## The COVID-19 and Filipino migrant workers

# Looking into the Philippine government's COVID-19 support mechanism for migrant workers and overseas Filipinos

Dr. Aubrey Tabuga, Senior Research Fellow

Thursday, 8 June 2023 | 2:00 PM to 4:30 PM (Manila time)



Outline of the study



**BACKGROUND** 

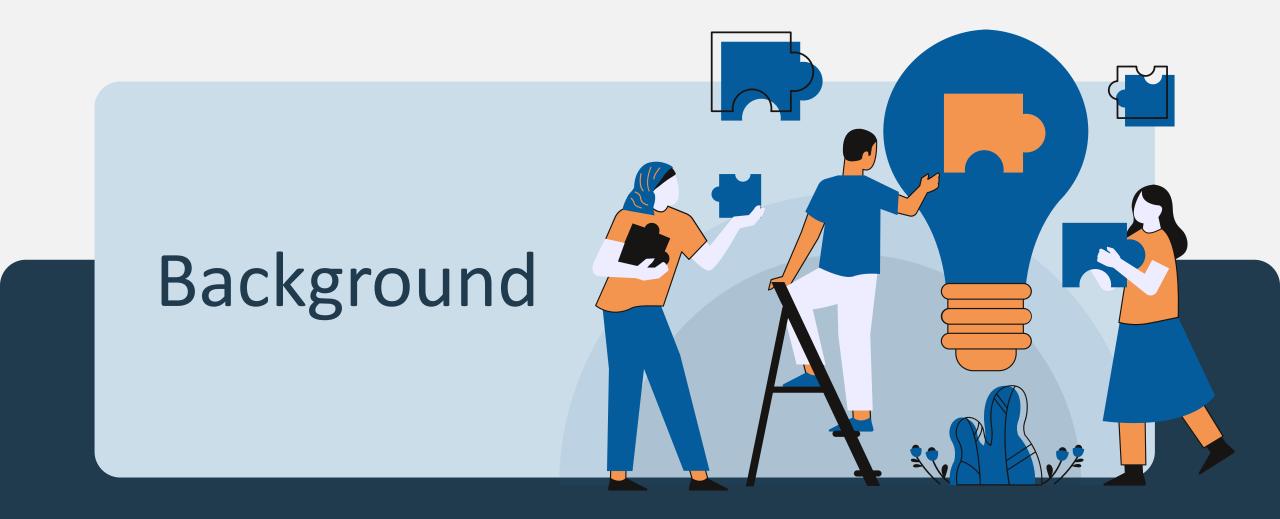
**COVID-19 SUPPORT SYSTEM** 

#### **CRISIS MANAGEMENT**

- -Repatriation of Migrant workers and Overseas Filipinos
- -Communication
- -Challenges

LESSONS LEARNED







# COVID-19 impact to Overseas Filipinos



#### **ECONOMIC IMPACT**

Massive job losses, Income reductions/ Lower pay, Depletion of their savings



#### **HEALTH AND SOCIAL IMPACT**

Deaths, Sickness, Isolation, Stress & Anxiety, Mental Issues

Challenges associated with processes of relief, repatriation, return, and reintegration



# Impact of the pandemic on OFWs

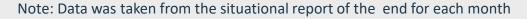




2020

2019

Overseas Filipinos' Cash Remittances, 2019- Aug 2022<sup>2</sup>





2022

Sea-based

2021

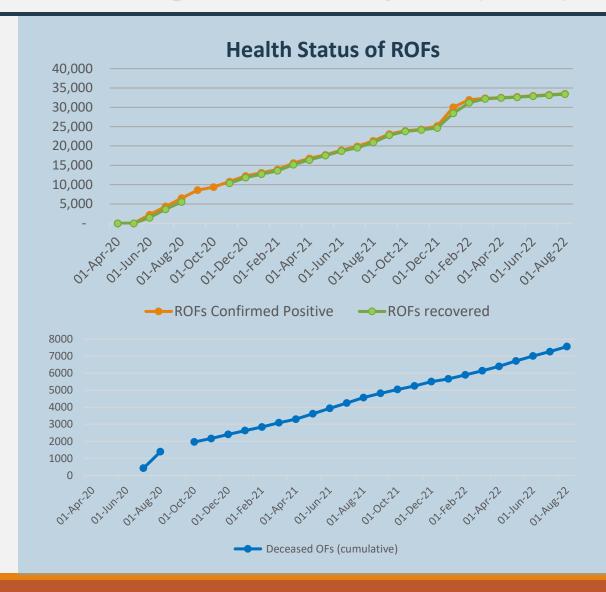
Land-based

### Information on Returning Overseas Filipinos (ROFs)

#### Total ROFs assisted by OSS-MROF Balik Probinsya and Uwian na Program







# Information on returned OFWs (2020)



327,511

Total repatriated Overseas Filipino Worker (DFA 2020)

Based on the IOM Survey

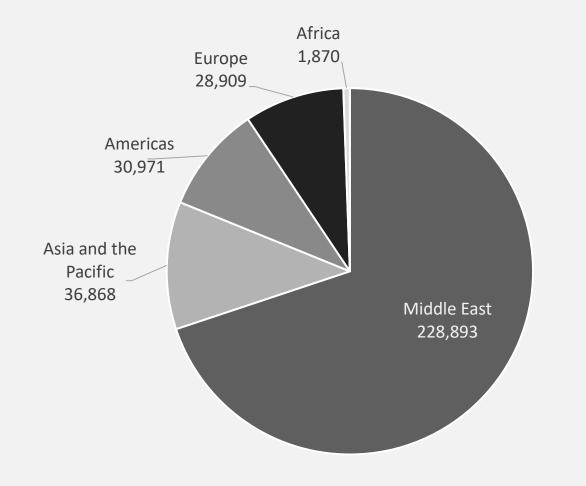
**67%** Returned due to COVID-19

Are between 25-39 years old

82% Completed Secondary and higher studies

Remain unemployed 3 months post arrival

#### Repatriated overseas Filipino workers in 2020 (DFA)





### **OBJECTIVES**

The study intends to document and examine the COVID-19 support mechanism implemented in the Philippines, specifically:



Identify the set of interventions or support which the Philippine government provided to Overseas Filipino Workers in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.



Discuss the challenges that were encountered in the implementation of related programs and services



Examine the key processes and mechanisms of operation and coordination among various entities from the government and non-government bodies



Extract lessons that can be learned from the experience



### **METHODOLOGY**

# Conceptual framework and Data

# Assessing the Philippine government's post-COVID-19 support mechanism for migrant workers

What are the mechanisms (plans, protocols for operation, Preparedness, Early resources) in place for recognizing/understanding and recognition & sensemaking addressing various crises? Making critical decisions How critical decisions were made What was/is the structure for coordination among Orchestrating Vertical and various organizations involved in the delivery of Horizontal Coordination support to migrant workers including those in host countries? What were/are the mechanisms for communication Public Awareness & and public awareness? Communications What are the institutional adjustments being adopted Learning (if any) (policies/regulations, roles and structure)?

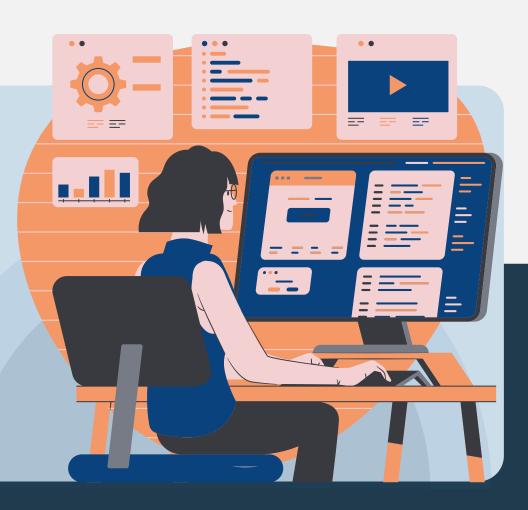
### **DATA**

Administrative data from various sources (OWWA, DFA, BOQ, etc)

Related Literature via Systematic Review (Google search involving 100 materials from first 10 pages of results)



Policy Framework/
Protocols Responding
to Crisis Situation





# PH Framework for responding to crisis situation – informed by experience (Gulf War 1990-1991)

#### Republic Act No. 10022 of 2010 (amendment of Republic Act No. 8042 of 1995)

**Section 15** - provides for the repatriation of OFWs, allocation of emergency repatriation funds, and designation of OWWA) as the lead agency in the repatriation of OFWs.

**Section 28** - mandates Philippine embassies and consulates to adopt the One Country Team Approach, with the ambassador as the lead, in coordinating efforts to respond to crisis situations

#### Joint Manual of Operations in Providing Assistance to Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos (2015)

A "unified contingency plan that will safeguard overseas Filipinos in case of crises and other imminent danger" (DOLE, 2015).

Foreign employers and companies employing OFWs have been required to submit a contingency plan outlining how OFWs will be protected and repatriated to the Philippines, if needed (policy that emanated from the Gulf War experience)



# KEY LEGISLATION AND POLICIES

# PH (pre-COVID) response in large-scale repatriation

1990-91



#### **GULF WAR**

30,000 Filipinos were evacuated from Kuwait - informed the development of legal and institutional framework governing emergency repatriation

1995



#### **ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 182**

**April 1995** 

Creation of the Assistance-to-Nationals Task Force (ATN-TF) to develop and implement integrated programs to address issues resulting from international migration

#### **EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 74**

**April 1995** 

Adoption of the country-team approach under the leadership of the Ambassador in the conduct of development diplomacy

1996



#### **REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8042**

February 1996

Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Act of 1995 - An act to institute the policies of overseas employment and establish a higher standard of protection and promotion of the welfare of migrant workers, their families and overseas Filipinos in distress, and for other purposes

#### MEMORANDUM ORDER NO. 357

**April 1996** 

Implementing the provisions of the Crisis
Management and Security Manual (CMSM) for
Overseas Filipinos -> committee shall ensure the
efficient implementation of country-specific
contingency plans and other programs relevant to the
overall Crisis Management and Security Plan



# KEY LEGISLATION AND POLICIES

# PH (pre-COVID) response in large-scale repatriation

2006-2010



2011-12



2015-17



#### ISRAEL-LEBANON CONFLICT 2006

Some 10,000 Filipinos have been repatriated from Lebanon

#### **REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10022**

July 2010

An act amending RA 8042, the Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Act of 1995, further improving the standard of protection and promotion of the welfare of migrant workers, their families and overseas Filipinos in distress, and for other purposes

#### ARAB SPRING

2011-12

More than 10,000 OFWs were repatriated from Egypt, Yemen, Libya and Syria; the 2nd largest repatriation organized by the PH govt

#### EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 34

April 2011

Creation of the Overseas Preparedness and Response Team replacing the Presidential Middle East Preparedness Committee (under OP) -> formulate contingency plans per region

#### **DFA DEPARTMENT ORDER NO. 11-12**

April 2012

Creation of the DFA Crisis Management Committee (CMC) to ensure safety of OFs in times of crisis

# JOINT MANUAL OF OPERATIONS IN PROVIDING ASSISTANCE TO MIGRANT WORKERS AND OTHER FILIPINOS OVERSEAS

August 2015

to ensure efficient and effective delivery of services to Overseas Filipinos, particularly those in distress, who require prompt and proper assistance

# JOINT MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR NO. 2017-1

June 2017

Guidelines and procedures in the implementation of Inter-Agency Medical Repatriation Assistance Program (IMRAP) for Overseas Filipinos



# EXISTING SUPPORT SYSTEM AND INTERVENTIONS

### Evacuation and repatriation process



#### **Contingency plan**

Regular updating of evacuation plans by Foreign Service Posts

#### **Creation of Response Teams**

Crisis Management and Security Committee augmented by Rapid Response Team (officers from DFA, PNP, DND, DOLE, POEA, OWWA, DOH, and DSWD) -> recommend measures to OPRT



#### Repatriation – POLO and POEA (monitoring)

For documented workers: Responsibility of principal employer/local agency that deployed the OFW — may be refunded if worker's fault In case of failure: Expense shall be advanced by OWWA from its funds For irregular/undocumented workers: request authority from DFA-OUMWA — endorsement to the Office of Financial Management Services

#### **PREPARATION**

#### **DURING CRISIS - REPATRIATION**

#### Alert 1

Precautionary Phase

#### Alert 2

Restriction
Phase
(restrict nonessential
movements)

#### Alert 3

Voluntary Repatriation (Deployment ban)

#### Alert 4

Mandatory Repatriation (undertake evacuation procedures

#### Travel advisory and alert levels

DFA, in consultation with DOH, may impose crisis alert level in times of pandemics

Note: OPRT - Overseas Preparedness and Response Team reports to the Office of the President

#### **POST-REPATRIATION**



#### **OWWA Assistance**

#### **Assist WELL Program (DOLE)**

- -Welfare (airport, temporary shelter, transport, medical (DOH), stress debriefing)
- -Employment (job placement local and overseas, competency assessment and certification)
- -*Livelihood* (Entrepreneurial development and skills training, mentoring, support, loan assistance)
- -Legal (legal advice, counseling)



# EXISTING SUPPORT SYSTEM AND INTERVENTIONS

## Mechanisms in place in the event of a crisis

#### **COUNTRY-TEAM APPROACH**

"All officers, representatives and personnel of the Philippine government posted abroad regardless of their mother agencies shall, on a per country basis, act as one country-team with a mission under the **leadership of the ambassador**."

#### Role of government agencies:



Formulate and implement policies and programs to promote and protect the rights and welfare of OFs, and provide consular and legal assistance to OFs in distress – through foreign service posts



Ensure that labor and social welfare laws in the foreign countries are fairly applied to OFWs, including the grant of legal assistance and the referral to medical facilities – Philippine Overseas Labor Office (POLO)



#### POFA

responsible for overseas employment from the pre-employment stage



#### **OWWA**

implement welfare programs for OFWs and their families in all phases of overseas employment



Source: Republic Act 10022

# EXISTING SUPPORT SYSTEM AND INTERVENTIONS

# OWWA programs

SOCIAL	<b>BENEFITS</b>

Supplementary For hospitalized active OWWA **Medical Assistance** and PhilHealth members Welfare Assistance For calamity, bereavement, disability, illness, and displacement Program **Disability and** For members injured by dismemberment accident overseas Death and For survivors of deceased active burial members

#### **EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

(for dependents and/or member)

Education for Development Scholarship Program

Skills for Employment Scholarship Program Information
Technology Training
Program

#### **REPATRIATION**

Repatriation
Assistance Program

For distressed/ deceased OFWs

#### REINTEGRATION

Balik Pinas! Balik Hanapbuhay! Program For returning member that are distressed/displaced

OFW enterprise development and loan program

For members and their families

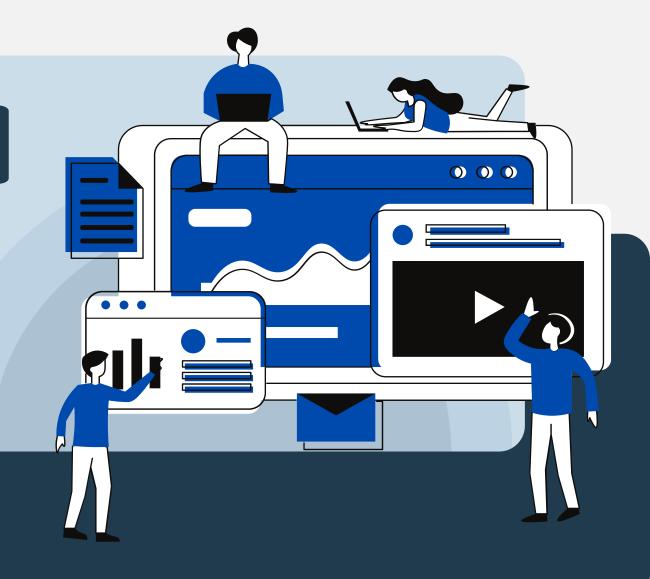
Tulong Pangkabuhayan sa Pag-unlad ng Samahang OFWs For OFW groups duly registered with DOLE, CDA, and SEC



17

# CRISIS MANAGEMENT

Repatriation of Migrant Workers & Overseas Filipinos





#### **COVID POLICY RESPONSES**

## Assisting OFWs affected by COVID-19 (early 2020)

#### JANUARY-FEBRUARY



#### **DFA PUBLIC ADVISORY**

January 31

Voluntary Repatriation of Filipinos in Hubei, China due to COVID19 – special flights available

#### **FIRST REPATRIATION**

February 10

a group of 30 persons (including an infant) from Wuhan, Hubei Province, China

#### **MARCH**



03/08 PH Declares a State of Public Health Emergency

#### **DOLE DO NO. 211**

March 21

Guidelines for the provision of hotel accommodation for distressed OFWs during ECQ or the OWWA Project CARE – transportation and shelter

#### POEA MC NO. 8

March 26

For all Philippine Licensed Recruitment Agencies And Manning Agencies - Close monitoring and assistance to OFWs and seafarers affected by the COVID-19

#### **APRIL**



#### **DOLE DO NO. 212**

April 8

Guidelines on the provision of financial assistance for OFWs due to COVID-19 (DOLE-AKAP for OFWs)

#### **DFA PUBLIC ADVISORY**

April 16

-Mandatory 14-day facility
 quarantine for returning OFWs.
 -Foreign cruise ships may be
 used as quarantine facilities for
 onboard Filipino crew
 members, subject to guidelines

#### MAY



#### **NAIA CLOSURE**

May 3-10

Temporary closure of PH airports – decongest quarantine facilities

# PRESIDENT DUTERTE'S ULTIMATUM

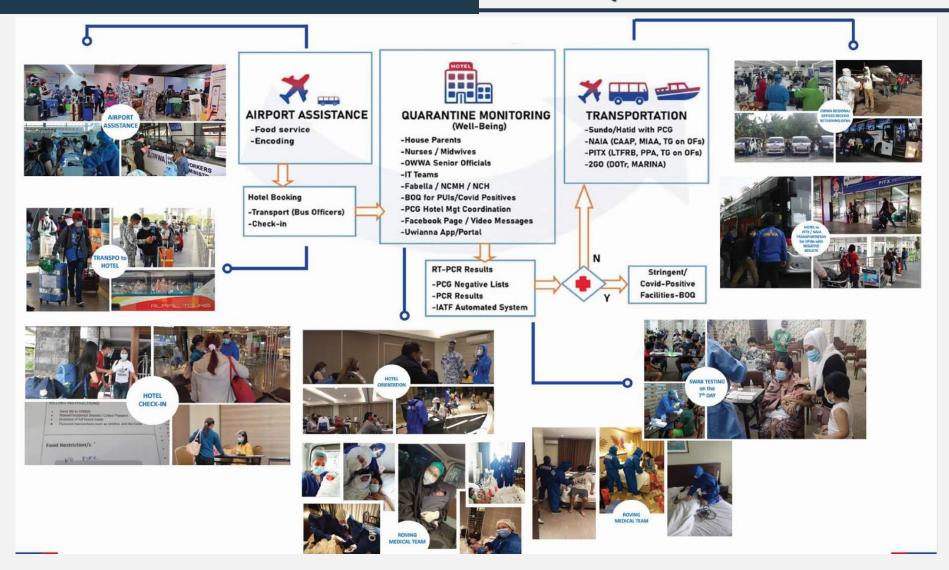
May 25

Rush the release of COVID-19 test results of over 24,000 returning OFWs in quarantine facilities



### POST REPATRIATION ASSISTANCE

## **OFW-QUARANTINE OPERATIONS**





### POST-REPATRIATION ASSISTANCE

## One-stop-shop for arriving OFWs

#### ACTIVITY

#### **Health Check**

- Thermal scanning
- •Issuance of health Declaration Form



#### Care Kits Distribution

DOT: Care Kits Distribution
 DOTr – MIAA: Malasakit Help Kits Distribution



#### **Mandatory Quarantine Briefing**

PCG and OTS: Mandatory Quarantine Briefing from
 PCG: Data Encoding and Interview, Rapid Testing

4

#### **Travel Documents Checking**



Baggage Claim at the Carousel



Hotel/Government Quarantine Facility Booking



Transportation and Check-In to Quarantine Facilities



Quarantine Check-Ups



Transportation to Area of Residence

#### AGENCY RESPONSIBLE

Bureau of Quarantine (BOQ)

Department of Tourism (DOT), Department of Transportation (DOTr), Manila International Airport Authority (MIAA)

Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), Office for Transportation Security (OTS)

Bureau of Immigration (BOI)

Licensed Manning Agency (LMA)/Shipping Company, Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA), Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA)

LMA/Shipping Company, DOTr, OWWA, PCG

For checkups: DOH/BOQ/PCG, for security: PCG/PNP

LMA, OWWA, PCG, DOTr



### POST-REPATRIATION ASSISTANCE

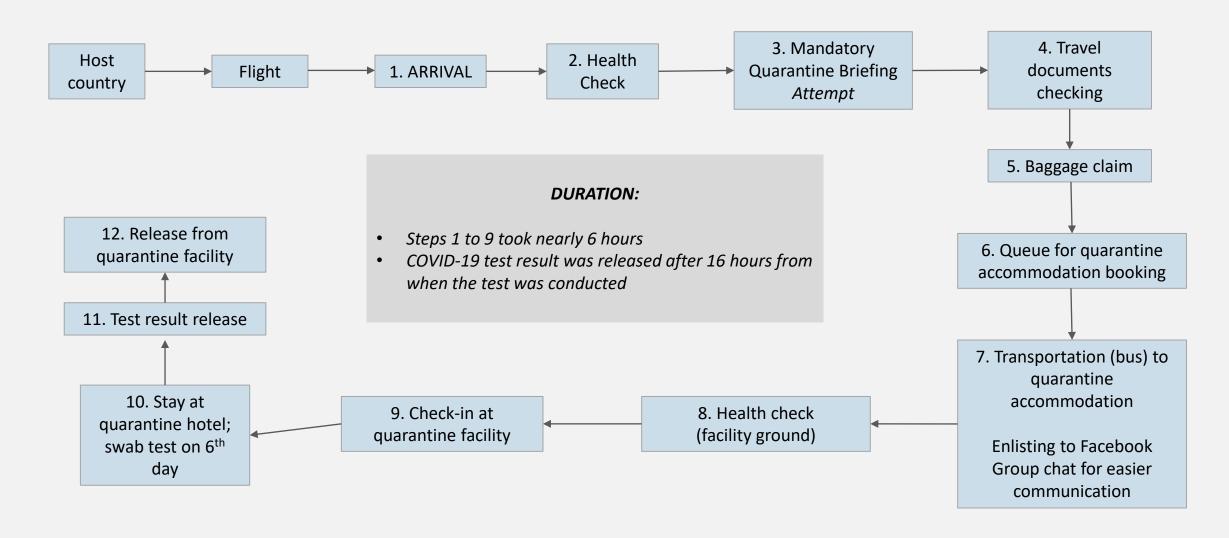
# One-stop-shop for arriving Seafarers

<u>STEPS</u>		ACTIVITY	AGENCY RESPONSIBLE	
1	Reservation and Booking	Identification of seafarers who have completed the mandatory quarantine	LMA/ Shipping Company, MARINA	
		Coordination with 2Go regarding booking and reservation of tickets		
		List of names shall be provided to MARINA, PCG, PPA, and 2Go		
2	Transportation to Pier 4, Port Area, Manila	Land transportation from hotels and/or quarantine facilities shall be arranged by the seafarer's manning agency or shipping company.	LMA/ Shipping Company, DOTr, MARINA	
		Concerned authorities may initiate actions for the provision of transportation utilities for this purpose.		
3	Rapid Antibody Diagnostic Testing	Initial screening	PPA Personnel, Port Police, PCG, Medical Teams, MARINA	
		Rapid Diagnostic Testing (RDT) performed by the medical team/s		
		Seafarers who failed the screening shall be isolated at a designated area and put under observation.		
4	Checking-in	Seafarers who passed the screening and testing protocols shall then be allowed to check-in at the check-in counters to enlist themselves as boarding passengers.	Port Terminal Personnel/2Go, MARINA	
		After checking-in, the seafarer shall immediately be allowed to proceed to the ship.		
5	Boarding And Voyage	A temperature scanning test	2Go Security Personnel/ 2Go	
		Passengers shall immediately be guided to their designated rooms or bunks.	Crew Members, Port Police, PCG	



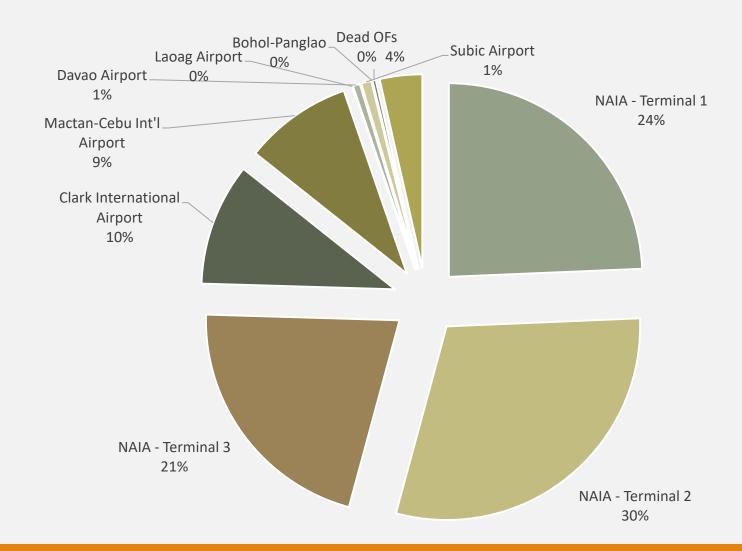
# PROCESS FOR FACILITATING RETURN OF OFWS

# OFW perspective - February 2021 arrival (negative COVID test result)



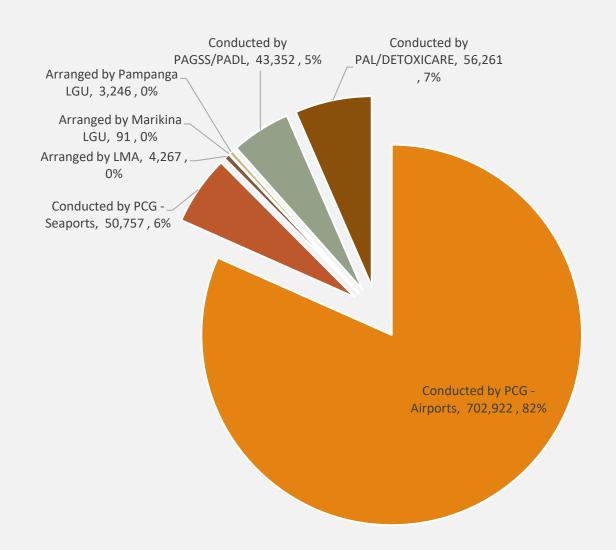


# ROFs by point of entry (April 2020-Dec. 2021= 1.953 million)



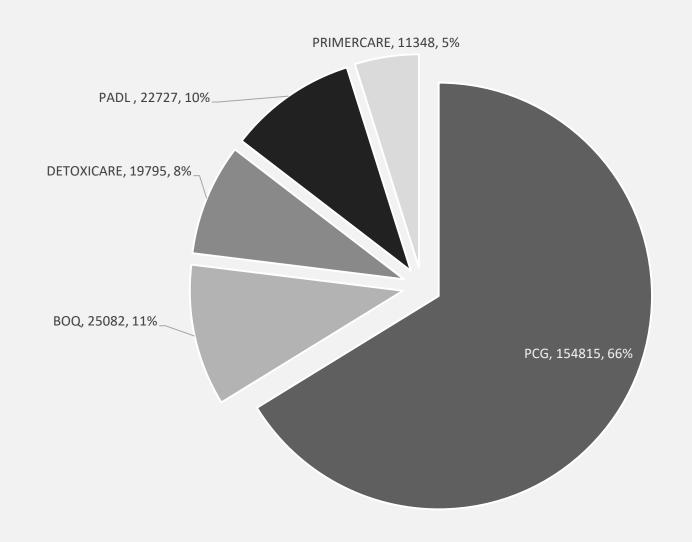


# Testing (RT-PCR), May 9, 2020-January 31, 2021 (860,896 ROFs)



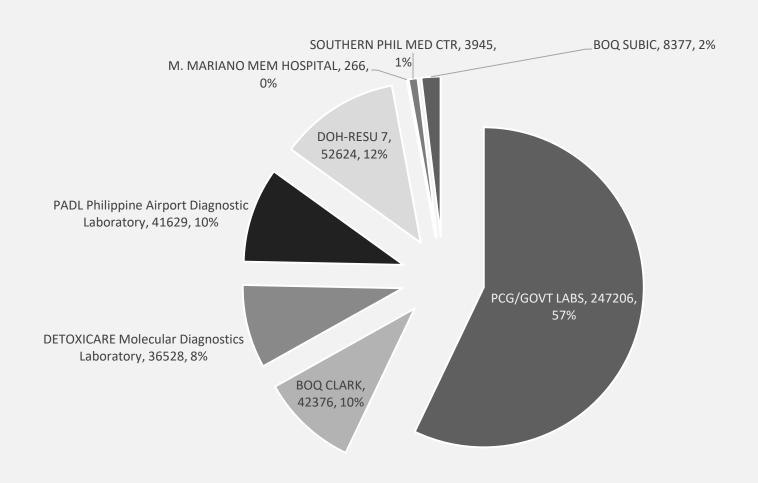


# 6th Day Swabbing Operation (RT-PCR), (233,767 ROFs)





# 7th Day Swabbing Operation (RT-PCR), May 14-Oct. 23, 2021 (432,951 ROFs)





### **GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS**

## One-Country Team approach

# ONSITE ASSISTANCE One-time financial assistance

(Abot Kamay ang Pagtulong)

One-time financial assistance of PHP 10,000 to both documented and undocumented OFWs ->Department Order 212, series of 2020

#### **REPATRIATION**

#### **DOLE OASIS**

(OFW Assistance Information System)

A tracking system to monitor returning OFWs

# DFA Repatriation Operations

DFA facilitated the repatriation of displaced OFs through their Assistance-to-Nationals Fund

#### **RECOVERY**

**OWWA** 

Airport assistance, counseling, and debriefing

**DOLE-OWWA** 

Covered costs of COVID tests, food, and hotel accommodation of OFWs during mandatory quarantine

#### **RETURN**

**OWWA** 

Covered cost of transportation of OFWs to their respective provinces and cities after the quarantine period.

#### REINTEGRATION

# DOLE-CHED Tabang OFW

(Tertiary Education Subsidy for Dependents of Repatriated OFWs) Provided scholarships, a one-time grant of PHP 30,000, to one dependent of an OFW who have died due to the COVID-19 pandemic or have returned to the Philippines due to job loss.

#### **OWWA Project EASE**

(Educational Assistance through Scholarship in Emergencies) PHP 10,000 educational assistance to qualified college-level dependents of OFWs who are active members of OWWA.



## **GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS**

# Status of select assistance

	Program	Beneficiaries		
Agency		End-2020	End-2021	Total amount
DOLE	Abot Kamay ang Pagtulong Program (AKAP)	460,471	540,876	PHP 5.4 billion
	Balik Pinas, Balik Hanapbuhay	16,518	15,474*	PHP 289.6 million
	Balik Pinay! Balik Hanapbuhay	1,421	477*	PHP 6.46 million
OWWA	Skills for Employment Scholarship Program (SESP)	1,661	1,604	PHP 122.58 million
	Seafarers' Upgrading Program	3,996	3,970	PHP 19.86 million
	Information Technology Training Program (ITTP)	9,613	5,573	PHP 9.69 million

Note: \*as of end Oct 2021



### **GOVERNMENT RESOURCES**

### Financial & human resources utilized

### **DOLE and OWWA Total Funds Utilized for COVID-19 Response**

Allotment	Disbursement	<b>Utilization Rate</b>
2,500,000,000	2,459,531,938	98.38%
5,145,000,000	5,133,533,618	99.78%
5,495,519,486	5,495,321,510	100.00%
6,166,063,457	6,127,548,127	99.38%
19,306,582,943	19,215,935,193	99.53%
	2,500,000,000 5,145,000,000 5,495,519,486 6,166,063,457	2,500,000,000 2,459,531,938 5,145,000,000 5,133,533,618 5,495,519,486 5,495,321,510 6,166,063,457 6,127,548,127

Total manpower support hired to provide direct assistance = **1,093** 

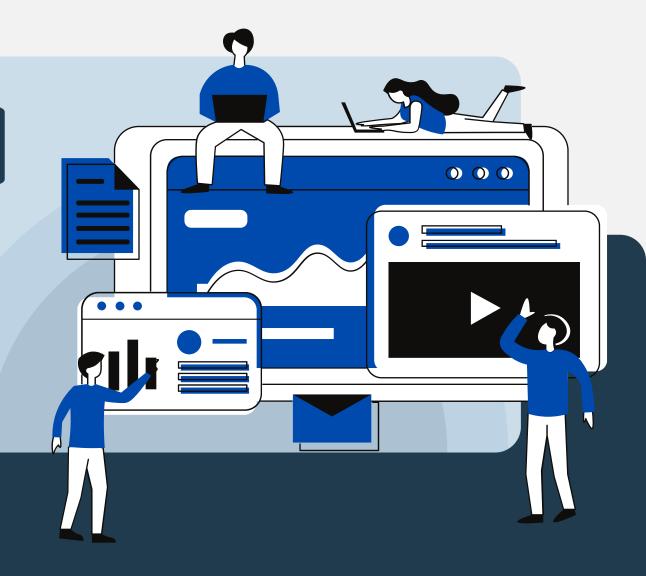


<sup>\*</sup> For the implementation of the Covid-19 Adjustment Measures Program (CAMP) for the OFWs.

<sup>^</sup> To cover the funding requirements for the implementation of the Emergency Repatriation Program.

# CRISIS MANAGEMENT

Communication





## Intra-governmental coordination

# On-site government agency coordination (One country team)

PH government agencies tend to be housed in the Embassy – OWWA, POLO in coordination with the Assistance to Nationals Unit of the Embassy" (Embassy Riyadh) assist OFWs needing repatriation. This close coordination allows their social capital to be maintained easily.

# Regular communication between on-site and home offices

Coordination is facilitated by digital services, such as Zoom; meetings with overseas people and regional people can easily be set up" (OWWA Singapore)

# Multi-agency initiative in the repatriation of OFs

Task Group composed of: DSWD, Office of Civil Defense, AFP, DFA, National Intelligence Coordinating Agency, BOQ, PCG, PNP and BI - clustered according to their focus areas.

International Humanitarian Assistance, Transportation and Logistics, Customs, Immigration and Quarantine Services, Law and Order, Health, Social Services, and Strategic Communications.



## Government to people

# Use of migration technology or "migtech" in closing information gaps

A technology that assists and empowers migrants like software applications and digital portals which incorporate elements of accuracy, safety, efficiency, and transparency in facilitating labor mobility (ADB 2022).

#### **Examples:**

#### **OFW Assistance Information System (OASIS) - DOLE**

To manage repatriation, testing, quarantine, and transport of migrant returnees

#### http://uwianna.owwa.gov.ph

To fast-track transportation arrangements and facilitate the transportation needs of OFWs in returning to their destinations in the PH

# Information dissemination using online website and social media

Government agencies use social media to disseminate information regarding COVID-19 policies, data, and available assistance, such as repatriation flights.

#### **Examples:**

#### **OWWA Quarantine Operations - OWWA**

FB page dedicated to answer queries and provide assistance to displaced and affected OFWs due to the pandemic

#### OFW Help PH (Sept 2019) - DFA OUMWA

FB page to better reach out to OFWs in distress. During the pandemic, this provided updates on OFWs repatriated and organized regular online OFW Town Hall meetings.



## Government to people (Cont.)

Communication of quarantine protocols to OFWs Since quarantine protocols changes frequently, OWWA communicates with the OFWs in several ways:

- 1) 'house parents' OWWA representatives working in the quarantine facilities;
- 2) Uwian Na online forum where OWWA discuss changes to protocols and OFWs can provide feedback while in quarantine; and
- 3) through the Philippine Recruitment Agencies (PRAs) and social media.



## People to government

# Dedicated communication platforms for OFWs concerns

In POLO Bahrain, there is a 24/7 quick response to OFWs routine queries either by phone, email, Facebook, WhatsApp, and other social media. The above has also been adapted in other POLOs.

# Digitalization of feedback mechanism

OFs to share complaints regarding the repatriation process and quarantine facilities, such as the type of hotel they are placed in, the food provided, cleanliness, and internet issues.

# Rise of participatory diplomacy or people diplomacy

Digital platforms are utilized to instantly communicate government initiatives to the public, while the public can easily relay their sentiments using social media and other platforms.



# Government to other government/agency/organizations

# Data sharing and coordination with host countries

Government agencies highlighted the importance of coordination with the host countries and commended those who incorporated migrants into their COVID-19 response. Coordination seemed to be stronger with the host countries who had already experienced a crisis, as they were able to collect and share information on migrants.

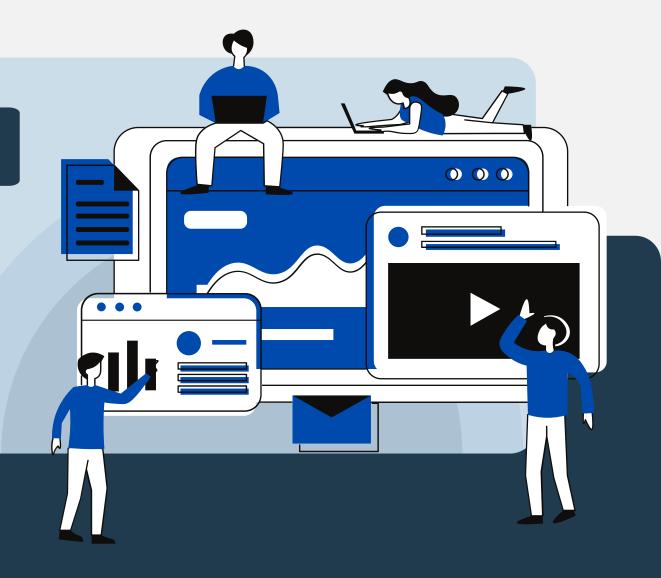
# Utilization of recruitment and manning agencies

POEA, through Memorandum Circular No. 8 s. 2020, reminded all Philippine recruitment agencies (PRAs) and licensed manning agencies (LMAs) to help in monitoring the condition of deployed Filipino workers (by sending a report) and to assist in coordinating with the concerned POLO in the distribution of assistance.



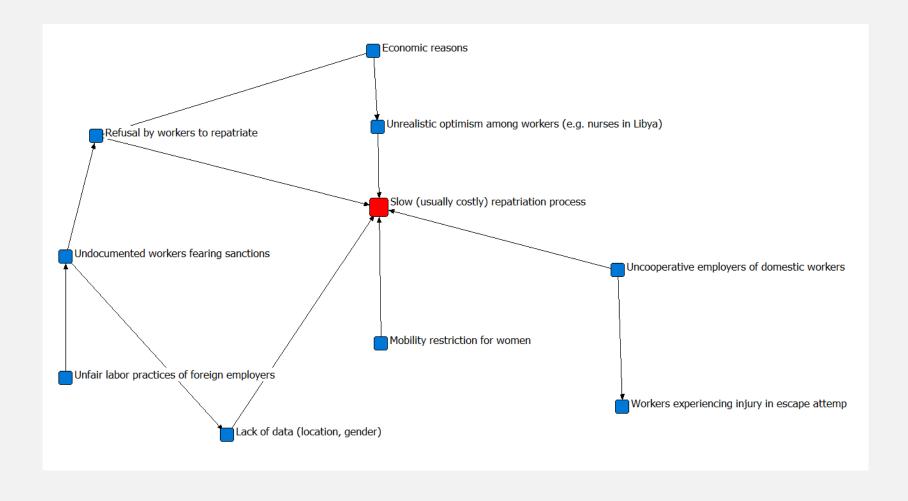
# CRISIS MANAGEMENT

# Challenges





# On-site challenges in repatriation based on past experience: Arab Spring (2011), Lebanon-Israel Conflict (2006)



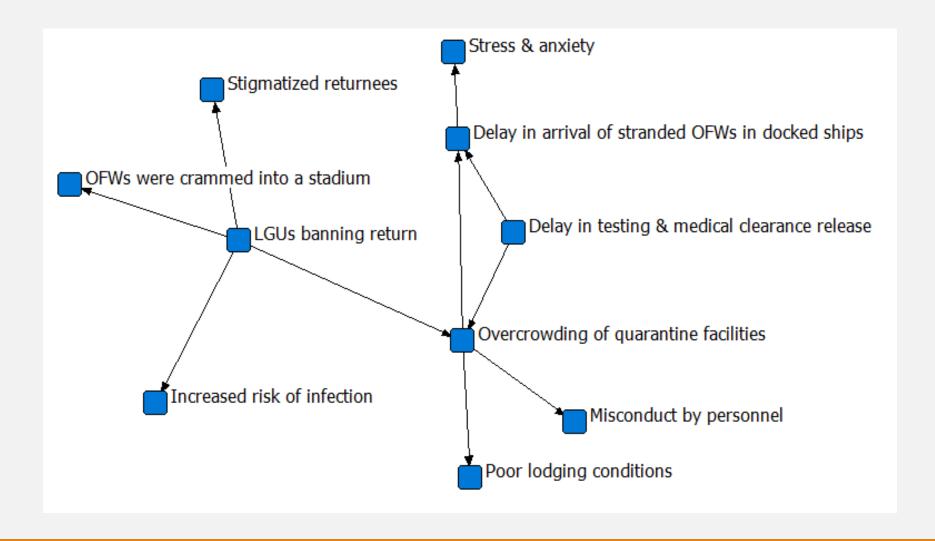


# Documented challenges experienced in repatriation process (COVID-19-related)

- **1. Slow process of repatriation** due to various factors (airport closures, absence of flights, restriction to flight entry, uncertainty about who will shoulder the cost of repatriation; closures of embassies due to infected personnel KSA)
- 2. Inadequate government funds (DFA experienced depleting funds for repatriation; OWWA also reported shortage of funds)
- **3. Post-arrival challenge**s delays in testing & release of medical clearance; quarantine facilities overcrowding, delay in arrival (extended stays in docked ships), stress & anxiety, stigmatized returnees, poor lodging conditions



# Post Arrival Challenges





#### **CHALLENGES**

### Communication

Fragmented response owing to the multi-sectoral nature of OFW needs

Data privacy laws and structures can hinder the provision of assistance

Lack of awareness on how to access assistance

Pandemic's impact on government operations – face-to-face assistance was limited, agency-to-agency coordination is also hindered due to infected personnel

# Reliance on digital dissemination of information can leave vulnerable migrants behind

"This is promising on the one hand, but also worrying on the other, when we consider the population of OFWs that is not Internet- proficient or does not have access to information technology" (IOM 2020)

#### Addressing fake news and disinformation

The Task Group Strategic Communications has been organized is tasked to disseminate appropriate, accurate and timely messages utilizing all available platforms, manage "infodemics", implement measures to cultivate the adoption of desired public behavior, and address local "fake news" and other falsified information.



# LESSONS LEARNED





### LESSONS LEARNED

# Emerging good practices



# UTILIZATION OF RECRUITMENT AND MANNING AGENCIES

- RA No. 8042, as amended by RA No. 10022
  - "the repatriation of the worker and the transport of his [her] personal belongings shall be the primary responsibility of the agency which recruited or deployed the worker overseas" (Sec. 15).
- POEA MC No. 8, Series of 2020 (March 26)
  - For Philippine recruitment agencies (PRAs) and licensed manning agencies (LMAs)
    - 1. Monitor and report the condition of deployed Filipino workers and to
    - 2. coordinate with the concerned POLO in the distribution of assistance



#### **USE OF ONLINE AND SOCIAL MEDIA**

- FB: OWWA Quarantine Operations
  - OWWA launched a Facebook page dedicated to answer queries and provide assistance to displaced and affected OFWs due to the pandemic
- FB: OFW Help PH (Sept 2019)
  - Launched by DFA OUMWA to reach out to OFWs in distress
  - [2020] provided updates on OFWs repatriated, organized online OFW Town Hall meetings
- Website (<a href="http://uwianna.owwa.gov.ph">http://uwianna.owwa.gov.ph</a>)
  - to fast-track transportation arrangements and facilitate the transportation needs of OFWs in returning to their destinations in the PH



### LESSONS LEARNED

# Emerging good practices



#### **DATA COLLECTION INITIATIVES**

- DOLE OASIS (OFW Assistance Information System)
  - Launched June 2020, it is a a tracking system that aims to "facilitate an orderly and smooth repatriation, and assistance to the huge number of returning OFWs."

#### **OTHER INITIATIVES**

#### **Directory of OFWs for job matching**

A directory of returning OFWs can be made to match skills with potential local employers, to facilitate networking for business, and to connect to support groups.

# Build partnerships with host countries, other government agencies, and migrant organizations

This would improve needs identification, maximize capital, and leverage the strengths of each stakeholder, ultimately improving the assistance provided. In addition, coordination may facilitate the establishment of referral procedures, which provide OFWs access to the stakeholder specialized in addressing their needs.



### LESSONS LEARNED

# On repatriation

Repatriation is not just an assistance but a system that relies on numerous inter-related factors

Adequate facilities for testing/medical care

Available and unhampered flights and entry into the country

Functional embassies/consulates

Adequate accommodation/ temporary shelters (both on-site, upon arrival while waiting for transport going to provinces/residences) Importance of social protection – it may be helpful to explore an insurance scheme for OFWs that cushions them in case of mandatory repatriation

Effective communication/feedback platform
(one-stop shop for information dissemination & help desk with tracking ID) – high importance of messaging to address the problems of refusal and unrealistic optimism of workers

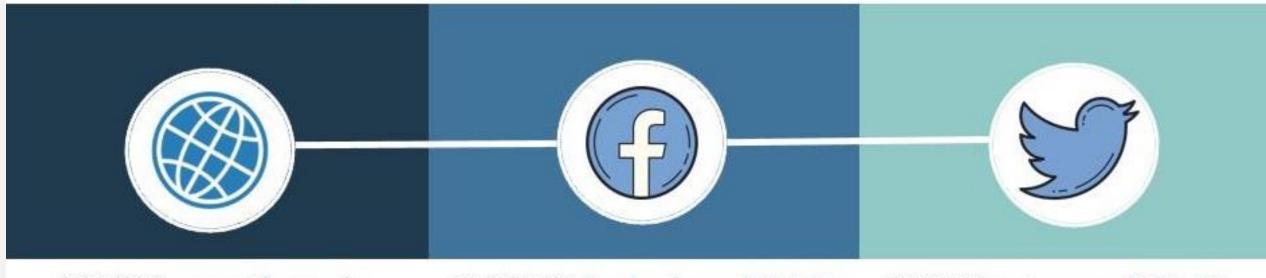
Cooperation of the migrant workers and their employers

Efficient system for logistics

Importance of coordination of government with migrant organizations, and workers' affiliation to groups that support migrants that are based on-site



# Thank You!



WEBSITE: www.pids.gov.ph

FACEBOOK: facebook.com/PIDS.PH

TWITTER: twitter.com/PIDS PH



