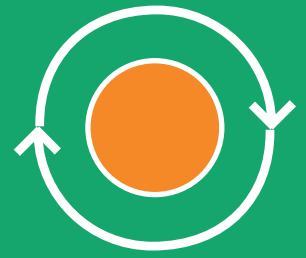


Gender, Remittances and Development



The Case of Filipino Migration to Italy



The United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women promotes applied research on gender, facilitates information sharing, and supports capacity-building through networking mechanisms and multi-stakeholder partnerships with UN agencies, governments, academia and civil society.

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Gender, Remittances and Local Rural Development:

The Case of Filipino Migration to Italy

Lead researcher: Natalia Ribas

Lead field researchers: Charito Basa and Rosalud de la Rosa

Assistant Field Researchers: Linda Balmes, Annie Caalim, Dona Rose de la Cruz,
Luisita Raquel Garcia, Marita Moaje and Dulcie Mendoza

Atlas-Ti Programme Assistant: Sonia Baños

Report prepared by: Victoria Simmons and Mar García

UN-INSTRAW Responsible: Carolina Taborga

IFAD Responsible: Maria Hartl

Cover Photo : Charito Basa

United Nations International Research and Training
Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW)

César Nicolás Penson 102-A

Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic

Phone: 1-809-685-2111

Fax: 1-809-685-2117

Email: info@un-instraw.org

Webpage: <http://www.un-instraw.org>

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The findings of this project reveal that gender influences migration, remittances and their relationship to local rural development in several ways. First of all, gender norms and sex-segregated labour markets have traditionally promoted and prioritized Filipino women's migration to Italy over the migration of their male counterparts. Female migration has been propelled by a care crisis in developed countries, such as Italy, which has opened up employment opportunities specifically for women from developing countries, such as the Philippines. At the same time, rural areas in developing countries are encountering growing difficulties for survival, principally linked to the impact of global capitalism on the agrarian sector.

Over the years, those paid employment opportunities that international migration offers has converted rural Filipino migrant women into necessary actors. Not only have their remittances served to finance the migration of other Filipino men and women, but without them, many households would not have been able to meet their most basic subsistence needs, nor would they have accessed the necessary capital to make investments- either in land or education for their children- in order to ensure their progress and social mobility. This fact is framed in a general world-wide tendency whereby the subsistence of agrarian communities is increasingly bound to their ability to participate in a non-farming market economy.

Secondly, women are the primary senders of remittances from Italy to the Philippines. The testimonies collected in this study demonstrate that women fundamentally conceive their migratory project in terms of their own self-sacrifice for the well-being of future generations, whereas men will often reserve their money for their own personal expenses and interests. Women therefore develop a strategy based on savings and the strict control of their spending habits in Italy designed to send the highest possible amounts of remittances to their households in the Philippines. This reinforces women's decision to work as live-in domestic workers in Italy in order to avoid housing expenses and save the whole of their salaries and implies high costs for women in terms of their own personal well being. Often the pressures that female migrants put on themselves to consistently send fixed amounts to their households back home leads some to use credit services. The high interest rates attached to these services often make it impossible for Filipino

migrants to keep up with debt payments, send remittances and ensure their own survival as domestic workers in Italy.

Gender norms also make women the preferred financial administrators of their households' daily expenses, placing a large percentage of the remittances sent from Italy in the hands of women in the Philippines. Added to this, is the fact that female migrants in Italy frequently have a high degree of control over the use of the remittances they send. Therefore women play a central role in deciding the use of remittances. This is believed to improve household food security for those left behind in the Philippines, as women tend to prioritize remittance spending on the nutritional, educational and health care needs of household members. These gender patterns in the sending and use of remittances mark the manner in which migration impacts food security (short-term improvements and potentially long term risks) and agricultural production (where the effects are more ambivalent in nature).

While remittances are mainly used to finance the basic consumption of households, there are two types of investments which are fundamental in the migratory projects of an important segment of the migratory flow analyzed: The investment in the purchase of lands and technology for agricultural production and the investment in the education of migrants' children and siblings. These two types of investment are clearly marked by gender and have differing effects on local rural development from a gender perspective.

When remittances are invested in agricultural land and technologies, they contribute to greater production levels and the diversification of crops. However, migration and remittances have led to decreases in women's participation in agricultural activities. Remittances used for attaining land, as well as agricultural technologies, tend to result in a transition from a subsistence model of agriculture to one focusing on agricultural commercialization and in which the unpaid labour of women and children is substituted for hired male workers. This implies important changes in the sexual division of labour in the communities of origin, where women are primarily dedicated to the care giving of dependents (children and the elderly) and/or to the administration of small business, while young adults are dedicated almost exclusively to their studies. Landownership has continued to be, as it has

traditionally been in the rural Philippines, patrimony left to male children, while education is emphasized in the inheritance of female children. Linked to the transformations in gender relations which have resulted from migratory processes, a greater number of female adult migrants have been progressively acquiring lands in their names. When they are not designated for agricultural exploitation- a task generally left to men-, these lands are commonly used for the construction of houses and/or businesses.

When considering general impacts on rural development, it is also important to consider effects relating to an increase in social inequalities, including the transfer of inequalities from some groups of women to others. These increases are taking place as a result of migration and remittances' positive impact on the ability to consume and invest. Only those households which receive remittances are the ones which are currently able to confront the mechanization/ technological changes to farming, while those which do not have a household member working overseas continue to apply traditional cultivation methods, making it difficult for them to compete. In terms of gender equity, this study revealed that high rates of female migration tend to generate job opportunities linked to the care giving of children and the elderly left behind in the communities of origin. It is important to note, however, that these jobs are generally informal and poorly paid positions occupied by women from the poorest households.

The investment of remittances in cultivable land is not prevalent in all cases. In some communities, such as those found in Batangas, investment primarily relates to the purchase of residential properties or small businesses. This can have a negative effect on agricultural development. In some cases, it reduces cultivable land and contributes to a growing disinterest in agricultural activities amongst migrant family members and their surrounding communities. Consequently, migrants' households become dependent on the remittance incomes sent from Italy, subsistence

farming decreases and household food security comes to depend on the purchase of goods from the market. There is still much work to be done in order to maximize the potential of migration and remittances for contributing to positive sustainable and gender-sensitive rural development. If current local rural development trends related to migration and remittances persist, emigration from these rural communities of origin to urban areas and abroad will continue to intensify. Household food security could be threatened as cultivable lands disappear and are replaced with houses and businesses purchased with remittances, younger generations abandon agricultural activity for a more lucrative career in international domestic work and remittance recipients become more and more dependent on store-bought food and cash flows to secure their nutritional needs.

It is therefore necessary to continue investigating possible methods of capitalizing on the relationship between migration, remittances and development in a gender-sensitive manner. The recognition of the positive impacts that migration has had on the maintenance and development of agricultural production should not lose sight of the fact that migrant women's self-exploitation and the costs this implies sustain these processes. For example, many female migrants that have spent the majority of their working life in Italy currently do not have a guaranteed pension to support them upon return to the Philippines. On the other hand, the manner in which remittances are directing agricultural development processes in the cases analyzed for this study, does not clearly involve the creation of stable, well-paid employment allowing for women to remain in rural areas, whether this is working in agricultural activity or other sectors of the labour market. Finally, the increase in inequality between households which receive remittances and those which do not worsens the conditions of women in non-remittance-receiving households, as their workload intensifies because of their required contribution to the diversification of household income sources.

Over the last decade, the growth in international migration and remittance flows has caught the attention of financial institutions, national governments and international organizations worldwide. It is estimated that some 192 million people, or 3% of the world's population, are migrants (IOM, 2007), who, in 2006, sent a total of approximately \$300 billion USD in remittances to their households and/ or places of origin (IFAD, 2007). From a development perspective, this enormous transfer of resources from wealthier to more impoverished regions of the world represents a unique opportunity for improving the well being of those communities involved. In order for such local development initiatives to be effective and sustainable however, there must be a clear understanding of how remittances and development shape and are shaped by gender in each and every context.

Since the publication of their working paper *Crossing Borders: Gender, Remittances and Development* (2005), the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (UN-INSTRAW) has been conducting a series of case studies that examine the gender dimensions of migration, remittances and development in different countries around the world. As part of this series, UN-INSTRAW has partnered with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) in order to examine the impact and potential of remittances for making positive contributions to sustainable and gender-sensitive local development in the rural Philippines.

One of the particular features of this case study was the active participation of the Filipino Women's Council (FWC) in the research process. Founded in 1991 by a

small group of Filipina migrant women in Rome, Italy, this migrant association has worked toward educating Filipina women about their rights and responsibilities as migrants living in Italy, while lobbying the relevant authorities for the recognition and legislation of these rights. Consequently, the FWC possessed valuable insight and community ties prior to the commencement of the data collection. This work, along with their previously published research on the situation of Filipino domestic workers in Rome,¹ has been well-received and, consequently, placed them in a unique position to support this project.

The purpose of this paper is to present a summary of the main findings in the 2007 case study of Filipino migration to Italy. In the first section, we will briefly examine the theoretical framework that guided the research process, followed by a brief overview of the study's main objectives and the methodology used in the collection and analysis of the data. Part two characterizes the migratory and remittance flows between the Philippines and Italy, and provides an overview of some of the key actors currently working on initiatives linked to migration, remittances and development. This is followed by an analysis of remittances' impact and potential for promoting gender-sensitive sustainable rural development and food security in the communities of origin studied. The fourth section of this paper highlights some of the conclusions reached during a validation workshop in which Filipino migrants in Rome met with the project researchers to discuss this study's results and explore possible initiatives for future action. Finally, the conclusions of this study are presented along with a series of recommendations for future policy and research in this area.

1. Basa, Charito and Jing de la Rosa, Rosalud (2004) *Me, Us and Them: The Realities and Illusions of the Filipina Domestic Workers, A Community Research Project by the Filipino Women's Council.* Rome.

1. Introduction

1.1 Linking Migration, Remittances and Rural Development

It is estimated that more than 1 billion people around the world live in conditions of extreme poverty (UNDP, 2005). Approximately, three quarters, or 75%, of this population lives in rural areas and depends on agricultural activities to survive (IFAD, 2007). Although they are often very context-specific, common causes of poverty and food insecurity in rural communities include natural disasters (drought, flooding etc.), civil conflict and structural inequalities. Such phenomena limit these populations' access to resources and opportunities to secure a sustainable livelihood.

When local solutions are scarce or non-existent, poor families living in rural areas will often resort to 'sending' a family member to a nearby urban centre or abroad, in search of remunerated work. Once abroad, migrants send remittances to their households back home in order to ensure their basic necessities are met. Remittances are the funds that migrants transfer from their destination country to their country of origin. Such transfers may be made on a regular basis and/or sporadically in the event of emergencies or special events by using both formal channels -such as banks and remittance agencies- and informal channels, such as the personal transport of items by the migrants themselves or migrating friends and relatives.

Whether these transfers are made from individual migrants to their households or are collectively sent by migrant associations in the destination country to their communities of origin, remittances have a definite impact on local development in rural communities of origin. Although some literature has highlighted the negative effects that international migration and remittances² can have on these communities, other studies have shown their potential for local development. From a macroeconomic perspective, remittances have been seen to positively impact national income and foreign currency reserves in the country of origin, as well as contribute to the stabilization of balance of payments. At a mezzo level, remittances can support entrepreneurial activities and increase the demand for local goods and services. And, finally, at a household level, remittances have been capable of reducing poverty levels and increasing human capital as they provide

households with the resources to cover nutritional, educational and health care needs (UN-INSTRAW, 2005). It is in this sense that labour migration has come to be widely understood as a household survival strategy for many migrants and their families, as well as a possible tool for development.

Remittances essentially depend on the course and direction that the migratory process takes, while, at the same time, this depends on numerous variables in the places of origin and destination. Thus, there is a need to analyze both contexts in order to obtain a comprehensive perspective on the multiplicity of elements that impact the potential for remittances to have a positive impact on rural development. It is important to consider the fact that migratory processes can only be understood from a transnational perspective which conceives of migration as an interconnected and interdependent process between the countries of origin and destination. The manner in which migratory projects are shaped and, consequently, also the sending and utilization of remittances as well as migration's impact on development, are determined by the conditions present in both the places of origin and destination, which directly impact the evolution of migratory projects. In the communities of origin, these conditions include the characteristics of households with one or more migrants abroad, the economic and social contexts in which these households are found as well as structural conditions which determine the possibilities for productive entrepreneurship. In the destination country, factors such as the legal status of foreigners, available niches for labour insertion and dynamics linked to the integration of migrants are examples of other relevant factors that shape the migratory project.

In the study of remittances, the most pertinent unit of analysis is the transnational household. The migration of one household member does not constitute the act of a lone individual, but rather a household survival strategy. Migrant households continue to function as a unit of production and reproduction even when its members do not live in the same geographical territory. However, one should be aware of the dangers of visualizing households as homogeneous and harmonious units, devoid of power struggles and internal inequalities in the distribution of resources

2. Examples of the negative impacts of remittances include an increased demand for imported goods, inflation, greater inequality at a community level and the financial dependence of remittance recipients on migrants abroad. (INSTRAW, 2005)

and benefits. Among the various axes that influence household dynamics and relations, gender is fundamental. In the analysis of remittances we must bear in mind that decisions on how to spend the money from remittances, who will benefit from the money, and the short and long-term effects of remittances on family structure are not gender neutral.

What should not be overlooked when considering the potential of remittances for development is also the fact that these are private funds. Whether remittances are directed towards productive investment or the accumulation of patrimony or consumption, the way in which remittances are ultimately spent is the prerogative of migrants and their households. Public policies can act in favour of a socially productive use of these private resources, but, in the end, these do not decide their final destination.

Nevertheless, political powers and, more generally speaking, communities are not 'oblivious' (nor can they be, given the socio-economic impact of remittances) to the possibilities offered by a significant injection of monetary resources. This is even truer for areas with a chronic shortage of capital and high poverty rates. The suitable channelling of this monetary flow demands policies that promote entrepreneurship, productive infrastructure and the strengthening of capacities and institutions. These policies, promoted by government or local social constituencies, can influence remittance recipients' decisions to direct remittance spending towards consumption and investment which are beneficial for local rural development.

The positive effect of remittances is not automatic. Whether these act in favour of rural development or, on the contrary, contribute to the further entrenchment of social inequalities or the establishment of relationships of dependency, is essentially a political issue that requires the consideration of multiple key elements. First of all, it requires a collective effort on the part of policy-makers, civil society, financial institutions, individual migrants and their families, as well as a transnational perspective involving such actors in both the countries of origin and destination. Secondly, consideration must also be given to local contexts and economic environments in origin and destination countries, the characteristics of migrants and their

households, their motivations, the utilization of remittances, as well as access to credit and other financial services, infrastructure and entrepreneurship opportunities. Finally, it demands a clear understanding of the role that gender plays in shaping migratory and remittance patterns so as to guarantee that the positive impacts of remittances on development include gender equality as an essential component.

1.2 Approaching Remittances, Rural Development and Household Food Security from a Gender Perspective³

As decades of research have shown, the effective and sustainable implementation of development programmes requires an in-depth understanding of gender. This, however, means going beyond the presentation of sex-disaggregated data and examining how the socially constructed norms, roles, expectations and values associated with being a man or a woman generate opportunities and privileges for some, while creating obstacles and disadvantages for others. Likewise, it means recognizing that the social experiences of men and women are distinct and that their positions and relations in society are unequal. Therefore, a gender perspective pays careful attention to these differences, as well as the interrelation of gender with other variables, such as age, ethnic origin, class, sexual orientation, (dis)abilities, marital and/ or migratory status, which allow for a greater understanding of social phenomena.

Because of their material nature, remittances represent the most tangible result of the much wider phenomenon that is the migratory process and imply an important degree of complexity. For this reason, the analysis of both the sending and spending patterns of remittances, as well as the effects that these have on local rural development (including their effect on gender equality), can only be carried out within the wider analytical framework of migratory processes that, like all social phenomena, are cross-cut by the relationships of inequality that gender implies.

Gender influences who migrates, as well as when, where, why and how they migrate. It also affects the amount and frequency of the remittances that migrants send, the way in which these are spent or invested, as

3. For more detailed information about the conceptual framework used by UN-INSTRAW to examine the topic of remittances, please refer to the paper entitled "Crossing Borders: Gender, Remittances and Development", at <http://www.un-instraw.org/en/publications/gender-remittances-and-development/crossing-borders-gender-remittances-and-development/download.html>

well as their potential or limitations for contributing to household food security and local development in rural communities.

Some studies have shown, for example, that the selection of a household member to go abroad often depends on the evaluation of opportunities for a migrant's insertion into sexually-differentiated labour markets in destination countries. A clear example of this would be the high demand for domestic and care workers in most developed countries, a sector traditionally reserved for women, which promotes the selection of a female household member to go abroad. Similarly, the demand for construction or agricultural workers promotes the migration of a male household member (ILO, 2008).

Other available studies point out differences in the amounts remitted by migrant men and women. In Semyonov and Gorodzeisky's (2005) study of Filipino labour migration, for example, it was found that, while both male and female migrants send remittances back home, male migrants remit an overall greater amount of money than their female counterparts, though research in other contexts has revealed that women remit a greater percentage of their salaries than men (Orozco et al. 2006 in Martin, 2007). These differences in remittance patterns have been explained, on the one hand, by the relatively higher wages men receive while working overseas and, on the other hand, by processes that socialize women to 'sacrifice' themselves for the well-being of others.

Studies have also discovered a tendency amongst female migrants abroad to select another woman to receive and manage the remittances sent back to the household. This decision is often based on the belief that female remittance recipients will use these resources for the collective good of the household, whereas their male counterparts are more likely to mismanage them or spend them on their own personal needs and desires (UN-INSTRAW, 2006). This belief is supported by empirical evidence suggesting that placing economic resources –such as remittances– in the hands of women increases food security and overall welfare of the household.

Evidently, gender has a unique way of shaping migration, remittance and development patterns and their interrelationship. However, it is important to note

that these patterns also have a reciprocal impact on gender norms and relations in both communities of origin and destination. For female migrants working overseas, for example, migration can provide greater economic resources that, in turn, increase their power to negotiate their roles and participation in household and community activities in the communities of origin (UN-INSTRAW, 2005). On the other hand, while male migrants may also enjoy an improvement in the social 'status' in their communities of origin, their condition as migrants may actually represent a loss of power in destination countries (Boehm, 2004). Meanwhile, for those household members left behind in the communities of origin, a migrant's absence can lead to a reassignment of traditional gender roles and responsibilities in the household, just as the control (or lack of control) over remittances can shift power relations at both the household and community levels (UN-INSTRAW, 2006)

In summary, the link between migration, remittances and development is a complex relationship of interdependency, whereby development issues, such as rural poverty, help determine the out-flow of migrants, while the in-flow of remittances impacts the direction of local development in countries of origin. International migration and remittance transfers represent a unique opportunity for rural development in countries of origin. Nevertheless, if this opportunity is to be used in an effective and sustainable way, the understanding of these context-specific dynamics must take into account the way in which each and every one of these components influences and is influenced by gender roles and relations.

1.3 Project Approach: objectives and methodology

Within this context, a study was carried out during 2007 in Rome, Italy and a number of rural communities in the Philippines' provinces of Pampanga, Batangas, Ilocos Sur, Oriental Mindoro and Tarlac. The migratory flow between the Philippines and Italy was selected for various reasons. First of all, the Philippines is not only one of the top labour-exporting countries in Asia, but also one where migratory flows are highly feminized. As such, women represent between 60% and 80% (depending on the destination country) of migrants leaving the Philippines, and remittances constitute a vital source of national income. Italy is the fourth most popular destination country amongst Filipino

migrants,⁴ and the Filipino community in Italy is more feminized than any other migrant group and is highly concentrated in the domestic service sector, characterized by its intense demand for a foreign female labour force. All of these elements have contributed to giving this migratory flow an emblematic nature, ideal for a gendered analysis of the potential of remittances for local rural development.

The research on Filipino migration to Italy was guided by a number of key objectives. These include:

- Assessment of the impact of remittances sent by Filipino migrant men and women in Italy on household food security and community development in selected rural areas in the Philippines
- Support to capacity-building activities promoted by migrant associations in order to improve the living conditions of both male and female Filipino migrants in Italy
- Increase in awareness amongst Filipino migrants -men and women- about available alternatives for sending remittances and their potential for promoting rural development in communities of origin
- Identification of relevant actors that can contribute to strengthening migration and remittance- based development initiatives
- Enhancement of capacity-building for key stakeholders –financial institutions, UN agencies, government offices, and international cooperation agencies, migrant’s associations, local NGOs and academic centers- so that they are able to integrate gender into programmes, projects, and other initiatives linking remittances and rural development in the Philippines.

The assessment of the impact of remittances on household food security and local community development in these selected rural communities in the Philippines was carried out through a number of specific activities. These included a complete desk review of the academic literature on the subject and the collection of qualitative data during 2 round-table sessions and 132 in-depth interviews. Of the 132 interviews, 61

correspond to Filipino migrants in the city of Rome, where Filipino migrants are most concentrated; and 71 were carried out with remittance- receiving households in the Philippines. In a significant number of cases,⁵ it was possible to carry out interviews with the migrant in Rome and their corresponding household in the Philippines. Both the migrants and the remittance-receiving households interviewed for this study were selected in a manner that ensured the structural representativeness that characterizes qualitative samples.

The provinces and communities of origin in the Philippines were selected for this study based on their relatively high participation in migratory flows to Italy, as well as the existence of Filipino migrant associations linked to these communities.⁶ Within these provinces, the study focuses on rural places of origin, where agriculture is the primary economic activity. This was done for several reasons. First of all, as in other parts of the developing world, poverty and problems relating to food insecurity in the Philippines are concentrated in rural areas where the means of subsistence is directly linked to agriculture. Nevertheless, rural populations tend to receive less attention and support than urban areas when it comes to overcoming such development challenges. Secondly, agricultural development is directly related to food security in such a way that it can contribute significantly to improving the availability and accessibility of food for the poorest households and generate employment and incomes which also allow for the poor to access food and productive resources. Finally, rural development can be considered as a possible strategy for slowing massive urbanization and emigration, which represent environmental pressures in both communities of origin and destination.

The direct participation of eight of the Filipino Women’s Council’s (FWC) members in the collection and validation of the data presented in this study was fundamental to supporting the capacity-building activities of Filipino migrant associations. This being their second major research project, FWC participants were able to apply and build on prior knowledge in this area, as well as acquire additional skills. Members of other related migrant associations and non-governmental organizations who participated in the discussions on the potential of remittances for local

4. The top three destinations for Filipino migrants include the United States, Canada and Saudi Arabia

5. 50% remittance-receiving households interviewed in the Philippine provinces of Oriental Mindoro and Batangas, and 77% of remittance -sender from Rome and remittance- recipients from households interviewed in the Philippines provinces of Pampanga, Tarlac and Ilocos Sur , were matched to migrants interviewed in Rome.

6. See Appendix 1 for statistics concerning the relative importance of emigration from these areas in the Philippines.

rural development in the Philippines also benefited from this study's activities.

In order to identify relevant actors for strengthening remittance-related development projects, a review was done of a number of different groups and institutions. These included Filipino migrant and hometown associations (FMAs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and financial institutions based in both Italy and the Philippines. Six members of the Filipino Women's Council (FWC) participated in the collection of this data. Their work during this phase of the research process was important to understanding this particular aspect of Filipino migration and development

and increasing FWC's understanding and knowledge in such a way that could potentially benefit the organizations' future strategy and the communities it works to serve.

Finally, the main findings of the study were presented to key stakeholders at a validation and discussion workshop in Rome, which focused particularly on future action to be taken in this area. The publication of the results of this study also represents a starting point for enhancing key stakeholders' capacity to integrate a gender perspective into remittance-based rural development initiatives.

2.1 An Introduction to the Philippines

The Philippines is located in Southeast Asia, roughly 1,000 kilometres south of mainland China and northeast of Malaysia. Comprising more than 7,000 islands and 300,000 square kilometres of territory, the Philippines is divided into three major island groups (Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao), 17 regions and 81 provinces.⁷

The land on these islands is rich and fertile, lending itself to agricultural activity. As the foundation of the national economy, the major agricultural products harvested in the Philippines include rice, maize, coconut, sugar, tobacco, pineapple and hemp. Farming has traditionally also been complemented by activities related to fishing, livestock, forestry and mining (Dept. of Agriculture of the Philippines, 1995).

Historically, the natural wealth that characterizes the Philippines has been poorly distributed amongst its population.⁸ Rural areas, where an overwhelming two thirds of poor families in the Philippines live, have seemingly suffered the most in this respect. These rural populations include small, landless farmers, farm workers, fishermen and indigenous persons (UNDP, 2004).

One of the causes of this poverty is limited access to land; over 70% of farmers do not own the land they till (UNDP, 2004). Consequently, people also have restricted access to credit and other financial services, as well as technology and productive infrastructure, resulting in relatively lower productivity and income levels. Likewise, rural areas lack access to basic services and infrastructure, such as health, education and transportation services and options regarding alternative employment are minimal. Finally, climatic invariability and natural disasters such as typhoons, volcanic eruptions and other similar events disproportionately affect rural populations and livelihoods, leaving them at greater risk for food insecurity and disease.

During the second half of the twentieth century, rapid population growth and rural poverty led to an accelerated urbanization process that created pressures on urban centres to provide employment opportunities

and the necessary infrastructure to attend to the massive influx of people from rural areas. Nowadays, with over 60% of the country's 86 million inhabitants residing in urban areas, urban poverty is also prevalent.

In response to these difficulties, the Filipino government has made several attempts to promote economic development, create employment and decrease inequalities in the country. The first of these attempts began in the 1970s⁹ with a number of land reform initiatives that aimed to redistribute land more equitably and to increase productivity and the incomes of small farmers in rural areas. Reforms involved restricting the ownership of large areas of cultivable land and providing landless farmers with the opportunity to legally acquire areas for cultivation. These policies were also designed to make women equal beneficiaries. Unfortunately, land reform efforts have met with limited success. Resistance on the part of landlords and a lack of political will to implement reforms have resulted in significant improvements for only a small percentage of the intended beneficiaries. Likewise, women's equal access to the benefits of land reform in the Philippines has been limited due to historical and cultural traditions that place land ownership in the hands of male household heads.

The Green Revolution of the mid-1960s was yet another attempt to improve the living conditions of the rural poor and increase food security through the continuous scientific development of modern varieties of rice. These new varieties were designed to produce higher yields and offer greater resistance to pests and disease. Their success, however, depended on an expanded use of fertilizers and pesticides, as well as increased irrigation and the mechanization of farming practices. Initially, the Green Revolution experienced relative success in augmenting rice yields, yet it did little to address the historic inequalities between rich and poor. Critics of the Revolution were quick to point out that only those who had the financial means to purchase the necessary inputs were able to benefit from such advances in production. Additionally, farmers became dependent on the new technologies required for 'modern' production. During the 1980s the Philippines suffered an economic crisis that involved

7. Map's Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Luzon> (See Appendix 2 for detailed map of the provinces)

8. This is an inheritance of the Philippines' colonial history, amongst other factors. Currently, the poorest regions in the Philippines include the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), where political conflict is of concern, and Cordillera Autonomous Region of Luzon, where the population is largely indigenous. These regions are isolated and suffer from a lack of social and economic infrastructure, including transportation and communication services (UNDP, 2004)

9. Efforts to implement effective land reform have been made regularly since the beginning of the 20th century in the Philippines. However, many of the different policies and laws have failed to redistribute the lands more equitably. The most recent efforts fall under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP), which took effect in the late 1980s.

decreases in the selling price of rice and increases in the price of chemical inputs required for its production. As farmers were unable to sustain palay¹⁰ activity, there was a consequent reduction in land used for cultivating rice and, eventually, the government was forced to import it. Since this time, rice yields have steadily decreased in the Philippines and ecological problems of soil degradation and ground water contamination have arisen.

Finally, the Overseas Foreign Worker Programme was established in 1974 as an escape valve for under- and unemployed populations. This national policy of labour exportation was designed to facilitate the temporary migration of Filipinos to other parts of the world. Involving the participation of both the private and public sectors, the Philippines Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) comprises recruitment agencies that charge potential migrants a fee for processing the required paperwork and securing job placement abroad. Hence, Filipino migration during the last three decades can be characterized as primarily labour migration.

During the 1970s, the Middle East was a major destination for Filipino migrants. Most of these migrants were men who went off to work in the manufacturing, construction and transportation sectors. The Newly Industrializing Countries of Asia, however, became the chosen destination for Filipino labour migrants in the 1980s-1990s. Filipino migratory flows during this period also underwent a process of feminization, as well as a shift toward services-oriented labour insertion of migrants in their destination country. Since then, Filipino women have constituted the majority of deployed workers, venturing abroad to work as caregivers and entertainers.

As a result of these processes, the Philippines is now one of the top labour-exporting countries in the world, as well as a recipient of large amounts of remittances. Nearly 9% of its population currently lives overseas, remitting a total of approximately US\$7 billion (Bagasao, 2004) annually. At a national level, this represented 8.76% of the country's GNP (Aldaba, 2004) in 2002, while in local terms remittances have meant a primary source of income for some 2.6 million families in the Philippines (Go, 2002).

Despite increases in emigration over the past few decades, however, under and unemployment have continued to represent serious challenges for the Philippines. National factors such as political and economic instability, environmental factors such as El Niño and the Mt. Pinatubo eruption, as well as the global economic influences of the 1997 Asian Crisis and the US-led war in Iraq, have all had a negative effect on the Philippines economy (UN, 2004). In this sense, international migration has perhaps eased some of these pressures as remittances have, to a certain extent, protected the country from an economic disaster of greater magnitude. Nevertheless, the impact of migration and remittances on long-term sustainable development appears to be minimal.

2.2 Characteristics of Filipino Emigration to Italy

One of the most salient features of Filipino migratory flows to Italy is that they include a large proportion of women. According to Caritas di Rome (2005), of the 26,000 Filipino migrants living in Rome, 61%, or 16,000, are women, which can be attributed to the historical circumstances surrounding the first major migratory flows to Italy and their subsequent development.

Filipino migration to Italy began, during the 1970s, when several factors present in both the Philippines and in Italy set the stage for the female-led labour migration that persists today. In the Philippines, economic decline, high unemployment rates and population pressures challenged national and household efforts to make ends meet. In Italy, the massive integration of women into the local labour markets left households in need of caregivers for the young and the elderly. Support in this area was only minimally provided by men or State institutions in Italy, creating a demand amongst middle-class households for domestic workers. This demand was subsequently satisfied by the arrival of Filipino migrant women.

Unlike other popular destination countries, migratory flows to Italy from the Philippines began as a result of connections to the Catholic Church, rather than through the sponsorship of the Overseas Foreign Workers Office or other similar agencies in the Philippines. During the 1980s and 90s, migratory flows took on a life of their own, as Filipinos grew to be one of the most numerically significant migrant communities

10. Rice production

in Italy. The arrival of these newer generations of migrants, which came to include men and children, was a direct result of Filipino migrant women's efforts to reunite their families in Italy, as well as the implementation of Italian immigration policies that supported family reunification (Martínez-Rodríguez et al., 2007).

To this day, Filipino migration to Italy continues to be predominantly labour-related and female-led. However, while the majority of Filipinos leave their communities of origin in search of employment opportunities offering relatively stable incomes and better pay, there are diverse circumstances that push them to migrate to Italy. In some cases, the poverty experienced in their communities of origin is a main motivating factor. In this sense, migration represents a household survival strategy:

"My daughter decided to leave the country because life in the Philippines is really difficult. She wanted us to leave the life of poverty and, more importantly, to be able to eat three times a day. We really expected that she could help us while she was working abroad since she is still single" (Mother of female migrant, Oriental Mindoro)

For other migrants, poverty as a deciding factor is less crucial than personal and household goals of upward social mobility. Some of the specific goals common amongst migrants interviewed during this study include their children's completion of university, the purchase of a house and/ or agricultural land, the repayment of debt and the accumulation of savings for business investments or retirement.

Most Filipino migrants in Italy have secondary education, if not a university degree. Despite their relatively high education levels, however, Filipino migrants –both male and female– are concentrated in the services sector of the Italian labour market, primarily in caregiving and cleaning activities. The majority of those migrants interviewed in Rome both work and live in the houses they serve, while a much smaller number live in their own homes. 'Live-in' Filipino domestic workers are concentrated in the upper-class neighbourhoods of Parioli and Appia Antica in Rome, they earn an average of 700 Euros per month,¹¹ and work long hours with very little leisure time. While the

'live-in' situation, in this sense, can be disadvantageous for Filipino domestic workers' integration into Italian society, it offers migrants the opportunity to save a greater portion of their salaries to send as remittances, as they are not required to pay for housing:

"On Sundays because we are here at church maybe this is our rest...We don't really have much time to relax...only when we're asleep. On Sundays, which is my rest day, I go out in the morning and then at 5 pm we have to go back, We sleep in our employer's house and really there is no time...I decided to 'live in' because housing is so expensive." (Single mother migrant, Rome)

The concentration of Filipino migrants in the domestic service sector in Italy is due, in part, to the difficulties involved in obtaining official recognition of their studies and professional credentials, in addition to the well-established presence of the Filipino diaspora in domestic service and caregiving work, which facilitates their entry into this sector at the same time as it limits their possibility of participating in other types of activities.

According to this study's informants,¹² migration to Italy is initially conceived as a short-term project aimed at gathering funds in order reach specific goals. Therefore, returning to the Philippines is usually the plan from the outset. However, once abroad, migrants frequently find that they must postpone their return in order to be able to meet their original objectives:

"Of course all of us have plans but the reality is I said that after 3 years I would go back and that would be enough and then go home and just do business. I want to go back home and experience being with my grandchild and my son, but my son has also has plans to go abroad...that is for now...I just want to save money and then do business in the Philippines. (Single mother migrant, Rome)

"In just three years from now I will be going home. I have been here for 22 years now and I am 45 years old. I really want to go back when my last daughter finishes her college education" (Male migrant, Rome)

Filipino migrants extend their length of stay for multiple reasons, including the repayment of debts accrued during the migration process; or marriage and family for migrants that were unmarried when

11. Those who are not 'live-ins' receive 7 Euros per hour minus INPS (social services contribution in Italy) deductions

12. See Appendix 3 for a detailed description of this study's informants.

13. Many children born to Filipino migrants in Italy are immediately sent to the Philippines to be cared for by other family members. There are a number of reasons for this, including the migrant parents' migratory status; specific working conditions which don't permit migrant parents to care for their children; limited options regarding adequate housing, day-care and social services; as well as economic pressures related to the high cost of living in Italy. This situation then separates children and parents

they left the Philippines. Permanent settlement in Italy is the tendency in these cases, especially once children are born and raised under their direct care.¹³

2.3 Understanding the Migratory Process

The Decision-Making Process: Household Dynamics

Migration may arise as an initiative of the migrant themselves or at the suggestion of another relative residing in the Philippines or abroad. Migration usually entails a collective decision-making process for the purposes of household survival and/or upward social mobility. The position the migrant occupies in the household prior to leaving often determines who participates in this process, as well as which household members their migration is intended to benefit.

Figure A: Types of Migration

Description of Migrant	Intended Beneficiaries of their Migratory Project	Decision-Making Participants/ Consent	Particular Features
Married adults with children	Spouse and children	Spouse	Female-led migration
Unmarried young adults	Parents and siblings Self	Parents	Elders child's duty to care for parents and siblings
Single mothers	Children	N/A	Relationship between migration and conjugal separation

The Filipino migratory flow to Italy is comprised primarily of women who are married with children and migrate as the main providers for their households. In many cases, these women reunite with their spouses after several years in Italy, thereby making them the 'anchor' of the couples 'migratory' project and, occasionally, that of the nuclear family as a whole. The woman is frequently selected to migrate first, instead of her male partner, since it is generally believed that it is easier for women to find employment abroad in domestic service:

"Our life was so difficult, since I was just a simple fisherman. So my wife plucked up the courage to apply to a recruitment agency to go to Italy. We had to send our

children to school and we had no means to do so. She had to go because I didn't know how to do domestic work" (Husband of female migrant, Batangas)

"It is better if women migrate because they find jobs in an easier way and also because they work harder (more *masipag*) than men" (Mother and sister of migrants, Rome)

Although it is proportionately smaller, another important segment of these migratory flows are young single women who migrate as daughters of their households. At first, these young unmarried adults may decide to migrate in search of opportunities for a more promising future. In this sense, one might think that their migration is initially anticipated to benefit themselves rather than others.

"I actually decided myself to go abroad. My parents did not stop me from leaving because they also said that if I were only to stay back in the Philippines nothing would happen to my future. That is why I found the inner strength (*lakas ng loob*) then. I was only 21 years old when I left just right after I graduated from college (Female migrant, Rome)"

However, young, single, female migrants also maintain a strong commitment to their households back home and they frequently contribute to its day-to-day financial subsistence, as well as the payment of other numerous expenses such as tuition fees for younger siblings. From this perspective, their financial contributions are considered to be "a sign of gratitude" to their parents, which is a cultural expectation of children in the Philippines.

When the migration of unmarried children is considered in terms of a household strategy, the eldest child is given priority. If the idea to migrate is not brought up by the parents themselves, parental consent is a normative pre-requisite for unmarried young adults wishing to migrate, whether they are female or male. While parental consent is an important norm, it also appears to be an economic necessity, as unmarried migrants are often unable to finance their migratory projects without the help and support of their parents:

"Our culture has taught us that when a daughter or son is still unmarried, their parents' consent and blessing are always sought before making any final decision in life. They helped me look for the money that I needed for processing my papers, as well as the plane ticket and other travel expenses." (Female migrant, Rome)

Finally, there is a segment of the migrant population comprised of single mothers, for whom migration is a project designed to secure a better future for their children. Their decision to migrate is a unilateral one, since there is no spouse present to consult. It is important to note here that some of these female migrants became single mothers as a result of their spouse's migration and consequent abandonment of the family once abroad, while others choose to migrate as a way to separate from their male partners in the Philippines.

Migrant Networks

During the interviews with Filipino migrants and their families, networking arose as an important aspect of their migration. Networks, comprising friends and relatives in the places of origin and destination, are essential for encouraging and facilitating migration. This refers not only to securing the resources necessary to finance the trip, but also to receiving help finding work and getting established in the destination country.

Since many families have more than one migrant abroad at any given time, their networks extend to different countries around the world. Potential migrants in the Philippines rely upon these networks in order to begin their journey, as there are high costs involved in arranging their migration through a recruitment agency. Some migrants interviewed spoke of spending up to €6,000 in pre-departure expenses. Such amounts are usually borrowed from other relatives who are capable of providing the loan, for instance relatives who are already established abroad and have access to these financial resources:

"The project to go abroad was realized through the help of relatives who were already abroad. They lent me money to pay for the agency to process my travel documents. Once I found employment, I worked hard in order to pay my debts and it took me years to settle them. Only after that, I was able to think of my other family goals (Female migrant, Rome)."

"My wife's family helped her to emigrate to Italy and, when she was there, her relatives helped her to find work. They were also the ones who lent her the money to travel. The same pattern happened to my daughter except, this time, my wife was the one who directly

supported her to travel to join her. With their earnings, they are able to support us here." (Husband and father of female migrants, Batangas)

Thus, the initial investment in migration is often only made possible as a result of the existence of transnational migrant networks. The repayment of the debts¹⁴ incurred by migration is a top priority for migrants once they have secured work in Italy. After these have been paid, migrants can begin to send higher quantities of remittances to their families back home, consider savings and investment opportunities and/or finance the migration of another family member, thereby extending transnational networks and perpetuating migratory flows.

Also noted above is the central role networks play in the migrants' selection of a destination country, as well as their integration in labour markets and communities abroad. These networks are intensely influenced by gender roles and relations. The sexual segmentation of labour markets influences the formation of networks (for e.g. mothers promoting their daughters' migration). A female migrant employed as a domestic worker in the destination country is much more capable of assisting another migrant with labour market insertion if the migrant is female rather than male, and vice versa.

In Italy, the Church also plays an important role in the formation of networks of support and exchange within the Filipino migrant community. Roughly half (47.54%) of the migrants interviewed for this study stated that they were involved in religious activities or organizations in Rome. These networks have come to constitute necessary social capital in the face of the isolation and difficulties that live-in domestic work implies for migrants' integration into Italian society. What free time these migrants have is often spent participating in such activities or attending family events.

Migration and Household Reorganization

Initially, migration implies separation and household reorganization for many Filipinos and their families,¹⁵ due not only to the high financial costs associated with migration and its temporary nature, but also to certain

14. When relatives are not able to provide these loans, migrants will often resort to local usurers (that charge high monthly interest rates) or to banks where they can mortgage their houses.

15. Changes in composition and organization occur regularly, as households are not static structures. Children grow up and get married, marriages dissolve, grandparents pass away and migrants may return or send for their family members to reunite with them overseas. In this section, we will only address those changes which explicitly refer to migration's effects on the household's organization. It is possible that in some cases, changes are the combined result of both migratory and other socio-demographic processes.

employment contexts in destination countries (i.e. live-in domestic service) that do not allow migrants' family members to accompany them. Therefore, when a migrant leaves, households are often faced with reorganizing and redistributing roles and responsibilities amongst the different members who remain in the Philippines.

Because of the gendered way in which these roles and responsibilities are assigned,¹⁶ the manner in which a household reorganizes often depends on the sex of the migrant and their position in the household they leave behind. While the migration of an unmarried child may imply one less person to share in the farm work, household duties and care for younger siblings, perhaps the biggest adjustments in household organization occur when the migrant is a married or single parent with children. In these particular cases, measures must be taken in order to reassign the duties of household head¹⁷ and/ or primary caregiver.

The selection of another household or family member for these roles is often based on sex and age. However, other factors, such as education level, marital status and the migrant's subjective evaluation of different members' commitment and responsibility to the household, can also carry weight in the selection process:

"At the time they migrated, I became the head of the family because I was the eldest of the children left behind. Currently, in my own nuclear family, my husband is the head of household." (Daughter of migrant parents, Oriental Mindoro)

"Since more women went off to Italy, the household chores were left to those who are here in the Philippines, either the father or the kids and especially the female members who are left behind. They learned domestic chores. Now, my daughter-in-law is the one mostly responsible for the domestic chores." (Father of adult migrant children, Batangas)

In this sense, household reorganization tends to reinforce pre-existing gender norms and intra-household power relations based on age and sex. Another not uncommon solution involves hiring local nannies and domestic workers to assist with or take over caregiving tasks when it is the female adult who migrates, which implies not only the reinforcement of gender

norms, but also the transfer of gendered inequalities between women. In fact, a portion of remittances sent by migrants can cover the costs involved in hiring a woman from outside of the family to take care of children and other dependent household members. Given the difficulties surrounding the generation of employment for women living in rural areas, this phenomenon can imply an increase in the number of employment opportunities for women who don't migrate. However, this employment is both poorly paid and informal in nature.

Although women's migration and the subsequent reorganization of their households tend to reinforce pre-existing gender norms, in many cases the opposite is true. Migration can also serve to challenge these structures. For example, men who previously lacked experience in child care and domestic work are at times faced with learning how to perform these tasks. This includes both men whose wives go abroad, as well as those men who go overseas:

"Before I only washed our clothes each time my wife gave birth. I learned to cook and manage the house. I have become the mother of the house." (Husband of female migrant, Batangas)

"What I do here is very different from the work I do at home. (Before) I was into fishing, farming, jobs in construction and all kinds of work fit for a man. When I got here, all I did was women's work, but it is easier and I earn from it." (Male migrant, Rome)

Another change that can occur in the context of migration refers to adjustments in established intra-household power relations that can result from the migration of a household member. Married and single parents who go abroad may have to give up a certain degree of power over day-to-day decision-making and child-rearing to other members of the family. Married female migrants and unmarried adult migrants, on the other hand, may garner increased respect and decision-making power in their households as a result of their financial contribution in the form of remittances:

"On the part of my parents and those left in the Philippines, nothing has changed except for the increased respect and regard they have for me as I became their breadwinner and financial helper in times of need." (Female migrant, Rome)

16. The sexual division of labor in Filipino households tends to follow the model of the traditional nuclear family, where the male is the breadwinner and head of household and the female is responsible for domestic tasks and care giving. Over 60% of interviewees in both Rome and the Philippines considered their households to be male-headed.

17. Since definitions of the concept varied amongst interviewees, the term 'head of household' loosely refers to the being the economic provider, administrator and/ or household decision-maker.

Those household members who are left behind and, consequently, become the financial administrators of remittances sent from abroad may also begin to exercise more power over daily household matters in the Philippines. However, as we will see in the section on remittance-spending, this power is relative, since many migrants themselves are quite active in budgeting and spending remittances in their households.

Finally, migration can lead to the break-up of marriages and the formation of newer more complex family relations. Several of the interviewees pointed out that male migrants will frequently begin new families in Italy after being away for some time. This can lead to abandonment of their families left behind in the Philippines or male migrants' financial maintenance of two parallel families. Family separation and reunification, as well as the household reorganization that occurs within the context of migration is sometimes considered one of the social costs associated with the phenomenon, since some children of migrants are unable to finish their studies,¹⁸ can become involved in undesirable activities or become dependent on remittances and reluctant to work.

2.4 Remittances

Amounts and Frequencies

Although the amount and frequency of remittances can vary over time and contexts, interviews with migrants and their families revealed three main types of remittances being sent from Italy to the Philippines. These include regular, irregular and random remittances:

Figure B: Summary Types of Remittance Flows

Type of Remittance	Form/ Amount	Frequency	Channel
Regular	Cash transfers of \$100-\$500 Euros	Monthly	Bank to bank
Irregular (Extraordinary need)	Cash transfers according to need	On a request basis	Door-to door Bank to door Remittance agencies
Random	Cash and in-kind transfers	Opportunity Special occasions	Informal Channels Community organizations

Filipino women in Italy send remittances back home to the Philippines more regularly than their male counterparts. In Rome, 85.36% of women and 64.70% of men interviewed stated that they sent regular remittances to the Philippines each month. 2.44% of women and 5.88% of men claimed to send money every two to three months.

Generally, regular remittances involve sending fixed amounts of money, averaging between €300 and €400 per month. For many women working in Italy as live-in domestic workers, this amount represents roughly half of their minimum salary of €600 per month. The preferred method of sending regular remittances is the bank-to-bank system which involves the use of joint accounts held by remitters and recipients, usually with Filipino banks that have offices abroad. Cash is deposited into accounts in Italy and withdrawn from accounts in the Philippines using an ATM card. This method is preferred because of the security it offers and the relatively low costs involved, in addition to the fact that it also allows for migrants to keep track of spending.

Men tend to send irregular remittances more than women. Less than 10% the Filipino migrant women and almost 12% of the men interviewed mentioned sending irregular remittances. In this case, the circumstances surrounding recipients' specific requests for financial assistance often dictate the amount sent back home. The transfer services preferred for sending this type of remittances differ from those used for regular transfers, since the transfer time takes priority over the sending costs in cases of emergency. Common methods used include door-to-door or bank-to-door services and remittance agencies.

Finally, migrants and their families referred to remittances being sent on a 'random' basis. This type of remittance generally comprises cash and/or in-kind gifts, including such items as toys, clothing, cellular phones and computers. These can be sent for birthdays, anniversaries and other special occasions or if the opportunity becomes available to send them informally with another Filipino migrant returning to the Philippines from Italy. Donations to community and religious organizations are also examples of random remittances.

18. For example, children who are reunified with migrant parents before the age of 18 frequently abandon their studies upon arrival to Italy and end up forming a second generation of Filipino domestic workers.

Relationships between Senders and Receivers

Remittances can be sent by one or more migrants in Italy to one or more households in the Philippines. Likewise, remittances flow from individuals and groups of Filipino migrants to community organizations back home.

Figure C: Types of Remitter-Recipient Relationships

Remitter(s) in Italy	Recipient(s) in the Philippines
Individual migrant	Individual household
Several related migrants	Several households
Community organization	Community organization

In Rome, 44.24% of those interviewed claimed to remit to their nuclear families. This would include those married migrants' remittances to their spouse and/or children, as well as unmarried migrants' remittances to their parents and siblings. In addition, 27.71% of Filipinos in Italy send money to their extended families, while 14.75% remit to both nuclear and extended family members. Finally, only a few migrants mentioned having sent remittances to the Philippines through community or religious organizations based in Italy or directly to an organization in the Philippines.

Remittance Spending, Saving and Investment Patterns

In the Philippines, 67.8% of households interviewed said they received regular remittances each month. For most receiving households, these monthly transfers act as a kind of salary, representing between 25% and 50% of total household income. Remittances are primarily used to cover basic household consumption (food, clothing, electricity etc.), education and health care needs. Similarly, regular remittances can also be used to pay for local nannies, domestic workers and /or relatives to take over the caregiving needs of dependents (children and elderly relatives).

For migrant parents, providing an education for the children they leave behind in the Philippines is a priority, while ageing parents' health care needs are of particular concern for migrant children who send remittances, since public health care in the Philippines and, particularly in rural areas, is considered

to be quite poor. Thus, many families opt for private services, which imply higher treatment costs:¹⁹

"The money that our parents send is primarily for my brother, who is studying in Manila. It covers his rent, food allowance, bills and tuition fees. The rest goes to me and I use it as additional capital for my poultry activity and for our daily household expenses." (Daughter of migrant parents, Batangas)

Healthcare is so expensive here in the Philippines. That's what everybody here complains about. Imagine, if there were no remittances, people here would just die of sickness without having the chance to be seen by a doctor! (Husband of a female migrant, Batangas)

Once these basic needs are met, the purchase or renovation of a home is generally a common investment amongst migrants and their families, as is the purchase of household appliances, such as washing machines and stoves, and luxury items that allow migrants and their households to distinguish themselves as 'well-off' in their communities of origin. This status will often lead other community and extended family members to ask these households for financial assistance in their own migratory projects or local activities. This assistance is usually granted in the form of a loan in accordance with *Pakikisama*, a cultural norm of reciprocal solidarity in the Philippines where those who are better off are expected to help out others.

"In a way, migration helps because we lend money to our other relatives who have a farm. They usually have the money to buy fertilizers and other farmland needs. For the majority, they have more lands to cultivate and, therefore, have a bigger harvest. That guarantees them a food supply and they can sell some produce in the market. Although, often, profit is exceeded by debt incurred during the production period. They are forced to sell the harvest because they had to repay some loans obtained during planting seasons." (Wife of male migrant, Oriental Mindoro)

Another area in which remittances are regularly invested is agricultural land, machinery and other inputs. In Rome, 61.97% migrants interviewed stated that they owned land and 31.15% were owners of livestock. Amongst remittance recipients in the Philippines, these numbers were even higher, as 81.97% claimed to own land and 35.4% owned livestock. However, it is interesting to note that just 24% of

19. Also, a large percentage of the medication available in the Philippines is imported from other countries, translating in higher purchasing prices and adding to the already high costs of private medical services.

those interviewed in the Philippines considered themselves to be farmers. Therefore, it is possible to say that a large proportion of the land that migrants and their families own is either agricultural land that is leased or cultivated by workers from outside of the family, or it is land purchased for the construction of residences and the establishment of small businesses.

Finally, regular remittances may also be saved and invested in education, health care and pension plans.²⁰ For many Filipino migrants in Italy, however, saving their hard-earned money for a rainy day or a brilliant future is more of an ideal than a reality. As the following testimony describes, migrants struggle to keep up with daily expenses and their commitments to send remittances to their families in the Philippines, thus making it difficult for them to put aside any portion of their salaries for this purpose:

“I can’t save much and nor can they, because commodity prices are also high, which makes it practically impossible to contemplate; besides I continue to give aid to relatives in need of help. The money that we send to our family in the Philippines is just enough for their primary needs, to think of tomorrow is a difficult objective. Even here in Italy, it is the same, there are expenses to tackle, and this hinders a family from creating bank savings” (Female migrant, Rome).

Irregular remittances are generally used to cover the extraordinary costs²¹ associated with circumstances such as a death, illness or accident, tuition fees, natural disasters and/ or periods of low profits or wages. Finally, random remittances sent through religious organizations or donated to local *barangay*²² councils are commonly used to finance community celebrations or to contribute to infrastructural needs in the community, such as the renovation of public buildings, the construction of schools or the paving of roads, for example.

Selecting the Remittance Recipient and Administrator

When remittances flow between migrants and households, the selection of a household member to receive and administer the remittances is based on a number of factors, including age and sex. For example, when the migrant is married with children, remittances will

usually be sent to the spouse. If both adults of the married couple go abroad, remittances are generally sent to the eldest child to administer or to the children’s temporary guardian. This is also the case with single mother migrants. When unmarried adults migrate, remittances are sent to the parents first and later, if necessary, to each one of their siblings’ households.

When several adult members reside in the household receiving remittances, sex also becomes a key factor when deciding who should receive and channel remittances. When the migrant has a choice, women are actually chosen over men to receive and manage regular household remittances. In the Philippines, 67.57% of female recipients interviewed said they received remittances on a regular basis, whereas only 63.64% of their male counterparts could say the same. The reasons behind this tendency are seemingly related to women’s traditional role as caregivers and domestic administrators in the Philippines and their consequent in-depth knowledge of the households’ basic needs. Women are perceived as “thrifter” and more responsible when handling money intended to benefit the household as a whole.

“There is a big difference if a woman is the one holding the money because a woman knows exactly what’s inside and outside the house, while men have vices; They’re always with their friends (*mabarkada*) and love spending (*magastos*) and having another woman (*mambabae*)” (Daughter of migrant parents, Tarlac)

While there seems to be a preference for women in the management of regular monthly remittances, men are apparently the preferred recipients of irregular remittances. Almost 23% of men and just 13.5% of women interviewed in the Philippines mentioned receiving irregular remittances. As the following testimony reveals, larger remittances are, in some cases, thought to be best handled by men, whereas women’s gift for money management is restricted to daily household finances:

“Women are better at handling money than men because women know everything inside the houses- even the smallest thing. For the men, they are only good for major things.” (Father of male migrant, Tarlac)

20. Many of Filipino migrants’ investments in this area have been lost as a result of structural issues. For example, the government sponsored College Assurance Plan (CAP) recently went bankrupt leaving contributors without their savings or educational services. Likewise, many Filipino women working in Italy spend years paying into a pension plan that they are later unable to benefit from, since they frequently do not end up working the minimum number of years required in order to receive payments and there are no bilateral agreements between Italy and the Philippines allowing for these women to receive benefits upon return to the Philippines. Political initiative and continuity with regards to this matter remains a major obstacle for overcoming these challenges.

21. Since remittances that are sent in cases of emergency do not usually form part of the regular budget, many migrants must resort to borrowing money from banks and/or other users in order to assist relatives in the Philippines.

22. This is the smallest administrative entity- similar to a village- in the Philippines.

The freedom that remittance recipients and administrators have to decide how the money is spent varies from household to household and according to the type of remittance. For example, some migrants send the money with strict instructions on how it is to be spent and distributed amongst household members. This is especially true when the remittance represents an irregular cash transfer or a greater amount than usual.

“My mother receives my remittances and she also manages the budget of the house. But I am the one who tells her where to put and how to use the money. I can still control where my remittances go because if I don't see where it goes I will not send money next time for a similar expense. It's impossible for me not to know because somehow someone will tell me. For example, I am having the house built-no picture, no money- that means they have to take a picture then they will send the picture to me via email.” (Female migrant, visiting in Tarlac)

Other migrants, however, leave the use of remittances to the discretion of the beneficiaries:

“I receive the remittances and I administer them. My daughter trusts me; even all my other children abroad just send money and they all allow me to decide on where to spend it. They all know anyway where the money will go. If the amount is big, of course, my children give me instructions on where to spend it- either to pay off debts or for the construction of the house.” (Mother of male and female migrants, Batangas)

When considering the gendered nature of remittance spending and investment amongst migrants and their households, it is therefore important to note that the decision as to how remittances are utilized depends on this constant negotiation between remitters and recipients. This investigation has revealed that, as the majority of both remitters and recipients, women are more inclined initially to invest in children's needs and, particularly, in their education; whereas men show a tendency to invest in the purchase of consumer items, assets and property. However, once women have covered basic consumption, education and health care needs, they too turn to the purchase of houses and agricultural land.

Gender also proved to be fundamental to understanding the expectations surrounding migrant men and women's obligations to their households back home. Amongst Filipinos, women's migration is

perceived as a 'self-sacrificing' act aimed to promote the well-being of others, while men's migration is thought to be a 'natural' aspect of their roles as breadwinners and heads of household.

2.5 Key Stakeholders in Filipino Migration and Development Initiatives

In order to achieve a greater understanding of the on-going efforts to promote migration and remittance-based development of Filipino communities in both Italy and the Philippines, research was conducted to determine some of the key actors currently involved in this field. Over one hundred different stakeholders were identified in this process, including Filipino migrant associations (FMAs), Filipino and Italian non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and financial institutions in both the Philippines and Italy.

Filipino Migrant Associations (FMA) and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO)

The majority of the Filipino migrant associations and non-governmental organizations examined in Rome were non-registered religious and social organizations established within the last decade. Membership in these organizations is predominantly female (60% on average) and many of the groups are hierarchically structured, with the positions of president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer are determined through democratic processes.

These groups are primarily involved in counselling, religious prayer, social gatherings and cultural activities. Those groups that extend their activities to the implementation of social projects in the Philippines concentrate their efforts on fundraising for emergency relief, the support of vulnerable urban populations and the improvement of infrastructure (roads, schools, access to water etc.). Very few organizations have on-going programmes designed to regularly benefit Filipino communities in need.

Only a limited number of FMAs and NGOs offer programmes designed specifically to assist Filipino and other migrant women in Italy. Those that do offer such services provide free medical consultations and treatments, counselling for female victims of trafficking for prostitution and cooperatives designed to promote

women's entrepreneurship. Apart from these efforts, the majority of the FMAs and NGOs currently working in Rome appear to promote 'gender-blind' programmes and activities. This apparent lack of awareness as to the different realities faced by migrant men and women in Italy and their specific needs, was indicated by various organizations as an area that requires further development. Likewise, financial management, organizational and leadership skills were also highlighted as areas for improvement.

Financial Institutions

The financial institutions examined in this study included both banks and remittance agencies based in Rome and in the Philippines. Many of these were found to have a number of services designed especially to assist migrants with their projects. Their services include bank accounts for remitters and their families in the Philippines, as well as loans to cover migrants' pre-departure expenses and/or for the purchase of vehicles and homes. Some institutions offer incentives, such as international phone cards and calling time, as well as counselling services relating to money management. Many also provide multilingual customer service (although Tagalog is not one of the service languages commonly offered, English and Spanish²³ are).

All of the institutions examined in this phase of the study offer services that facilitate the transfer of remittances from Italy to the Philippines. These include the bank-to-bank, bank-to-door and door-to-door delivery of monetary transfers, as well as pre-paid international cards. The fees charged for these services vary amongst institutions. For example, in some instances, migrants are allowed to send a limited annual number and quantity of remittances free of charge, while in other institutions fixed fees of between €6 and €12 are applied to each transfer.

Very few of the financial institutions have established on-going relationships with Filipino community organizations and migrant associations in Italy and the Philippines. In just one case, a financial institution partnered with the Filipino Women's Council and other non-governmental organizations in their social micro-credit programme. This institution provides low annual interest rate loans to Filipino migrant women in Rome who participate in the programme. Other relationships between financial institutions and Filipino communities are more periodic in nature. These include the periodic sponsorship of migrants' sporting events in Italy, for example, or the funding of local fiestas in major remittance-receiving communities in the Philippines. One cargo business was also found to provide incentives to migrant associations wishing to send humanitarian aid (clothing, food etc.) to the Philippines in times of crisis.

23. Because of the historical influence of Spain and the United States in the Philippines, both English and Spanish have, at some point, been official languages in the country. Over the past 30 years, the number of Filipino Spanish speakers has dwindled; however, English remains an official language used primarily in government and educational institutions. Nevertheless, it is important to note that many Filipinos are not fluent in the English language, but rather have knowledge of a number of words which have been integrated into Tagalog, the most widely spoken language in the Philippines.

3. Impacts of Remittances on Rural Development and Household Food Security

3.1 Agricultural production

Important changes in agricultural production have occurred, as a result of remittances flowing into the communities studied in the Philippines. These changes refer to levels of interest in agricultural work, the division of labour, as well as land use and ownership.

When migration to Italy began, lands bought were usually put under the name of male household members. In the rural Philippines land inheritance and schooling investments represent two typical ways in which wealth has been transferred from one generation to the next. Since rice farms primarily depend on male labour, land is preferentially given to sons. Meanwhile, parents invest more in their daughters' schooling, as they are thought to have greater employment opportunities in non-farming sectors (Estudillo et al. 2001). However, over the years, the number of female migrants that buy lands and have them registered under their names has grown, even though women are not always the ones to cultivate those lands.

This study reveals that remittances allow migrant households to improve their living and working conditions, since they can be used to purchase agricultural land. As former tenants become land owners, these farmers are more willing to invest in technology for improving both the quantity and the quality of their harvests:

"Families of migrants who put their money in developing their farm can now afford to buy better farming equipment like motor pumps for the water system, hand tractors and threshers. They can also buy fertilizers and pesticides that can eliminate grasses." (Mother of female migrant, Oriental Mindoro)

Likewise, increased land ownership among migrant families encourages them to diversify the types of products they cultivate. Ilocos Sur, Sta Catalina that is known as the "vegetable bowl" in the Northern Luzon, diversified agricultural production including cabbage, cauliflower, sweet peppers, eggplant, onions and other vegetables, have improved as a direct result of migrant's investments in agricultural lands.

Nevertheless, in most of the interviews with households that had used remittances to buy lands and invest in

technology to cultivate them, emphasis was placed on persistent structural problems that threaten agricultural sustainability in their communities. Among those highlighted by interviewees were problems relating to market access, the prevailing model of agrarian development that is being imposed in a context of commercial liberalization (most strongly affecting small-scale farmers) and the role of the government in the importation of locally-produced crops, such as rice. The capacity to invest in the purchase of land and technological improvements, which allow remittance-receiving households to transition from subsistence agriculture to a 'modern' agriculture focused on commercialization, renders those households that do not receive remittances and continue to employ traditional farming methods unable to compete with those with modern technologies. The most immediate effect of this is an increase in social inequalities, as well as differences linked to food security within these communities.

The organization of agricultural labour is another area that has experienced changes linked to remittances. In some rural areas examined in this study, for example, remittances have led to a shift from family-oriented subsistence agriculture involving men, women and children, to agricultural production based on the labour of mostly male family members. In addition, remittances have also allowed for households to hire persons (also predominantly male) from outside of the family and/or community to help with farming activities.

"Since Ali (eldest sister) started working we stopped working in the rice fields. Then it was left up to my father and the men...Remittances can help a lot to pay other men who work in the rice fields, men who can help my father prepare the rice and plant the rice fields" (Sister of female migrant, Oriental Mindoro).

In such contexts, women's participation in agricultural production declines and they begin to dedicate their time to caring for the children left behind by migrants, or to the administration of newly-acquired properties and assets. This process, in part, leads to a reconstruction of the sexual division of labour, which is perceived by women as a 'liberation' from manual unpaid agricultural labour and their entrance into paid occupations considered to be more 'modern,' such as the ownership of a small grocery store.

The purchase of agricultural land, however, is not always a top priority for migrants and their families. Many consider agricultural properties to be less productive than other investments, given the high price of inputs and the low selling price of their crops.

I personally would not invest in agriculture especially on *palay* farms because of my experience. The fertilizers cost so much and the price of *palay* does not increase. Even among my friends who are farmers, they are just maintaining the small farms they have - that is with *palay* if we are talking about that. But if it is vegetable farming it is better, but it depends on water system (Male migrant, Rome).²⁴

This works as a disincentive for many migrants and their households to continue working in agriculture in order to earn a living. The end result implies varying degrees of abandonment of agricultural and fishing activities amongst migrants and their households:

I don't fish or farm, but I think fishing of the town folks here has slowed down. Only 10% of the traditional fishermen are still working. Those who do fishing here are not natives of Anilao anymore; they came from other places. My father used to be a fisherman. We were raised on his meager income from fishing. Here, the trend is that when they have families abroad, they stop fishing... (Husband of female migrant, Batangas)

"With regard to agricultural workers, almost all aspire to go abroad to migrate. Many no longer want to work on the farm because it is hard work and there's no chance of a good income, especially for small farmers and tenants" (Female migrant, Rome)

A similar trend occurs amongst younger people in Batangas who are only just entering the productive stage of their lives. Remittances sent by migrant parents and/ or older siblings to support younger generations in the completion of their studies or to provide them with a higher standard of living often discourage these young adults from participating in local productive activities.

"...young people also aim to go abroad. And because the money arrives regularly they become lazy to work. Nobody is working in the fields anymore, there are almost no farmers, and only a few are still fishing. As for those who have relatives abroad, they expect to go there too (Batangas)"

The reasons for this trend can be attributed to at least two different factors. First of all, since many university programmes provide education promoting

labour insertion in non-agricultural activities, higher education levels do little more than perpetuate the internal and international migration of young graduates in search of employment in their fields of study. Secondly, remittances can sometimes become a disincentive for youth to continue their studies or search for work, as they become accustomed to receiving monthly allowances and having a certain lifestyle. Young people develop an acute awareness of the differences between the wages earned locally and those offered abroad, leading to such attitudes and the further perpetuation of emigration flows.

As interests in farming activities wane and remittances become available for investment, land is often purchased for the construction of houses, businesses and factories, thereby reducing the agricultural lands available for cultivation.

It looks like that those who left for abroad are the ones destroying our agricultural lands because they come back here from abroad, instead of improving the lands they would put gravel and sands and they would put up beautiful houses...that is now resulting in a shortage of *palay* (rice). (Husband of female migrant, Ilocos Sur)

Among those remittance-receiving households interviewed in the Filipino communities of origin, the construction of modern houses was, in some cases, interpreted as an advance in community development, at least in aesthetic terms, while for others (as in the testimony above), it represents major challenges to household food security and local development.

A final question that must be taken into account is that, in addition to investments in land, there is another household investment strategy which arises as a result of growing difficulties relating to social reproduction in the agrarian world. This strategy centres on the acquisition of educational capital of the children of migrants. The investment in educational capital has the potential to affect migration from rural to urban areas, as well as international migratory flows, given that rural areas in the Philippines currently possess limited ability to generate employment opportunities for skilled workers outside of agricultural work. This ability is also limited at a national level. The resulting drain of qualified professionals in rural areas is even more relevant amongst women, as the traditional

24. Originates from Pampanga

manner in which wealth is transferred from one generation to the next is based on gender and tends to promote sons as recipients of land inheritance, while daughters' inheritance is passed on through educational capital. In the long run, future tendencies may indeed include the masculinisation and ageing of rural areas.

3.2 Household Food Security

The evaluation of household food security and any changes that occur in this respect entails the careful consideration of two basic dimensions: a quantitative dimension involving the availability of food and 'households' access to and distribution of it, and a qualitative dimension referring to the safety and nutritional value of the food available,²⁵ as well as its cultural 'suitability.'²⁶ In this sense, food security is thought to be achieved when people have permanent access to sufficient, affordable, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.

Since Filipino migration to Italy is highly feminized and women are often the ones selected to administer remittances sent to households in the Philippines, women's role in increasing household food security should not be overlooked. As other studies about the use of remittances have already demonstrated (UN-INSTRAW, 2006; 2007), women's greater control over monetary resources (whether as remitters who control the destination of their remittances or as remittance recipients who have a certain freedom to decide where the money is spent) has a direct effect on the amount of remittances being spent on basic consumption items such as food and clothing.

Those households that benefit from remittances in the communities of origin studied in the Philippines have seen various improvements in food security. These improvements are considered in terms of both the quantity and quality of the food that reaches dinner tables. In Batangas, for example, sweet potatoes, cassava, corn, fresh fish and meat have replaced rice and dried fish in poor families' homes, as remittances provide households with the purchasing power to obtain such products from the market.

"In the past, there were times when we didn't even have three meals a day; there was not enough food for everybody. Life was really hard, especially when my husband died. When my daughter left to work in Rome, everybody got fed, I mean with good food." (Mother of male and female migrants, Batangas)

In other areas, such as Ilocos Sur and Oriental Mindoro, it is the investment of remittances in agricultural production that has offered greater food security for remittance-receiving households. This is due in part to the fact that remittances allow farmers to purchase the necessary inputs (fertilizers, pesticides, mechanized farming and irrigation equipment) to both intensify and diversify their production. Intensified agricultural production permits farmers to stock the food necessary to cover periods between harvests or those of lower productivity, while agricultural diversification implies greater nutritional benefits for subsistence farming households and a reduced dependency on the harvest of a single type of crop. Secondly, remittances received in these areas appear to act as a kind of 'insurance' against catastrophic events, such as drought, flooding or market price fluctuations, which, in the past, led to periods of critical food insecurity. Now, if harvests are threatened or there are periods of lower productivity, these households can resort to remittances in order to purchase the food necessary to ensure their subsistence and good health.

Nevertheless, although remittances appear to have an overall positive impact on the food security of migrants' households, there are number of other significant impacts to keep in mind. To begin with, remittances affect the way in which recipient households obtain their food. Dependency on subsistence farming in some areas tends to shift toward a dependency on store-bought products that require regular incomes for their purchase.

"Goodness! They don't work on farms or fishing, not even for their own food. They buy everything." (Mother and sister of migrants, Batangas)

"We buy all the rice and food stuffs here. Only a few have vegetable gardens. Everything is bought from town. You often only see imported food and fruit, such as apples and oranges. Well even our own products are expensive. Who can buy them? Only those with enough money! Even if I receive remittances, I can't afford to

25. Food's storage and preparation are also important aspects here

26. This refers to the ability to attend to cultural preferences for different types of food.

buy a lot of things, what more for those who don't have any source of money from abroad! (Mother of male migrant, Batangas)"

This dependency is of particular concern since household food security in these communities could be put at serious risk if remittance cash flows were interrupted at any time. Given the results of the validation workshop (discussed in the following section), this presents potential risks to food security in the households of both remitters and recipients. For example, some migrants interviewed in Italy stated that they were often unable to earn enough money to meet the financial needs and expectations of their households in the Philippines. Consequently, these migrants sometimes resort to credit services in order maintain remittance levels, thereby risking their own household food security or well-being in Italy.

A second impact of remittances on household food security, which also merits concern, refers to changes in food consumption patterns. The very same purchasing power that has meant permanent access to a variety of foods, has also allowed for migrants' households to eat out more often. While households that can afford to dine out will often consume foods similar to those that they prepare at home, younger generations in some communities have begun to develop new preferences for fast food chains. This not only implies a change in cultural eating habits, but also a possible reduction in the nutritional quality of the food that is consumed. Likewise, migrants who return to the Philippines, either to visit or to settle, bring with them new food preferences acquired in Italy. As a result, demand for imported foods increases, negatively affecting the sale of locally-produced products and, to a certain extent, food sovereignty.

Finally, as monetary resources are injected into local economies, prices in general tend to rise. While small-scale farmers of migrant families struggle to compete with larger-scale producers and imported products,

families that do not receive remittances from abroad struggle to keep up. On the one hand, the high prices of the inputs (such as fertilizers and pesticides) necessary to guarantee agricultural subsistence often prevent many of these farmers from accessing them. On the other hand, they are also unable to compete with migrant families once these have made technical investments in their farming practices. Add to this the lack of financial power that non-migrant families have for purchasing store bought food products and the results seem to point to increased levels of inequality within remittance-receiving communities, as well as increased risk of food insecurity in those households that do not receive remittances.

"...there are farmers who do not have rich relatives working abroad and still use the traditional way of farming. They cannot compete with those who have modern farm equipment which greatly affects agricultural production. Agriculture can't be sustainable because the lands are not fully utilized- there is still a lot of farm land that remains uncultivated- and we must consider those who have no relatives abroad and, therefore, have no access to resources, not even their own lands. So, there are a lot of people who are bound to be poorer. And what with the environmental problems that are here, there really can't be full development. While the prices of food go up, these poor families are bound to become poorer." (Mother of female migrant, Oriental Mindoro)

"The problem is that the gap between the poor and those who are not now becomes wider as well. And the government has the primary responsibility to provide for its people. The governments of other countries do it differently. They have welfare services accessible to all. Here, there's no support at all!" (Husband of female migrant, Oriental Mindoro)

Therefore, remittances seem to improve access to food for migrant households, while reducing such access for non-migrant households. In this sense, having a household member abroad becomes even more necessary for survival in these communities, which in turn would contribute to the perpetuation of emigration flows.

Figure D: Summary of Remittances' Impacts on Agricultural Production, Household Food Security and Gender Equality

Aspects of Community Development	Benefits	Risks
Agricultural production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Ability to purchase and invest in agricultural land -Intensification and diversification of agricultural activity -Improved harvests resulting from technological investments -Changes in the organization of agricultural and household labour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Loss of interest in farming activities -Reduction in cultivable agricultural land, due to remittance-based investments in the construction of houses and businesses
Household Food Security and Consumption patterns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Purchasing power has led to improvement in quantity, quality and selection of food for families of OFWs -New preferences for imported food products and fast food -Reduced dependency on subsistence agriculture for food supply -Ability to stock and sell food to cover periods of lower productivity or natural catastrophe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Greater dependency remittances and store bought food for consumption -Rising prices of food supplies and farm technologies put non-migrant households' at risk for food insecurity -Debt accrument amongst migrants wishing to meet remittance expectations of family members in the Philippines
Gender Equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Women's economic empowerment via migration increases and diversifies employment opportunities for women -Women's transition from unpaid subsistence agricultural work to administration of small businesses (e.g. Sari-sari stores) -Increased levels of educational attainment amongst daughters of migrants- Increases in women's household decision-making power -Increased landownership amongst women 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Transfer of gender-based inequalities amongst women -Promotion of the social construction of Filipino women as 'self-sacrificing' migrants and heroines of their households and communities. - Risk of women's instrumentalization: their altruism for the sake of their transnational families even to the detriment of their own wellbeing- is increasingly praised

3.3 Gender Equality

Migration and remittances have had a number of positive impacts on gender equality in the Philippines. First of all, migration seems to have economically empowered many women, as it has increased and diversified the employment opportunities available to them. Some women in this study were able to transition from unpaid subsistence agricultural work to the administration of small businesses (e.g. Sari-sari stores) as a result of increased capital and the impact of remittances on the organization of agricultural production. Likewise, the investment of remittances in migrant children's studies has increased levels of educational attainment among the daughters of migrants, opening up new opportunities for future generations of women.

The major beneficiaries of my wife are my three daughters. So I think remittances help women. They are able to study because their mother provided for all the educational expenses. Everything! From all these children of migrant workers, women are the most diligent. The majority of female children complete their studies. Many boys behave differently in schools. For us parents, the education and wellbeing of our daughters is the most important thing. (Husband of a female migrant, Batangas)

Migration brought about positive effects on me as a woman because I am now the one who supervises and manages our farm. Thinking also about my daughters, they wouldn't be able to support their families if they were here – even if they worked on their own farms. My personal experience would have been transferred to them: poor women with children unable to get an education and live decently. (Mother of migrant children, Oriental Mindoro)

Women's household decision-making power has also increased due to their leading role in international emigration. As both remitters and remittance recipients, women in these Filipino communities of origin have acquired land and financial capital, which, in turn, has led to changes in their power and status in their households and communities of origin:

The women have become breadwinners, especially those who are working abroad. They can support the family fully with what they earn. Here in the *barrio*,²⁷ women sending remittances are highly appreciated and are held in great esteem. I think they are the true heroes. I want to acknowledge their courage. Before they left these women were just housewives. With their remittances,

27. A *Barrio* refers to a community or neighbourhood.

they have gained a social status in the community.”
(Husband and father of migrant women, Batangas)

As migration and remittances become increasingly relevant for households in these communities of origin, however, they can create new challenges for gender equality. As noted in the previous testimony, Filipino women who go abroad and send remittances are increasingly represented as the ‘self-sacrificing’ migrants and heroines of their households and communities. While this, in many ways, can be understood as positive recognition of these women’s efforts to support family members in the Philippines, it simultaneously puts them at risk of becoming instrumentalized. Such representations create expectations as to women’s ‘altruistic nature,’ placing them under pressure to do whatever is necessary to meet their families’ needs and expectation, even to the detriment of their own well-being.

Secondly, as mentioned in previous sections of this

text, migration implies the reorganization of the household in terms of its members’ roles and responsibilities. The biggest impact, in this sense, often comes as a result of the migration of a female adult household member, as women continue to occupy a central position in the home. Their absence, therefore, often leads to a transfer of gender-based inequalities to other women in their households and/or communities of origin. Female household members left behind, for example, are frequently the ones required to take on the migrant woman’s household roles and responsibilities in addition to their own, since gender significantly influences the manner in which households reorganize. The increase in inequalities between those households that receive remittances and those that do not has also meant that non-remittance-receiving households must participate in additional income-generating activities in order to make ends meet.

4 Recommendations

Remittance-based development in the Philippines cannot be left solely to migrants and their households. It is the shared responsibility of numerous stakeholders and, therefore, the involvement of all types of actors in any remittance-based development initiatives in these provinces is imperative in order to reach the goal of establishing positive relationships between migration and development. These actors include international agencies, Filipino and Italian policy-makers and government offices, financial institutions, migrant associations and non-governmental organizations, as well as individual migrants and their families.

Some recommendations:

- Organize public hearing, town hall meetings, discussions, seminars etc. on remittance-based development in the Philippines (both in Italy and in the Philippines) and encourage the participation of a wide variety of stakeholders (all actors listed above)
- Build the capacity of migrant associations and other relevant organizations, in particular women's groups, to participate in policy dialogue and other events surrounding migration and remittance-based development in the Philippines; Encouraging and strengthening migrant women's associations could be an important method for ensuring that proposals aimed at increasing the positive impact of remittances include gender equality as one of their main objectives. On the other hand, strengthening these associations is necessary given that the migrants themselves can begin to collectively reflect upon their working and living conditions in Italy.

One particular area that requires further investigation and action by Filipino policy-makers and government offices is, for example, the possibility of promoting a model of local rural development which is not restricted to agricultural production. This could benefit communities in the province of Batangas, for example, where migration and remittances have contributed to a transition (now quite advanced) from agricultural to tourist industries. Likewise, in areas such as Oriental Mindoro, where remittances are invested in the cultivation of land, possible State involvement in the subsidization of farm inputs and the promotion of locally-produced products instead of imported ones, could assist small-

scale farmers in these areas and prevent the future abandonment of agricultural activity, as has been seen in other communities in this study. It would be of particular relevance to clearly establish what agricultural development model to pursue at both local and national levels, that is, to clearly define whether the path to follow includes an intensive agricultural production model focused on exportation and left in the hands of large corporations, or the support of a more diversified agriculture which aims to strengthen food sovereignty and which is left in the hands of small-scale farmers. The State's role in the importation of rice, for example, is a fundamental question requiring debate and definition. Although remittances have allowed households to invest in such a way that improves the profitability of their current agricultural production, market liberalization within the context of globalization threatens midterm sustainability amongst small scale producers and, consequently, presents potential risks to long term food sovereignty.

Some recommendations:

- Agrarian investments amongst remittance-receiving households can only have a greater impact if they manage to fit within the framework of concrete plans for local development that are institutionally designed and financed. This includes the specific design of development plans for rural areas with high internal and international emigration rates which remittance-receiving households can contribute to through their investment efforts. These plans must have a transversal gender focus so that they contemplate the creation of stable and well-paid employment for women. They must also be capable of capitalizing on remittance-receiving households' investments in human capital vis a vis their investment in higher education for their children.
- The actions that are carried out in order to strengthen the link between migration and development through remittances should not only be directed at remittance-receiving households, but also include those households which do not receive remittances, thereby preventing a greater intensification of social and gender inequalities in those communities with high rates of emigration.

Apart from providing a number of services that support the transfer of remittances from Italy to the Philippines and the provision of loans, the majority of the financial institutions examined in this study had not yet become involved in local development initiatives that would benefit the Filipino communities in both countries. This area is one that needs development that goes beyond the facilitation of remittance transfers and home loans.

Some recommendations:

- More research on migrant women's access to financial services;
- Work with financial institutions to develop services specifically for women migrants/remitters and recipients (i.e. savings, investment and credit services in both the Philippines and Italy)
- Work with women's groups in Italy and the Philippines to build capacity on productive investment/entrepreneurship, etc.

Finally, the continued support of Filipino migrant associations and related non-governmental organizations should be considered as perhaps one of the most important areas for expansion. As a result of the participation of the FWC in the data-gathering and analysis processes, as well as the validation workshop, this study contributed to raising awareness about the potential of remittance-based development amongst Filipino migrants and their families. With the insight they have gained from having participated in this process, it is now imperative that Filipino migrant associations are supported both financially and technically in the proposals they have developed to promote positive change and overcome current challenges to local/community development. This is just one of the areas where international and governmental agencies can play a pivotal role.

There is still much work to be done in order to maximize the potential of migration and remittances for contributing to positive sustainable and gender-sensitive rural development. If current local rural development trends related to migration and remittances persist, emigration from these rural communities of origin to urban areas and abroad will continue to intensify. Household food security could be threatened as cultivable lands disappear and are replaced with houses and businesses purchased with remittances, younger generations abandon agricultural activity for a more lucrative career in international domestic work and remittance recipients become more and more dependent on store-bought food and cash flows to secure their nutritional needs.

It is therefore necessary to continue investigating possible methods of capitalizing on the relationship between migration, remittances and development in a gender-sensitive manner. The recognition of the positive impacts that migration has had on the maintenance and development of agricultural production should not lose sight of the fact that migrant women's self-exploitation and the costs this implies sustain these processes. For example, many female migrants that have spent the majority of their working life in Italy currently do not have a guaranteed pension to support them upon return to the Philippines. On the other hand, the manner in which remittances are directing agricultural development processes in the cases analyzed for this study, does not clearly involve the creation of stable, well-paid employment allowing for women to remain in rural areas, whether this is working in agricultural activity or other sectors of the labour market. Finally, the increase in inequality between households which receive remittances and those which do not worsens the conditions of women in non-remittance-receiving households, as their workload intensifies because of their required contribution to the diversification of household income sources.

Appendix 1: Filipino Emigration by Province

Table 1. Number of Overseas Filipino Workers, by Sex and by Region: October 2003 and 2004 (In Thousands)

Region	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female
Philippines	1063	524	539	982	508	475
National Capital Region	194	121	73	182	116	66
Cordillera Administrative Region	24	6	18	20	7	13
I - Ilocos	86	25	61	82	31	51
II - Cagayan Valley	57	12	45	63	13	50
III - Central Luzon	149	90	59	119	65	54
IV-A - Calabarzon	191	110	80	170	113	57
IV-B - Mimaropa	11	5	6	14	6	8
V - Bicol	32	16	16	32	18	14
VI - Western Visayas	92	138	53	98	49	50
VII - Central Visayas	49	33	16	52	29	23
VIII - Eastern Visayas	24	9	14	19	13	7
IX - Zamboanga Peninsula	22	6	17	18	6	11
X - Northern Mindanao	28	13	14	27	16	11
XI - Davao	34	10	25	32	9	23
XII - Soccsksargen	30	11	19	31	10	21
XIII - Caraga	10	3	6	10	5	6
Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao	31	15	17	13	4	9

Note: Details may not add up to totals due to rounding.

Source: Income and Employment Statistics Division, Survey on Overseas Filipinos
Household Statistics Department
Philippines National Statistics Office
Manila, Philippines



The names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations

Map Ref: OCHA_PHL_Country_v2_070620

Appendix 3: Interviewee's Profiles

Table 1. Length of Stay in Italy

	In Rome		In the Philippines		TOTAL	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Below 5 years	11	11.58	23	22.12	34	17.09
6 to 10 years	11	11.58	21	20.19	30	16.08
Above 10 years	31	32.63	53	50.96	109	42.21
None	-		-		0	0.00
Don't know/No response	42	44.21	7	6.73	49	24.62
TOTAL	95	100	104	100	199	100

Table 2. Age and Sex Distribution of Interviewees

Table 2a) Age Distribution of Interviewees

	In Rome		In the Philippines		TOTAL	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Below 25	2	3.28	6	8.45	8	6.06
26 to 35	3	4.92	10	14.08	13	9.84
36 to 45	21	34.43	11	15.50	32	24.24
46 to 55	25	40.98	13	18.31	38	28.78
Above 55	10	16.39	31	43.66	41	31.06
Don't know/No response	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	61	100	71	100	132	100

Table 2b) Sex Distribution of the Interviewees

	In Rome		In the Philippines		TOTAL	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Female	41	67.21	43	60.56	84	63.64
Male	20	32.79	28	39.44	48	36.36
TOTAL	61	100	71	100	132	100

Table 3. Marital Status of Interviewees

	In Rome		In the Philippines		TOTAL	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Single	7	11.47	5	7.04	12	9.09
Single Mother	1	1.64	-	-	1	0.76
Married	45	73.77	52	73.24	97	73.48
Separated	4	6.56	1	1.41	5	3.79
Widow/widower	3	4.92	13	18.31	16	12.12
Don't know/No response	1	1.64	-	-	1	0.76
TOTAL	61	100	71	100	132	100

Table 4. Educational Attainment of Interviewees

	In Rome		In the Philippines		TOTAL	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Graduate or Master's	25	40.98	4	5.63	29	21.96
Undergraduate or College	15	24.59	16	22.53	31	23.48
Some College	2	3.28	12	16.90	14	10.60
High School	9	14.75	13	18.31	22	16.66
Elementary or Some elementary	8	13.12	24	33.80	32	24.24
Vocational or Technical	2	3.28	2	2.82	4	3.03
None	-	-	-	-	-	-
Don't know/No response	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	61	100	71	100	132	100

Table 5. Occupation of Interviewees

	In Rome		In the Philippines		TOTAL	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Domestic helpers	56	91.80	2	2.82	58	43.94
Babysitter	2	3.28	-	-	2	1.52
Business	-	-	7	9.86	7	5.30
Farmer	-	-	17	23.94	17	12.88
Housekeeper	-	-	6	8.45	6	4.55
Housewife	-	-	11	15.49	11	8.33
Labourers and unskilled	-	-	2	2.82	2	1.52
Not regular occupation	-	-	1	1.41	1	0.76
Professionals and associates	1	1.64	10	14.08	11	8.33
Seafarers/fisherman	-	-	2	2.82	2	1.52
Service workers. sales	2	3.28	2	2.82	4	3.03
Student	-	-	2	2.82	2	1.52
None	-	-	8	11.27	8	6.06
Don't know/No response	-	-	1	1.41	1	0.76
TOTAL	61	100	71	100	132	100

Table 6. Type of Household

	In Rome		In the Philippines		TOTAL	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Female-headed	20	34.48	17	28.81	37	31.62
Male-headed	36	62.07	36	61.02	72	61.54
Family headed (both)	2	3.45	5	8.47	7	5.98
Don't know/No response	-	-	1	1.69	1	0.85
TOTAL	58	100	69	100	117	100

The validation workshop, held in Rome, Italy in September 2007, brought together some 80 Filipino men and women to discuss the results of this study and identify priority issues, as well as key partners and strategies for future policy making and community action. Led by representatives of the Filipino Women's Council (FWC), the workshop consisted of two sessions: A morning session in which the results from this investigation were presented and openly discussed amongst all participants, and an afternoon session where participants divided up into four working groups in order to share their experiences, brainstorm ideas and create a plan of action for advancement in the following pre-determined areas:

- Enabling Hometown Associations to Create Community Development Projects
- Enabling Filipino Migrant Associations to Build Alliances and Information Networks on the Rights, Roles and Responsibilities of Migrants
- Enabling Filipino Migrant Associations to Establish a Woman-Led Cooperative which Aims to Create Business Opportunities for Migrants in Italy and in Europe
- Enabling Filipinos Migrant Associations to Build their Capacity and Become more Effective in the Delivery of their Services

Challenges to Development: A Bi-National Perspective

During the morning session, a number of challenges were highlighted in relation to the impact of migration and remittances on the development of Filipino communities in Italy and the Philippines. Many of these challenges revolved around mobilizing and informing Filipino migrants and their families about opportunities for improving their living and working conditions in Italy.

Regarding Filipino migrants' integration into Italian society, for example, it was noted that migrants often show a lack of interest in learning the language of their host country and a resistance to seeking out opportunities outside of Filipino diaspora in Italy. And while many migrants cite heavy work schedules, limited free time and financial obligations to families in back home

as some of reasons behind this, workshop participants pointed out the ways in which such practices limit the potential for development. One of the major barriers discussed was that many Filipinos are often uninformed or misinformed about their rights and responsibilities as migrants in Italy, thereby preventing them from demanding and/or taking advantage of a wide range of rights and services. These include education and health care services, labor laws and formal financial services, as well as opportunities for professional advancement.

Another matter raised during the open discussion session of this workshop was the cultural construction of the 'self-sacrificing migrant', the financial expectations of remittance recipients and the long term sustainability of this relationship. Many migrants in this study and participants in the validation workshop voiced their concerns regarding the overwhelming dependency of their families on the fixed monthly allowances that they remit and the degree of pressure that this exerts on migrants to continuously send these amounts whether it is possible or not. Such pressures have led many migrants to take out high interest loans in order to meet these expectations. Once again, a lack of information is apparent, as well as access to formal lending institutions in Italy that could provide these services- while still unsustainable- at lower interest rates. The growing indebtedness and the consequent bankruptcy of some migrants, leads them to become entangled in a never-ending migratory project of loan repayment after loan repayment and prevents them from saving for their return to the Philippines or investing in the improvement of their own present and future living conditions.

Issues relating to remittances' impact on the communities of origin in the Philippines were also discussed in the morning session. Several problems concerning the misuse of remittances and a loss of interest in investments in education funds due to bad experiences from defunct government-run College Assurance Plan (CAP), as well as pension plans were pointed out as having a perpetuating effect on migratory flows, as they cause migrants to stay away longer and stimulate younger generations to migrate. Likewise, remittances were also linked to attitudes of apathy on the part of remittance-recipients and relationships of dependency on migrants' incomes. The consequent abandonment of local agricultural activities and other career-related

initiatives were other areas of concern for workshop participants. At the same time, participants expressed interest on how to meet their dreams and wishes either to go back home or to stay in Rome.

Between the morning and afternoon sessions of the workshop, calls were made to overcome these challenges by raising awareness about the cultural aspects of remittances and re-evaluating the feelings, values and behaviors that perpetuate remittance dependency in the Philippines and migrants' use of credit services in Italy. This would entail questioning migrants' feelings of shame and guilt for not keeping up with recipients' cash expectations, re-examining the concept of 'sacrifice' attached to migration and remittance sending, as well as promoting the development of proactive and independent youth in the Philippines. Also proposed was the development of a documentary film depicting the lives of Filipino migrants in Italy. The objective of this film would be to raise awareness amongst migrants' families about the extraordinary efforts that Filipinos in Italy make in order to send remittances to the Philippines,

Enabling Hometown Associations to Create Community Development Projects

The first of the working groups in the afternoon session worked to identify specific mechanisms that have or can be used in order for hometown associations to develop projects that would contribute to local development in their rural communities of origin. As a starting point, members of this group reflected on past and current initiatives in this area. These included:

- The Catangcas Hometown Association's *Euro Handog sa Pusong Project* (Christmas donations) and *Emergency Credit Fund*
- The Bantay Hometown Association's Scholarship Programme for indigent youth
- The Mabini Cooperative
- OWWA's Burial Assistance Programme
- Medical missions and donations for disaster-relief

These programmes were put in place by a wide range of actors including, government offices, international agencies and hometown associations. Participants of the workshop identified various problems these efforts have faced which can be taken into account for future proposals. Some of these difficulties include the 'one-time' or 'sporadic' nature of certain assistance programmes, the 'charitable' nature of some assistance, a lack of funding, mismanagement of programme funds, loan repayment and the burial services being revoked if the required payment of monthly dues is missed at any time (OWWA).

The Catangcas Hometown Association was identified as an experience which can be built on and further expanded. One of specific proposals for action which arose was the validation of this study's results in the Philippines in order to identify future sustainable long term community development projects for this association and the creation of a brochure about the Catangcas Revolving Fund which aims to share this work with other migrant associations as an example of 'best practices'.

Enabling Filipino Migrant Associations to Build Alliances and Information Networks on the Rights, Roles and Responsibilities of Migrants in Italy

Another working group of the afternoon session examined ways to increase Filipino migrants' awareness of their rights and responsibilities in Italy and build alliances with local social service providers in order to access and disseminate accurate information to migrants. Participants identified a need for more accurate information regarding INPS, permesso di soggiorno, health assistance, housing, access to formal lending institutions, nursery schools, citizenship for children born in Italy to migrant parents, as well as shelters and services for victims of domestic violence.

Upon considering some of the experiences -past and present- in this area, participants were able to identify several key actors involved in these efforts as well as some of the difficulties they face. It was noted that individuals, government offices, lawyers and migrant associations, such as the Filipino Women's Council (FWC), lack coordination, need to create a network, and attend to the lack of paid employees who could provide these services. Also, in some instances,

there is a lack of information as to who can access the different available services and there are often costs associated with membership and lawyer's fees. Several of the proposals for action which resulted from this working group's reflections include the building of alliances amongst existing community organizations, migrant associations and government offices, as well as research into and the dissemination of accurate information relevant to Filipino migrants in Italy

Enabling Filipino Migrant Associations to Establish a Women-Led Cooperative which Aims to Create Business Opportunities for Migrants in Italy and in Europe

A third working group looked at the establishment of a cooperative led by women that would create opportunities for business and exchange between the Philippines and Italy. As in the other working groups, participants began their session by sharing their experiences and knowledge regarding this type of venture. The cooperative experiences back in the Philippines described during these reflections were generally small groups comprised of members that had paid a small membership fee, entitling them to small, low-interest loans that could be used to invest in agricultural production.

The challenges that were identified during this discussion include a lack of capital and a need for training to guarantee effective management of cooperatives in the Philippines. It was also noted that the repayment of membership dues and outstanding loans has been especially difficult for members of other cooperatives when crops are affected by poor weather conditions or a natural disaster. Under these circumstances, members are withheld from taking out further loans until their previous ones have been paid back. And, finally, some participants expressed frustration at being unable to monitor the cooperative's management from Italy.

Proposals for future action include the foundation of a cooperative led by women that would provide multiple services pertaining to the:

- Search for Employment
- Processing of legal documents
- Sales and promotion of Filipino handicrafts/ goods

- Access to micro-credit for members ONLY to sustain micro-enterprises in Rome and in the Philippines
- Promotion of collective remittances

Additionally, skills' training was highlighted as a possible focus area for development work in the Philippines. This would include capacitating community members in project management, marketing and technical skills related to local industry (e.g. The drying, canning and refrigeration of fish in Batangas). Likewise, capital and infrastructural support of migrant and non-migrant families for their small businesses, as well as access to low cost fertilizers and pesticides for those involved in agricultural production were considered other important elements for the success of future programmes.

Enabling Filipinos Migrant Associations to Build their Capacity and Become more Effective in the Delivery of their Services

The final working group of the validation workshop's afternoon session assessed the capacity-building needs of Filipino migrant associations in Italy with the aim of improving their effectiveness and their delivery of services to the migrant community and other intended beneficiaries. The participants of this working group shared the experiences of three existing migrant associations in Rome: The Commission for Filipino Migrant Workers in Italy (CFMW), Duji of Deufratres and the Filipino Cultural Association in Piemonte (ACFIL). These associations' projects range from the running of daycare centers and helping poor children, to assisting Filipino newcomers to Italy.

Work on these projects and others has meant challenges for these migrant associations. Such challenges include membership shortages, a lack of trust amongst existing members and financial problems. Likewise, it was noted that many were lacking in vision, mission and leadership skills in order to guide their work, as well as limited contact and networks within other institutions and Filipino migrant associations.

This working group's participants concluded that it is necessary for Filipino migrant associations to strengthen their own individual organizations before a larger unifying network is created between them. Therefore, it was recommended that a series of

capacity-building activities be developed and offered to the associations in the following areas:

- Leadership training and empowerment
- Project management
- Team work
- Networking with other organizations and institutions
- Goal Setting

Additional capacity-building needs assessments of Filipino migrant associations were also thought to be required, as well as the encouragement of Filipino community members' participation in these activities.

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