*Salita at/o pisikal na pang-aabuso ng amo*
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. Possibility of getting into an accident  
*Posibilidad ng sakuna*
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. News of events in the Philippines (e.g., typhoons, coup d' etat) that may affect family  
*Balita ng kalagayan sa Pilipinas (hal., bagyo, kudeta) na maaaring maka-apekto sa pamilya*
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. Possibility of someone telling on me regarding my status  
*Posibilidad na may magsabi sa awtoridad tungkol sa aking estado*



## FGD Questions

In general, what can you say about your life in the Netherlands?

What is the precipitating event or events that made you decide to come to the Netherlands?

Why did you choose Netherlands?

When you decided to stay in the Netherlands beyond the date stamped on your visa, were you aware of the risks and the consequences of those risks?

If yes, what are the factors that made you decide to stay knowing fully well of the risks?

If no, what is the top reason that made you decide to stay?

Do you plan or have you tried to practice your area of expertise in the Netherlands?  
What barriers have you faced?

In your work, what is most difficult about it?

How do you cope with these difficulties, how do you go around it?

Think of a time when you felt so low. What sustained you in those "dark" times?

Despite disempowering condition in the Netherlands, how does migration become a source of empowerment?

Are you aware of Dutch policies that directly affects you?

If yes, what is your opinion of such policies?

Do you feel that you are exploited? Why or why not?

What positive things can you see in being undocumented?  
What about the negative things?

Do you know of any Filipino association based in Holland that you can contact, join or ask for assistance?

If yes, please state the name of the association and describe its nature and their activities.

Would you recommend to friends to work here as domestic helpers? Why or why not?

What are your future plans?

