

**Migration Lessons Learnt Workshop**  
for  
**Mindanao Returnees operation**

Bayview Hotel  
19 – 20 July 2017



## **Background**

Since 15 February 2017, there has been a rapid increase in the number of Filipino returnees from the state of Sabah in Malaysia arriving in Zamboanga City, Mindanao. While repatriations were procedural and common prior to the increase, the sinking of a vessel that previously transported the returnees prompted suspension of the exercise in September 2016. The suspension of repatriations led to a backlog of approximately 7,000 undocumented Filipino migrants in Sabah.

As of 31 May, a total of 2,382 returnees have arrived since the exercise started on 15 February. More returnees are expected to arrive in the city over the next weeks in line with an agreement reached by Philippine and Malaysian governments in November 2016 to clear the backlog.

The PRC has been complementing the efforts and assistance being provided by the public authorities. PRC is providing services to support returnees in terms of improving their health, safety and welfare. The support by PRC is being provided on one-off basis in view of the scale of returnees' needs following the backlog of repatriations. Under normal circumstance, the National Society does not engage in providing welfare services to returnees in routine repatriations.

So far, 3,005 people have returned to the country from Sabah. Using resources mobilized locally, the Philippine Red Cross has provided welfare services, including hot meals and psychosocial support, to returnees arriving in Zamboanga City. Specifically, the Zamboanga City Chapter has mobilized 21 staff and volunteers to provide welfare services to the returnees. As of 07 July, PRC had provided 2,064 people with psychosocial support, supported 387 individuals to make phone calls and send 'safe and well' messages to their families (both local and international calls), provided 2,795 individuals with hot meals and attended to 33 individuals with first aid. Furthermore, 1,073 individuals registered with PRC to be linked with family members who contact the National Society regarding the status of their loved ones, 363 attended hygiene promotion and 91 families received hygiene kits and sleeping kits.

Many of the returnees coming from Sabah, Malaysia left the Philippines to thrive and succeed, driving diversity, innovation and creating important social, cultural and economic benefits to their families. However, many others face considerable humanitarian challenges, including abuse, violence, discrimination and exclusion. These challenges include restrictions, barriers and concerns related to the wellbeing.

The movement has a globally recognised and trusted role in addressing the humanitarian needs of migrants, irrespective of their legal status.

There are many strong and diverse experience of the staff and volunteers of the Philippine Red Cross regarding health and care work for vulnerable migrants and displaced persons in the western part of Mindanao, however much more can be done. A critical first step in this support, will be identifying, sharing and celebrating the good practices, lessons learned and challenges of our staff and volunteers. This will be a major focus in this lesson learned workshop.

## **Specific Objectives;**

1. To present the progress of the Returnee Operation in – Zamboanga City, Basilan, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi.

2. To share good practices or strategies undertaken by different chapters in resolving context specific challenges.
3. To understand migration in Asia and the Pacific and changing face of migration in the Philippines.
4. To acknowledge achievements and discuss key challenges faced during response coordination in the affected areas (Zamboanga etc.)
5. To generate recommendations to improve current systems and response mechanisms depending on the context.
6. To learn from other similar operations (e.g. from Myanmar), strengthen existing partnerships and develop new partnerships.
7. To have better preparedness in relation to address specific needs of migrants in relation to Health, Gender, Protection etc.

### **Expected Outcome/Results/Deliveries;**

By the end of the workshop, the following expected outcomes are;

1. Workshop proceedings/ documentation report
2. Documented case studies
3. Overview of the operations – highlighting the key strengths and weaknesses
4. Identifying capacity development areas based on lesson learned
5. Agree on priority recommendations from the lesson learned
6. Importance of Operational and Coordination Support
7. Cross-cutting Issues

### **Methodology;**

The workshop interplayed various learning methodologies like presentation of accomplishment reports from the chapter, brainstorming, focused group discussion, critical thinking and analysis and scenario based-exercise.

### **Target Participants;**

The workshop was participated by 31 participants (15 female and 16 male). This included the PRC National Headquarters and chapter staff and volunteers, Partner National Societies and the Federation;

1. NHQ Offices
  - a. Welfare Services
  - b. Disaster Management Services
2. IFRC Manila Delegation
  - a. Operations Manager
  - b. PMER Officer
  - c. Program Delegate
  - d. Communications Officer
3. IFRC Asia Pacific Regional Office
  - a. Senior Advisor on Migration
4. PRC Chapter Staff & Volunteers
  - a. Zamboanga City
  - b. Basilan
  - c. Sulu
  - d. Tawi-Tawi

5. Government Institution
  - a. Department of Foreign Affairs-OUMWA
  - b. Department of Social Welfare and Development-PCDP

### Resource Person/Facilitators;

The workshop was facilitated by Ezekiel Simperingham, Migration Coordinator, IFRC APRO with support from the IFRC Philippines delegation and personnel from Welfare Services at PRC.

### Date and Venue;

The workshop was organized at the Bayview Park Hotel, Manila on 19 - 20 July 2017.

### Workshop Schedule;

TIME	ACTIVITY	REMARKS
<b>DAY 1, WEDNESDAY, JULY 19, 2017</b>		
8:30 – 9:00	Arrival, Registration and billeting	
9:00 – 9:30	Opening of the lesson learnt workshop Introduction of the participants Housekeeping Sharing the agenda	<b>Dr. Zenaida Beltejar</b> Manager – Welfare Service, Philippine Red Cross
9:30 – 10:30	Presentation on lessons learnt by the Chapters, followed by extensive discussion on achievements, good practices, challenges etc.	Zamboanga, Tawi-Tawi, Sulu and Basilan chapter representatives
10:30 – 10:45	Morning Break	
10:45 – 12:00	Continues ... Presentation on lessons learnt by the Chapters, followed by extensive discussion on achievements, good practices, challenges etc.	Zamboanga, Tawi-Tawi, Sulu and Basilan chapter representatives
12:00 – 13:00	Lunch	
13:00 – 14:00	Presentation from MOFA on the Migration issue in the Province and Government response to the crisis	Representative from Overseas Workers Welfare Administration
14:00 – 15:30	Understanding Migration in Asia and the Pacific	<b>Ezekiel Simperingham</b> Asia Pacific Migration Coordinator IFRC Regional Office- Malaysia
15:30 – 15:45	Afternoon Break	
15:45 – 17:00	Migration in Myanmar an Overview, followed by discussions on lessons learnt and common areas of interventions	<b>Dr. Amaya Maw Naing</b> Executive Committee Member Myanmar Red Cross Society
19:30	Dinner	
<b>DAY 2, THURSDAY, JULY 20, 2017</b>		
7:00	Breakfast	
8:30 – 9:00	Recap of Day One Activities	
9:00 – 10:00	Gender Based Violence and Migration	<b>Ulf Edqvist</b>

TIME	ACTIVITY	REMARKS
		Regional Disaster Response Team Gender & Diversity Australian Red Cross
10:10 – 10:15	Morning Break	
10:15 – 11:00	Information Management and documenting migration and good practices in a migration project	<b>Mary Jane Patulilic</b> PMER Officer IFRC Philippines Delegation
11:00 – 12:00	Health and Migration	<b>Gopal Mukherjee</b> Health Program Manager IFRC Philippines Delegation
12:00 – 13:00	Lunch Break	
13:00 – 14:00	Challenges and ways of overcoming them, in a migration project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify Challenges</li> <li>• Brain Storm Challenges</li> <li>• Prioritize Challenges</li> <li>• Problem resolution/ identifying action points</li> <li>• Risk Management</li> </ul>	<b>Michalle Angielo Mabugnon</b> Welfare Office/ Migration Focal Point, Philippines Red Cross <b>Jomari M. Borlongan</b> National Project Coordinator, Philippines Red Cross
14:00 – 15:00	What could we do better? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultations</li> <li>• Recommendations</li> </ul>	<b>Ezekiel Simperingham</b> Asia Pacific Migration Coordinator IFRC Regional Office- Malaysia
15:00 – 15:15	Afternoon Break	
15:15 - 16:30	Future Planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present operation</li> <li>• Future operations</li> <li>• Wrapping up the technical sessions</li> </ul>	<b>Ezekiel Simperingham</b> Asia Pacific Migration Coordinator IFRC Regional Office- Malaysia
16:30-17:00	Closing the Lessons Learnt Workshop	Atty. Oscar P. Palabiyab Secretary General, Philippine Red Cross
19:00	Dinner	

## Proceedings:

Day 1: 19 July 2017

### Welcome Message

The training was formally opened by Dr. Zenaida Beltejar. She emphasize the importance of helping the returning Filipino workers. Followed by messages from Ezekiel Simperingham, IFRC APRO Migration Coordinator; Micha Wedekind, ICRC; Dr. Amaya Maw Naiang of Myanmar Red Cross Society; Gopal Mukherjee, IFRC PHL CO Health Manager; Vinod Mundaray, IFRC PHL CO Programme Delegate. It was then followed by the presentation of all the participants and going through the two-day agenda.

### Background: Returnees Operations in Mindanao – Michalle Angielo Mabugnon

Presented the context and background why PRC is supporting these returning Filipino workers and so with the achievements of PRC as of to date.

Following the presentation about the returnee operation in Mindanao was the presentation of chapters from Basilan, Sulu, Tawi – Tawi and Zamboanga on their accomplishments, the gaps and challenges. *See attached notes for further details on the presentation.*

### OWWA – Cynthia Erom

OWWA is currently assisting the repatriation of Filipino through the Amnesty Programme of/from Saudi Arabia – providing fare and livelihood programme. Another programme of OWWA is the reintegration. OWWA has the biggest capital fund for the migrants. This department is under the DOLE, and takes care for the protection and welfare of overseas workers. OWWA has a board of trustee from government and private sectors. It has a programme for all its members and its benefits will also extend to its dependent. Each member of OWWA has a trust fund of around PHP 1,250 which is invested to different investment sectors to keep and secure the money. OWWA sees migration as temporary source of income but due to the globalization of professional overseas workers, welfare programme is now being extended to cater the needs of Filipinos overseas. OWWA is also keeping up with the trend of new technologies by using facebook, twitter and creation of an app to monitor and track members' needs.

### Myanmar Red Cross Society – Dr. Amaya

MRCSC supported around 12,000 labour migrants from Thailand. They work closely with Thai Red Cross Society. Myanmar has a strong back-up from schools and civic society group that support migrants. Their ways forward are on: durable resettlement solutions for the IDPs, awareness raising on safe and orderly migration, to develop migration framework policy, training for staff and volunteers, and SOP on immediate support to stranded migrants to be integrated to DM work.

### Message from SecGen Atty. Oscar Palabyab

- Highlighted the great work that PRC is doing so support the Filipino returnees from Sabah. And is encouraging all the staff and volunteers to never get tired on doing the job as front-liners in the community.

### Migration in AP – Ezekiel Simperingham

Overseas Filipino Worker is associated as migrant in Philippine context. Migrants are people who move, whether short or long in distance, for livelihoods reasons. In a global scale, 1 in 7 people is considered a migrant. 65.3 million people worldwide are forcibly displaced.

Refugees are forced to flee from their country from fear of persecution. Asylum seekers are the people who are waiting to be accepted as refugees. 26 million people are displaced worldwide because of the disaster. Globally, 90 per cent of the displaced people are from the Asia Pacific. Irregular migration is considered as illegal migration. The world illegal in describing a migrant is avoided due to the criminal association of the word and it is also non-humanize to call people illegal. There are still people who are not accounted, those people displaced because of the effect of the disaster and climate change.

Migration in the Philippines: 23 per cent of the OFWs are in Saudi, 16 per cent in UAE, 6 per cent in Kuwait and Qatar, and 5 per cent in Hongkong and Singapore. These OFWs remits PHP 203 billion annually to the Philippines. Then majority of these OFWs are coming from CALABARZON region.

Day 2: 20 July 2017

### **Migration in AP – Ezekiel Simperingham**

Some of the problems that will be faced by migrants will be access to healthcare, freedom of movement and connectivity to families, do not know where to access relevant information, exploitation, high risks for human trafficking. The Movement work with all kinds of migrants, unlike other organizations that have mandate to work only with the refugees. The 190 National Societies worldwide will help strengthen support in migration. The IFRC Secretariat is also looking ways on how to support NS on migration works. There's a 2009 migration document, there's a 2011 resolution for migration, 2015 there's a RCRC Movement proclamation on migration.

There's a global migration framework that is being laid out by the APRO at the moment. There's 2016 September New York Declaration. Asia Pacific Migration Network has 30 NS members, which meets virtually for sharing experiences and information. It has four working groups. The RCRC Movement has two new commitments: on refugees and migration.

### **Migration and Gender Based Violence – Ulf Edqvist**

Sex and gender was being define. Biological is the biological orientation while gender is your social orientation preference. 1 in 3 women will experience some form of SGBV in their lifetime. Principle of impartiality: it makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. It endeavours to relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress.

Challenges on SGBV: no evidence that SGBV is taking place, not a priority, do not know how to address SGBV, no time and resources dedicated to it. Needs assessment plays an important role for GAD analysis since it examines between the females and males; their roles, responsibilities, access to and control of resources and constraints they face and relative to each other. For diversity analysis, it examines the distinct reality of being a particular age/age group, disabled and other contextual. Challenges in collecting and analysing SADD include no harmonized way to collect SADD; different people in chain of collection, analysis and design.

### **Information Management – Maryjane Flor Patulilic**

Presented how to do information management and build a beneficiary master list. As well as to how to do a process documentation on the migration project.

### **Migration and Health – Gopal Mukherejee**

In the group work, participants identify several health issues experienced by returnees.

Gopal explained that health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. He as well presented some facts about health in migration.

On the second day, half in the afternoon was for each chapter to discuss their recent challenges in terms of supporting the returnees from Sabah, Malaysia. After identification of challenges was the creation of Plan of Action on ways forward to further strengthen programmes related to migration. Here, participants were group in three: (i) NHQ group, (ii) Zambonga group, and (iii) BASULTA (Basilan, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi) group. *Results of the group work is in the documentation notes.*