



BALIK PROBINSYA

A phenomenological case study of pandemic-related reverse migration from Metro Manila to Leyte province, Philippines

By Firie Jill T. Ramos

Implemented by

giz Deutsche Gesellschaft
für Internationale
Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

In Cooperation with



BALIK PROBINSYA

A phenomenological case study of pandemic-related
reverse migration from Metro Manila to Leyte province, Philippines

Imprint

Published by the

Deutsche Gesellschaft für
Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

Registered offices

Bonn and Eschborn, Germany

Global Programme Human Mobility in the Context of Climate Change - Philippines

GIZ Philippines Project Offices
10th Floor, Bank of Makati Building
Ayala Avenue Extension, Makati City 1209
Philippines
Phone +63 (2) 8651 5100
Email: andrea.teran@giz.de
<https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/376.html>

Responsible

Dorothea Rischewski (GIZ Bonn)

Author

Firie Jill T. Ramos

As at

July 2022

Design

Ponci Soliongco

Photo credits

List of photographers in alphabetical order

Syrix remanes | Pexels - Cover & pg.7
Chitto Cancio | Unsplash - pg. 45
Dan Kirk Formentera | Unsplash - pg. 45
Silver Ringvee | Unsplash - pg. 15
Jr Padlan | Unsplash - pg. 18
Ferdinand Edralin | UNDP - pg. 51
Javina Sivila | Unsplash - pg. 59
Jon Alvin Merin | Unsplash - pg. 39
Eduardo Prim | Unsplash - pg. 54

Contact Person

Andrea Teran (GIZ Philippines)

On behalf of

Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)

In cooperation with

Potsdam-Institut für Klimafolgenforschung (PIK)

Telegrafenberg A 31

14473 Potsdam, Germany

Phone +49 (0) 331 288 - 2500

Except where otherwise noted (e.g. photos), this publication is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non Commercial 4.0 International License. For more information see <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0>

BALIK PROBINSYA

A phenomenological case study of pandemic-related
reverse migration from Metro Manila to Leyte province, Philippines

Implemented by



In Cooperation with

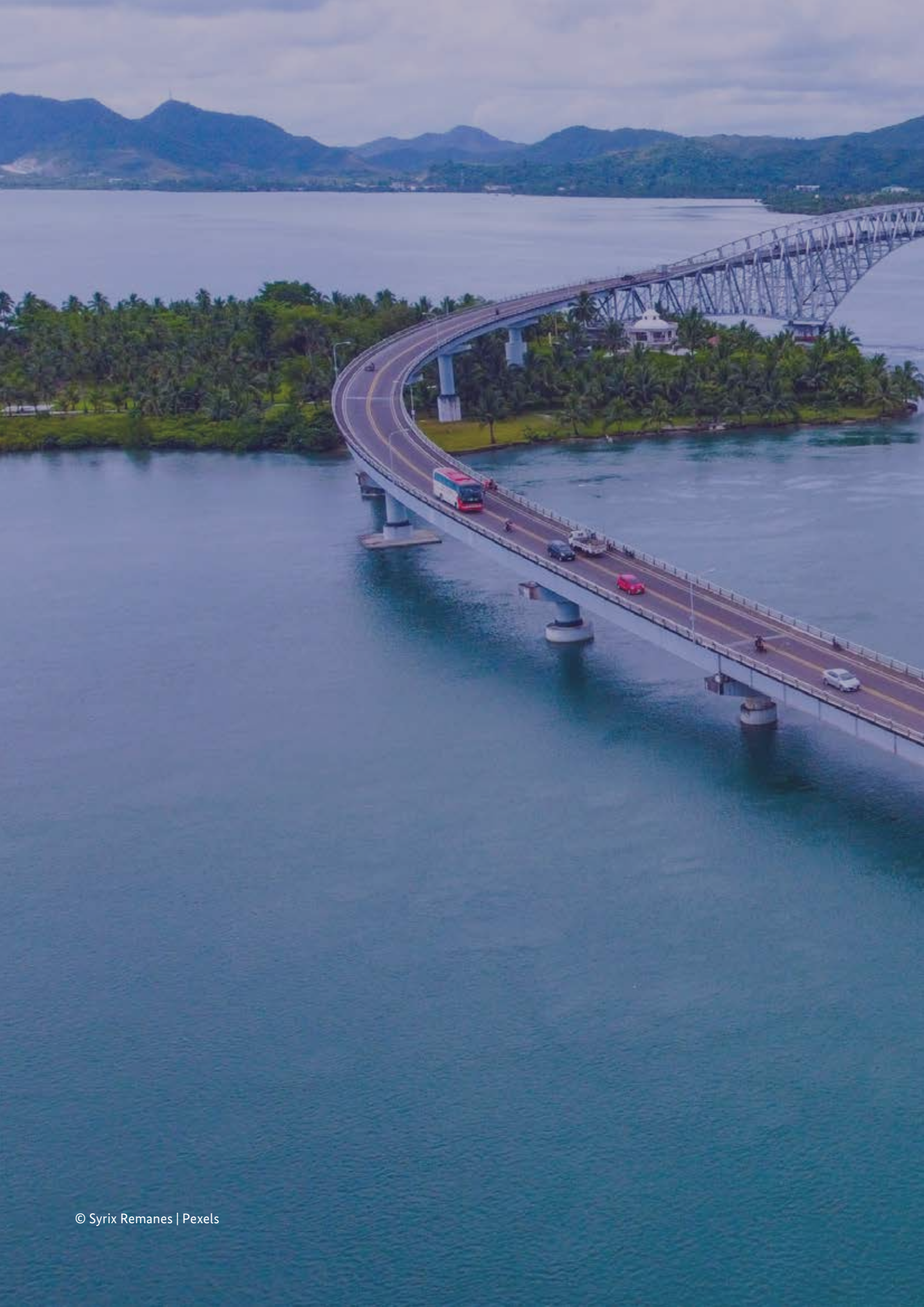


Table of contents

Introduction	9
Literature review	13
Black et al.'s five drivers of migration (2011)	14
Migration in the Philippines	14
Internal migration	15
Causes for internal migration	16
Working and living conditions in the new setting	17
The impact of internal migration on those who stay behind	18
Reverse migration due to the COVID-19 pandemic	18
The Balik Probinsya Bagong Pag-Asa program	24
Research design	27
Methodology	27
Research questions	28
Research site and respondents	28
Research methods	28
Demographic data	33
Results	33
Emerging themes	35
Dominant themes from returned migrant workers	36
How has reverse migration affected the household (in the community of origin) vulnerability and adaptive capacity to slow-onset climate change impacts?	43
Interpretation of findings	43
How has reverse migration affected household income, livelihoods, and consumption patterns in the community of origin?	45
How has reverse migration affected other household members' migration aspirations?	50
Conclusions and recommendations	53
References	57

List of tables & figures

Table 1: Results from the October 2020 Labor Force Survey (LFS).	22
Table 2. Participants and time frame per stage	29
Table 3. Demographics of 12 returned migrant workers	33
Table 4. Demographics of 12 household members of the returned migrant workers	34
Table 5. Consumption of basic needs	49
Figure 1. A conceptual framework for the “drivers of migration”	13
Figure 2. Summary of data analysis	31



01

Introduction

The World Health Organization recorded the first case of COVID-19 in the Philippines on 20 January 2020, with the first local transmission confirmed on 7 March of the same year. The Philippine government reacted by implementing quarantine measures to prevent the transmission of the virus. Metro Manila was placed on Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) on 16 March 2020. The ECQ restricted the movement of the populace except for basic necessities, work, and health-related travel. The country's capital and its nearby provinces were placed in total lockdown, one of the strictest containment measures implemented in the world.

Metro Manila, also called the Philippines' National Capital Region (NCR), is a metropolis of 12,877,253 people (PSA, 2020), with a population density of 20,785 persons per square kilometer (PSA, 2020). This megacity is the destination of choice for millions of people from the countryside who leave the rural areas for lack of job opportunities. These internal migrant workers from the provinces move to Metro Manila for work. They range from the most menial laborers to college graduates. They all flock to the metropolis: unskilled laborers fill the lowliest positions in construction projects, high school and college graduates fill various positions in call centers and the business process outsourcing (BPO) industry, and other rank and file positions in the private sector.

Additionally, many Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW) pass through Metro Manila as the final staging point for their employment abroad. It is in Manila where they process their documents, attend training, and fly out of the country to their various destinations. Everyday, 3,700 Filipinos fly out of the country (UNDP PH, 2020) to take on jobs abroad. This group includes domestic helpers, seafarers, construction workers, engineers, nurses, truck drivers, salespeople, and office workers deployed to various parts of the globe.

OFWs are scattered worldwide, with a concentration in the Middle East, US, Canada, and Europe. One can find OFWs even in the sparsely populated parts of the world.

When Metro Manila was placed on lockdown, a myriad of issues hurtled to the front of national focus, among them are migrant workers stranded in the country's capital. Day laborers left without work, as many construction projects ground to a halt. Short-term contract workers in factories were laid off. OFWs unable to fly abroad as travel restrictions were implemented. Countries across the globe applied border lockdowns to contain infection and transmission. A number of flights were grounded.

In response, the Philippine government formulated the *Balik Probinsya* program to move individuals back to the provinces and decongest densely populated areas such as Metro Manila, once the quarantine restrictions associated with coronavirus have been lifted. President Rodrigo Duterte signed Executive Order (E.O.) 114, s. 2020, 'institutionalizing the '*Balik Probinsya, Bagong Pag-Asa Program*' (BP2)¹. E.O. 114 intends to facilitate reverse migration from NCR and other highly urbanized cities by stimulating development in other key areas across the country. Consequently, by the end of May 2020, the first batch of 112 individuals had already returned to their home provinces in Leyte.

Balik Probinsiya aims to achieve a balanced regional development program to promote socially cohesive, resilient, and sustainable rural communities. It needs to be institutionalized to reverse migration to NCR and other congested metropolises and achieve rural prosperity through an equitable distribution of wealth, resources, and opportunities.

The *Balik Probinsya* program is a long-term program of the government intended for Metro Manila residents who want to return to their provinces "for good." The government introduced a sustainable project scheme and a rationalized fiscal incentive system for export-oriented and domestic-oriented enterprises under the BP2 program, as the program is popularly known.

BP2 Council explained the three stages of intervention in the program: immediate, mediated, and long-term. The immediate phase provides transportation, cash assistance amounting to PHP15,000, and livelihood opportunity. The mediation phase ensures, among other things, that the recipients have decent jobs and a house and lot, and the institutionalization of health and education services. The long-term phase involves reinforcing urban development and creating economic zones, employment, and much more to be implemented in the years to come.

¹ Balik Probinsya is the short term for Balik Probinsya, Bagong Pag-Asa Program meaning "Return to the Province, New Hope".

This paper is interested in determining the effects of this reverse migration on the rural areas and the loss of remittances from these returning migrants on the community of origin, especially any adaptation to climate change activities. This study aims to answer the following questions:

1. How has reverse migration affected the household (in the community of origin) vulnerability and adaptive capacities to slow-onset climate change impacts?
2. How has reverse migration affected household (in the community of origin) income (including remittance), livelihoods, and consumption patterns?
3. How has reverse migration affected other household members' migration aspirations?

The purpose of the study is to describe the experience of returning migrants. The main tasks are:

- a. To investigate the phenomenology of returning migrant workers in the context of COVID-19 compelled return
- b. To describe the phenomenon of return migration through the lived experience of the returning migrant worker and their household member in the context of the COVID-19 situation.

Specifically, this paper will:

1. Study the effect of reverse migration on affected households and show how the situation has impacted their vulnerability and adaptive capacities to slow-onset climate change.
2. Examine the effect of reverse migration on affected households and reveal how the situation has impacted income (including remittance), livelihoods, and consumption patterns.
3. Expound on the effect of reverse migration on affected households and how reverse-migration affected other household members' migration aspirations.

The study forms part of the early literature on the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic with its accompanying lockdown and quarantine on internal migrant workers' lives. This study has explicitly focused on the migrant workers who left their home provinces and worked in Manila. At the onset of the Enhanced Community Quarantine in Metro Manila, the Philippines was able to roll out a program to assist OFWs. However, no specific plan was tailored for internal migrant workers, largely unaccounted for highly skilled workers to unskilled daily wage workers. This research seeks to bring to light the lived experience of these migrant workers.

Individuals move as an effort to improve their and their families' lives, learn new skills, gain new experiences, find a job, or flee insecurity, disaster, or famine. Migration is an economic, social, and political process that affects those who move, those who stay behind, and the places where they go. And with the advent of globalization, labor migration has become a worldwide phenomenon. People are crossing borders to search for better job opportunities and provide a better future for their families.

Black et al. (2011) summarized the five primary families or drivers of Migration that might affect the volume, direction, and frequency of migratory movements. They are the economic, political, demographic, social, and environmental, exemplified by the framework illustrated in Figure 1.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Consumption patterns | The process by which individuals identify, purchase and consume products and services to fit all their needs.

Internal migration | The movement of people within a State involving the establishment of a new temporary or permanent residence. Internal migration movements can be temporary or permanent and include those who have been displaced from their habitual places of residence, such as internally displaced persons and persons who decide to move to a new place, such as in the case of rural-urban migration. The term also covers both nationals and non-nationals moving within a State, provided that they move away from their place of habitual residence

Return migration | In the context of international migration, the movement of persons returning to their country of origin after having moved away from their place of habitual residence and crossed an international border. In the context of internal migration, the movement of persons returning to their place of habitual residence after having moved away from it.

Reverse migration | Refers to migration from urban areas to rural areas instead of the main direction of migration from rural areas to urban areas.

Individuals move as an effort to improve their and their families' lives, learn new skills, gain new experiences, find a job, or flee insecurity, disaster, or famine. Migration is an economic, social, and political process that affects those who move, those who stay behind, and the places where they go. And with the advent of globalization, labor migration has become a worldwide phenomenon. People are crossing borders to search for better job opportunities and provide a better future for their families.

Black et al. (2011) summarized the five primary families or drivers of Migration that might affect the volume, direction, and frequency of migratory movements. They are the economic, political, demographic, social, and environmental, exemplified by the framework illustrated in Figure 1.

02

Literature review

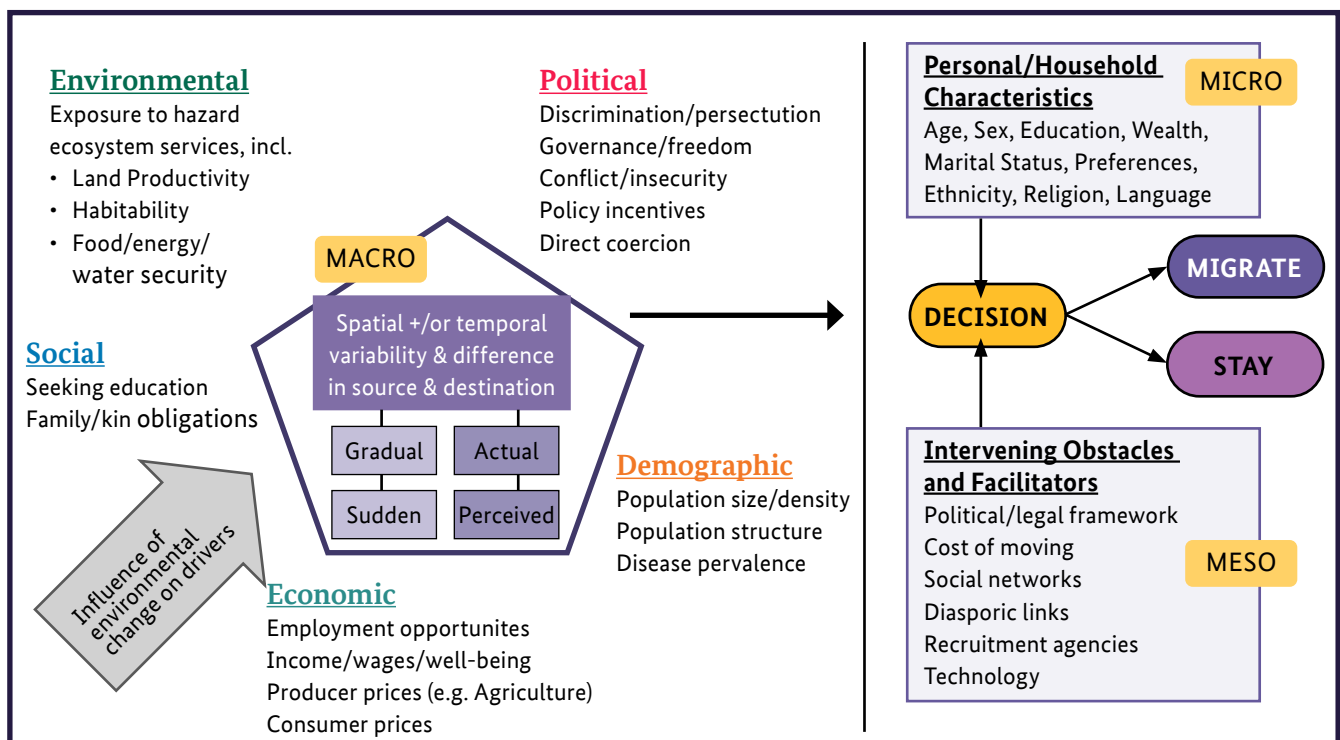


FIGURE 1. A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE "DRIVERS OF MIGRATION."

The factors that drive Migration to affect both the scale of Migration and whether populations decide not to move location at all (ibid.). Most of the world's population are not and do not want to be migrants. Some parts of the population have low migration rates because they lack the resources – personal and financial – to move.

BLACK ET AL.'S FIVE DRIVERS OF MIGRATION (2011)

The pentagon in Fig. 1 characterizes five groups of drivers of migration. The actual or perceived spatial and temporal differences in these five dimensions that influences movement, akin in some respects to Lee's (1966) conceptualization of the 'push-pull' factors that influence migration.

1. Economic drivers include employment opportunities and income differentials between places.
2. Political drivers cover not only conflict, security, discrimination, and persecution and the political drivers of public or corporate policy over, for example, land ownership or enforced relocation.
3. Demographic drivers include the size and structure of populations in source areas and the prevalence of diseases that affect morbidity and mortality.
4. Social drivers include familial or cultural expectations, the search for educational opportunities, and cultural practices over, for example, inheritance or marriage.

5. The environmental drivers of migration are exposure to hazards and availability of ecosystem services.

These five drivers rarely act in isolation, and the interaction of the five drivers determines the details of movement (ibid.). The nature of these interactions will influence the scale of movement, and movements at different scales – internal compared to international – will be influenced by different interactions between drivers.

MIGRATION IN THE PHILIPPINES

Based on the 2018 National Migration Survey (NMS, 2018 cited in PSA, 2020a), about 55 percent of Filipinos age 15 and over have ever moved to or resided in another city/municipality, province, region, or country for three months or more since birth. Forty-nine percent (49%) moved within the country (internal migrants), three percent moved to/from another country (international migrants), and four percent were both internal and international migrants. For each type of migration, there is slightly more female than male migrants. In terms of period migration, 15 percent of Filipinos changed their residence over the past five years, of which 13 percent were internal migrants. Moreover, over half of these internal migrants were less than 30 years old. On average, recent migrants were better educated than non-migrants, with more of them having reached college or tertiary level. Furthermore, international migrants were better educated than internal migrants. Still, those who have

internal and international migration experience in the last five years had the highest proportion of college education among all migrant types.

The most dominant migration trend in the Philippines has been toward the urban, or more accurately the suburban, areas adjacent to Metropolitan Manila. Migration flows in the country are primarily caused by economic reasons in pursuing employment and other economic opportunities (Jolipa, 1980).

INTERNAL MIGRATION

Local migration surveys show (UNESCO, UNDP, IOM, UN-Habitat, 2018) that female migration is very significant in the Philippines, especially in rural-urban movement. In rural Mindanao, females constitute 56.3% of the out-migrant population (Quisumbing and McNiven 2006). Data from the 2000 Population and Housing Census indicate that 52% of working-age migrants are aged 20–39 (Perez 2015). 46% of migrants are single or unmarried, and 24% of migrants have at least graduated from high school (ibid.).

Different types of migrants are attracted to rural areas, poblaciones, and urban areas. The latter two attract the better-school because young people migrate for education or seek better employment prospects. Migrants to rural areas move primarily for farming and marriage (Quisumbing and McNiven 2006).

In Mindanao, migrants' reasons for moving differ by destination and by gender. Most male first-time migrants to rural areas migrate to start a

new job (21%) or get married (18%). Female first-time migrants primarily move to rural areas for marriage (35%) or start a new job (23%). On the other hand, first-time migrants to poblaciones and urban areas, both male and female, move to start a new job or access better schooling.

For the most recent move (compared to the first move), more males (53%) to rural areas migrate for economic reasons than for life-cycle or family reasons, while most female migrants to rural areas migrate for family reasons, with marriage accounting for 54% of female migrants. But for migrants to poblaciones and urban areas, both male and female migrants primarily move for economic reasons, with the next most important reason for moving being schooling for females and marriage for males (ibid.).

Migrants' occupations vary substantially based on whether or not there are male or female and if they are moving for the first time. Men tend to work in farming, crafts, trades, manual labor, and transportation in their first and most recent moves. In contrast, women who have moved more than once tend to work in housework or child-care and are less likely to work in manual labor or transportation. This suggests that women who work in the latter occupations when they first move switch occupations on their subsequent move(s) (ibid.).

Females are more likely to move to urban areas if they have more siblings. A possible explanation for this is that siblings who have already migrated provide pre-existing support networks for younger sisters in families (ibid.).



© Silver Ringvee | Unsplash

The predominance of women among rural-urban migrants can be explained by their relative lack of education and skills (particularly in relation to agriculture). They are motivated to move to cities to seek opportunities as a result (U.N. Habitat 2016, in UNESCO, UNDP, IOM, UN-Habitat, 2018). Women also migrate to escape abuse within marriage and to avoid the pressure that comes with marrying early, and young people tend to see life in urban areas as exciting. Many migrants to Manila use it as a stopgap measure and intend to further international Migration. They use their time in Manila to accumulate funds, make administrative arrangements for overseas travel, and gain work experience (Anderson et al., 2017).

CAUSES FOR INTERNAL MIGRATION

Climate change affects agricultural migration. Temperature rises and typhoons negatively affect rice yields and cause greater outmigration from agriculturally dependent provinces with large

rural populations. Males, the better-educated, and younger individuals are susceptible to climate change's migratory effects (Bohra-Mishra et al. 2017). An archipelago of 7,640 islands with high climatic variation levels, the Philippines is one of the 12 countries in the world most vulnerable to disasters and the effects of climate change (Germanwatch 2017, UNICEF 2012). Natural calamities affected 109 million people between 1980 and 2009, and 60% of the Philippines' 1,500 municipalities and 120 cities are located along coastal shores.

Rural and agricultural poverty has driven internal migrants to seek opportunities in urban areas (IOM 2013). Agriculture's share in total employment declined from 43% to 27.7% between 1991 and 2017 (World Bank 2018, in UNESCO, UNDP, IOM, UN-Habitat, 2018). Its contribution to the country's GDP dropped from 23.2% in 1990 to 13.9% in 2010 (IOM 2013) and 9% in 2017 (PSA, 2017, UNESCO, UNDP, IOM, UN-Habitat, 2018).

Violent conflict has also resulted in large-scale internal migration. For instance, the conflict in Mindanao has caused significant involuntary outmigration, primarily in the form of displaced Moro and Lumad peoples from conflict zones (Tigno 2006, in UNESCO, UNDP, IOM, UN-Habitat, 2018), with displaced Lumads in particular locked into a cycle of poverty (Norwegian Refugee Council 2013a). In 2013 around 327,000 people in Mindanao fled their homes, about a third of whom fled within Zamboanga Province, where clashes between government forces and the Moro National Liberation Front were especially intense (Norwegian Refugee Council 2013b). The precise extent of protracted displacement is unknown, but data suggests that half of the 461,000 people displaced by conflict and disasters at the end of 2014 had fled their homes more than a year before (Norwegian Refugee Council 2015).

WORKING AND LIVING CONDITIONS IN THE NEW SETTING

The high volume of migrants to cities has strained housing, infrastructure, and essential services in major cities. As a result, informal settlements have proliferated: the number of informal settlers in the Philippines had increased from 4.1% of the total urban population in 2003 to 5.4% in 2012 when 2.2 million lived in informal settlements, of which 1.3 million were in Metro Manila alone (World Bank 2017, in UNESCO, UNDP, IOM, UN-Habitat, 2018).

At least 75% of migrants find jobs in their areas of destination (Perez 2015). The predominance of female migration in the Philippines indicates that women have a degree of economic freedom, but their concentration in gendered work suggests a paucity of diverse employment options (UNICEF Philippines and Scalabrini Migration Center, 2013). The majority of female migrants end up in domestic work in the cities (UNICEF Philippines 2013) or work as street vendors and factories associated with the textile industries (Anderson et al. 2017). They are more likely than male migrants to work as professional or managerial staff in urban areas, and in poblaciones, they are more likely to work in sales occupations (Quisumbing and McNiven 2006). The majority of male migrants in urban areas work in jobs that offer low salaries, such as crafts and trades, farming, and manual or transportation work (ibid.).

Migrant domestic workers are particularly vulnerable. They work long hours and are the lowest-paid workers in the country. 33% work 9-10 hours per day, and 20 % work 11 hours or more. In 2010, the average daily pay received by domestic workers was approximately US\$2.60 (ILO 2011). Although efforts have been made to formalize domestic work by introducing the Domestic Workers Act 2013, this law is very poorly implemented. Domestic workers are not registered for the most part, and labor inspectors cannot enter private homes (Anderson et al., 2017). Data from trafficking

shelters have emphasized the vulnerability of young, predominantly female, migrants to being victims of trafficking (ibid.).

The Philippines's slum population as a percentage of its urban population is 38.3% (U.N. Data 2014, UNESCO, UNDP, IOM, UN-Habitat, 2018). However, data is not available on what proportion of the slum population is comprised of internal migrants. Informal settlers lack access to basic infrastructure and services, secure land tenure, protection from natural disasters, and have limited access to capital, stable employment, and livelihood opportunities. There are also vulnerable to natural disasters: over 104,000 informal settler families in Metro Manila live in dangerous areas exposed to recurrent flooding (World Bank 2017b, UNESCO, UNDP, IOM, UN-Habitat, 2018).

THE IMPACT OF INTERNAL MIGRATION ON THOSE WHO STAY BEHIND

Migrants to urban areas remit more than migrants to rural areas or children who stay in the same barangay (Quisumbing and McNiven 2010). Internal remittances are sent mainly via money transfer operators. 69% of Filipinos do not have bank accounts, and for adults in the poorest 40% of households, this figure rises to 82%. Transfers are rarely sent through financial institutions (World Bank Group 2015, UNESCO, UNDP, IOM, UN-Habitat, 2018). Remittances have had a significant positive

impact on internal migrant-sending households' expenditures, especially in the areas of clothing, footwear, and education. Households receiving remittances also can accumulate consumer durables and non-land assets (Quisumbing and McNiven 2010). Internal remittances generate more welfare among poorer households than international remittances (Ang, Sugiyarto, and Jha 2009). However, not all internal migrants attain better jobs after migrating and can afford to send remittances to their families.

The outflow of the young labor force and the best-educated individuals from rural areas poses challenges to rural agricultural productivity. Most remittances are invested in non-land assets, suggesting that Migration forces a transition out of agriculture (Quisumbing and McNiven 2010).

In the Philippines, many women and girls marry and have children at a young age. This pushes them to migrate to earn money (Anderson et al., 2017).

REVERSE MIGRATION DUE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

In normal times, decongesting cities would have been a good idea. Migrant labor lives in inhuman conditions in slums and shantytowns. Most migrants come from lower socioeconomic groups and are recruited through unfair channels; underpaid and overworked; they are engaged in the environment compromised of occupational safety and health. Cities are overburdened and underprepared to provide guaranteed social

protection to these migrants, often denying them access to adequate food and nutrition, quality healthcare, housing, or water and sanitation facilities (IAS, TNEXT, 2020, Friborg, 2020).

EFFECTS OF REVERSE MIGRATION BROUGHT BY THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

a. Increased vulnerability to poverty

Among other factors, returning home includes the following risks: the return to unstable or worsening economic conditions in their home locale; indeterminate length of unemployment; limited re-migration possibilities; and increased vulnerability to social and financial instability (Friborg, 2020). In many locales, migrant remittances provide poor households with an economic lifeline; a decline in remittance flows could increase poverty and decrease households' access to much-needed health services (Aldrich et al., 2020).

Additionally, COVID-19 lockdown measures, including reduced mobility and layoffs, have made starvation and homelessness even more acute risks for migrants (ibid). As these migrants are not formally registered or tracked and are becoming scattered throughout their countries, it is highly unlikely that they will receive any – much less adequate – government or NGO support (ibid.).

Also, every household in rural areas will likely have a few extra members at home who will have to be fed and taken care of. Lower incomes and more mouths to feed could cause stress within households in the country's high-poverty regions that have traditionally served as a source for Migration, leading to a food-related crisis (ibid).

A significant number of the migrants who returned home are expected to enter local labor markets. This will likely depress wage rates in agricultural lands in the upcoming monsoon crop season and beyond (Verderosa,



2020). A large unoccupied workforce entering local labor markets could also take work away from the more marginalized and impoverished population segments (ibid.), causing anti-migrant sentiments from locals.

b. Consumption patterns

Fitch Solutions Country Risk and Industry Research's predicted that household spending in the Philippines would decline by 7.8% in 2020 due to the pandemic and related economic shock that has hit households through several channels: a deteriorating labor market, weaker remittances, [and] a confidence shock, prompting higher savings rates (Noble, 2020).

In terms of cost, a Nielsen study showed that with less disposable income, consumers are looking for ways to maximize their budgets (Ordinario, 2020). Consumers tend to prioritize health and their value needs. Around 83 percent of consumers in the Asia Pacific said they were cutting down their expenses in the second quarter of 2020 compared to 73 percent in the pre-pandemic fourth quarter of 2019. Among surveyed consumers who have changed their spending, 30 percent or more are spending less on takeaway meals, holidays, out-of-home entertainment, and new clothing. As such, channel preferences are also shifting as the criteria for affordability, considering the safety of access and mobility limitations in consumers' minds.

Across Southeast Asia, consumers continued to demonstrate a focus on in-home consumption, where food and dairy saw strong uptake in

the Philippine market at 11.4 percent (ibid.).

According to PSA, the Household Final Consumption Expenditure grew by 0.2 percent in the first quarter of 2020 (2020). Of which, essential items such as food and non-alcoholic beverages, housing, water, electricity, gas, and other fuels, health, and communication posted a growth of 4.9 percent, lower than the 6.1 percent in first-quarter 2019. Meanwhile, non-essential items declined by 4.7 percent from a growth of 6.4 percent during the same period last year.

Around 24 percent of consumers surveyed in the Philippines switched pack sizes, suggesting that they seek products that suit their homebound lifestyle (Ordinario, 2020).

c. Informal local economies

Migrant workers are typically hand-to-mouth consumers, earning subsistence living and spending a large part of their income in the local economy. This contributes to another layer of demand, which will now cease to exist. In their capacity as consumers, they are a part of an informal economy that generates and sustains volumes for the fast-moving consumer goods industries, which will take a blow due to reverse migration (IAS, TNEXT, 2020). The lack of demand from the migrant workers and the mini economies they help sustain implies that forward and backward linkages to the formal sector will be weakened (ibid.).

d. Safety from risky employment

The workers who migrate may face extreme hardships, and authorities do very little to provide for migrants' rights (Albright & Naybor,

2010). And so, returning home is a welcome relief for women from the long hours of difficult work, the crowded and unsafe living and working conditions of migrant labor, exposing them to trafficking, exploitation, abuse, discrimination, or danger (ibid.). As the demand for labor decreases, the expensive and sometimes dangerous migration to another area of the world for work also decreases. When men migrate to urban areas or to foreign countries for higher-paying employment, they also may be placed in dangerous or abusive situations or end up in forced labor, unable to afford to return to their families. Men involved in labor migration are often forced to focus on survival and have little time to think of family back home. They may be the victims of violence as local workers grow angry at jobs lost to outsiders. Male migrants have been attacked and murdered, accused of stealing jobs from local workers, leaving women widowed or caring for injured men, and devastating the family income (ibid.).

e. Household impacts

In addition to reducing stress, health risks, dangerous conditions, and exploitation, women migrant workers' return have several positive impacts on the home they return to (ibid.). Mothers are often reunited with their children, cared for by family members. Women, who act as caretakers for children, the sick, and the elderly, are an invisible and undervalued domestic labor source, and although the remittances sent from their jobs were much needed, so are their unpaid services to the family and community.

When men come home, the main household producer returns (ibid.). Their labor adds to increased production in self-sufficient subsistence farming and adds to local food security as food availability increases and prices are lowered. Local labor force availability increases, decreasing local production costs.

On the other hand, there are three main disadvantages and negative aspects that women can expect to have to deal with when they return home. First, there is a loss of essential remittances obtained from migrant work (ibid.). Although it is quite often that these remittances may appear to be inconsequential, they have been proven to be essential contributions to the economy of the home village. These remittances are often used for family education, health costs, and food.

Along with losing the money itself, the second negative effect is that women lose a sense of responsibility from making important decisions on how to manage the money they were making (ibid.). This loss of responsibility can also lead to the third main disadvantage, which is a loss of educational and skills opportunities (ibid.). Many female migrants will return to restrictive education, social, and career opportunities. The return home ends opportunities for women to work in other countries learning new cultural and social practices. Women may be returning to cultural practices that limit their exposure to education, resulting in an end to a "brain gain" they have been privileged to be a part of in their migrant country.

When the male head of household returns home, there can be an extreme restricting of women's freedom (ibid.). Women, who have been running the household and working the fields while the men were away, now often find their rights and land taken away from them. This has led to domestic violence issues as women have tried to claim the land they had been working on in the men's absence. In many cases, women lose all rights and decision-making responsibilities regarding the land once the male head of household returns.

While men may have been exposed to a more global view of women's rights, some returning male migrants are reluctant to expose women and girls to Western values (ibid.). They fear this would undermine cultural traditions. In fact, some men become more socially and religiously conservative due to their disgust with Western ways that they experienced during their migration. Women who try to challenge such conservative views may risk losing both

their land and their children if they chose to attempt to divorce their restricting, oppressive, and possibly violent former migrant husbands.

f. Brain gain

Another advantage of returning migrant women to their traditional homes is the new knowledge they may bring with them (ibid.). A "brain gain" returns those women who have gained new skills and education while working in an urban or more viable rural area. Many women have gained knowledge on health, contraception, and work skills from other women or programs available through their workplace. Women who have journeyed to the cities or abroad have a broader global view of human and legal rights, politics and democracy, and a better understanding of the world outside their village.

As with returning women, men who return from urban areas or international employment bring back new ideas and better understand policy and rights, including potential exposure to a greater range of rights for women (ibid.). The return of

TABLE 1: RESULTS FROM THE OCTOBER 2020 LABOR FORCE SURVEY (LFS).

Philippines	October 2020^p	July 2020^r	April 2020^f	October 2019^r
Population 15 years old and over (in 000)	74,307	74,061	73,722	72,603
Labor Force Participation Rate (%)	58.7	61.9	55.7	61.4
Employment Rate (%)	91.3	90.0	82.4	95.4
Underemployment Rate (%)	14.4	17.3	18.9	12.8
Unemployment Rate (%)	8.7	10.0	17.6	4.6

Notes:

p - Estimates are preliminary and may change

r - Revised estimates based on 2015 POPCEN-
Based population projection

F - Final

skilled and educated laborers provides a better workforce at home. They return with a broader range of goods, ideas, and services and increased economic connections. These diasporas can also help stimulate political reforms that improve conditions in home countries.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) notes that the new and different experiences they enjoy could redirect and redefine roles and relations between migrant men and women and impact their family lives (ibid.). Returning home strengthens the family bond and provides help in caring for children and elderly parents.

g. Stigmatization as virus spreaders

Migrants may also face stigmatization as virus importers as locales to which these workers return to face increased health vulnerabilities with more potentially infected people arriving (Friborg, 2020). During crises like COVID-19, undocumented immigrants understandably steer clear of hospitals to avoid identification and reporting. However, if they contract the virus, they often present late with more advanced, more deadly infections (ibid.). This movement to rural areas quickly spread the coronavirus into various towns and villages due to the absence or lack of tracking, testing, and implementing quarantine regulations (Aldrich et al. 2020). In India, rural returnees infect their elderly parents and family members who stayed behind in villages and often performed essential care duties (e.g., raising grandchildren), hold crucial local knowledge, manage rural assets, and

govern local natural resources. Notably, the under-resourced, fragmentary health systems that prevail in most rural villages in low-income countries are not adequately equipped to treat COVID-19 patients or to contain the disease. There is a serious risk that these areas could become endemic, undetected sites of infection

h. The economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in the Philippines

The COVID-19 pandemic led to massive disruption in the Filipino labor force, causing widespread unemployment, underemployment, decrease in the labor force participation rate (LFPR) in the regions and among women.

According to the October 2020 Labor Force Survey (PSA, 2020), the country's unemployment rate in October 2020 was estimated at 8.7 percent. This is equivalent to 3.8 million unemployed Filipinos who are 15 years old and over. Meanwhile, the country's underemployment rate was at 14.4 percent. On the other hand, the LFPR was 58.7 percent, or 43.6 million Filipinos reported as either employed or unemployed. All regions reported a decrease in LFPR from July to October this year. LFPR was lower among women at 45.0 percent, compared to men at 72.3 percent. Employment rates for men and women were reported at 91.3 percent and 91.1 percent, respectively. However, the underemployment rate was higher in men (15.9%) than in women (12.0 percent).

In the same survey (PSA, 2020), the Services sector was the dominant industry with about 57.2 percent share, followed by the Agriculture

sector with about 24.5 percent share. In terms of year-on-year employment growth rate among the sub-sectors, arts, entertainment, and recreation had the highest decline at 38.2 percent, followed by accommodation and food service activities at 33.2 percent. On the other hand, water supply, sewerage, waste management, and remediation activities had the highest year-on-year employment growth rate (23.2%), followed by fishing and aquaculture (5.4%) and education (5.2%).

THE BALIK PROBINSYA BAGONG PAG-ASA PROGRAM

On May 6 2020, President Rodrigo Duterte signed Executive Order No. 114, s. 2020 (2020) institutionalizing the “Balik Probinsya, Bagong Pag-Asa” (BP2) program as a pillar for balanced regional development. BP2 has identified key areas to achieve its goal of a balanced urban and rural development. These include empowerment of local industries, food security and agricultural productivity, social welfare, health and employment, and infrastructure development.

Balik Probinsya, Bagong Pag-Asa has three phases of intervention, namely short-, medium-, and long-term. The short-term intervention provides beneficiaries transport, cash assistance of Php15,000, and livelihood opportunities. All government programs, activities, or projects with funding will be adapted for the program. The medium-term intervention involves projects or programs for implementation after the

lockdown and lifting of travel restrictions. This includes establishing new special economic zones in Visayas and Mindanao, among others. The long-term plan includes the passing of laws deemed essential for rural development.

Previous administrations have adopted the regional development perspective in national development planning. The idea of encouraging people to settle in the provinces has been one of the strategies explored to decongest the growing metropolises such as the National Capital Region (NCR).

NCR also serves as the gateway to the Philippines, with international airports and seaports located in the region. Thus, a public health crisis such as the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic puts the NCR in a more vulnerable situation than other regions in the country. As of January 16 2021, 43% of all confirmed COVID-19 cases were from the NCR.

The government’s BP2 Program is open not only to people in Metro Manila wanting to return to their home provinces but also to people such as informal settlers who would wish to go to other provinces for job opportunities to decongest the capital. Under the Program, other locations like Bataan and Palayan City in Nueva Ecija offer thousands of new jobs to aspiring applicants. The National Housing Authority offered a 24-month rental subsidy to future employees with no homes upon their relocation to the partner locations. Most of the applicants were from typhoon-stricken places

such as Samar, Bohol, Leyte, and Negros; and provinces in Bukidnon, Lanao del Sur, and Lanao del Norte afflicted with insurgency issues.

THE BALIK PROBINSYA, BAGONG PAG-ASA PROGRAM IN LEYTE

According to BP2's website, 112 returnees originally from Leyte's province were allowed to return under the Program. They returned to the towns of Kananga, Matag-ob, Alangalang, Tanauan, Hilongos, Bato, Burauen, Dagami, Julita, Tabobtabon, Palo, Tolosa, Isabel, Palompon, Tabango, Villaba, Abuyog, Javier, MacArthur, Calubian, San Isidro, Albueria, Merida, Tunga, Dulag, Mayorga, Carigara, Jaro, Babatngon, Barugo, Capoocan, and Matalom, and Baybay City. Leyte Governor Dominic Petilla said that most of them lost their jobs due to the Luzon-wide lockdown. The provincial and local government units accepted their return since they would be better off in their respective hometowns to receive food assistance and cash aid under the Social Amelioration Program (SAP).

As returnees in need of employment, they were expected to participate in the province's agricultural industry and the continuing Build, Build, Build Program of the national government as local construction workers. However, there was no guarantee that the local government units could provide livelihood assistance to returning individuals as most of the locals were also unemployed.

Some beneficiaries received eight sacks of rice and weighing scales from the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) to help the BP2

recipients start their own rice retailing business (Meniano, 2020). Meanwhile, the Department of Trade and Industry said it would offer livelihood kits with a seed capital of between P5,000 and P15,000 for participants in the Balik Probinsya program to help them start small neighborhood stores and other businesses after they left the cities (Ibañez, 2020).

The Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) listed BP2 beneficiaries as top priority recipients of technical and vocational scholarship programs. The beneficiaries have to express their interest in cookery, dressmaking, animal production, auto repair, electronics, and air conditioning to help them in their employment and livelihood pursuits in the province.

The national government's program of sending people back to their hometown came under fire for being suspected of spreading COVID-19 in the provinces (Salamanca, 2020). Jaro, Tolosa, Tanauan, Baybay City, and Ormoc City, among others, listed the first cases of their existing cases surged due to the arrival of the locally-stranded individuals (LSIs) and BP2 recipients in their respective hometowns (Bonifacio, 2020).

The poorly implemented BP2 is criticized for its lack of foresight in the implications of sending people back to their home provinces, the latter being ill-equipped to handle returning individuals in terms of medical facilities such as ICU beds, isolation beds, ward beds, and medical ventilators, doctors and frontline personnel for handling COVID patients as well as testing

centers and quarantine facilities for accepting returning residents which are mostly concentrated in NCR. Critics slam the government for its ill-conceived COVID response. The less able rural areas bear the brunt of the lack of a cohesive response plan that addresses the country's gross socioeconomic and healthcare incapacity.

According to these critics, the government failed to maximize the three months of lockdown to start the mass testing, tracing all positive cases' contacts, and isolation and quarantine needed to contain the virus's spread. It also did not increase the health system's capacity to treat all COVID-19 cases.

Earlier in its implementation, LGUs also complained of the national government's lack of coordination in sending the BP2 recipients back to their hometowns. Before traveling back to their respective hometowns and provinces, the BP2 recipients were not swabbed, under

the assumption that they quarantined as part of NCR's enhanced community quarantine (ECQ). The guidelines stated that the local government where the LSI has been residing must ensure that they have undergone 14 days of quarantine and are not a confirmed, suspected, or probable COVID-19 case or contact of one before they are allowed to depart for their home province.

Upon their arrival last May 22, they were immediately placed in isolation facilities in their respective areas for a 14-day quarantine. Swab samples for COVID-19 positivity tests were also taken from them as part of protocols to avoid the coronavirus disease spread (Gabieta, 2020).

RESEARCH DESIGN

This chapter presents the research design, the research locale and the respondents, research instruments and procedure, and data analysis.

This research is a phenomenological study on the lived experiences of returning migrant workers who lost their jobs or livelihood in Metro Manila due to the community lockdowns and quarantines to control the spread of COVID-19.

A phenomenological study attempts to understand the study participants' lived experiences in the phenomenon studied (Finlay, 2009; Giorgi, 2008; Reid, Flowers, & Larkin, 2005; Starks & Trinidad, 2007). It uses rich descriptive interviews and in-depth study of lived experiences (Finlay, 2009; Giorgi, 2008; Reid, Flowers, & Larkin, 2005; Starks & Trinidad, 2007). In phenomenology, the study begins with "concrete descriptions of lived experiences, in the first person, void of intellectual generalizations" (Finlay, 2009, p. 10), followed by analyzes of the data and presentation of a summary account of the phenomenon's themes (Finlay, 2009).

Phenomenology results in a rich and detailed interpretation of the lived experiences by reflecting on views of values that may be otherwise dismissed as common knowledge (Finlay, 2009; Giorgi, 2008; Reid, Flowers, & Larkin, 2005; Starks & Trinidad, 2007).

Specifically, this study is descriptive phenomenological research guided by the methods designed by Edmund Husserl in the 1930s. In descriptive phenomenology, researchers look for the general meaning of the phenomena by staying close to the richness of the data collected and restrict themselves from making assertions (Finlay, 2009).

03

Methodology

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions guided the study by focusing the data collection and analysis on answering the following questions:

1. How has reverse migration affected the household (in the community of origin) vulnerability and adaptive capacities to slow-onset climate change impacts?
2. How has reverse migration affected household (in the community of origin) income (including remittance), livelihoods, and consumption patterns?
3. How has reverse migration affected other household members' migration aspirations?

RESEARCH SITE AND RESPONDENTS

The research respondents were composed of returning migrant workers and their fellow household members. These returning migrant workers (RMWs) used to be employed in Metro Manila, due to the COVID-19 pandemic that first hit the metropolis. They were either terminated or furloughed. They were forced to return to Leyte due to the extenuating circumstances brought about by the pandemic's community quarantines and economic fallout. The RMW respondents held various kinds of jobs and came from different socio-economic and educational backgrounds. They were selected through purposive sampling techniques. The household members are immediate family members, spouse, or extended relative of the RMW who live in the same household and the RMW.

The return migrant workers and their household members are selected from one city and two municipalities in Leyte. Four RMW and four members of their households are residents of Tacloban City. Another set of the same number of RMW and their household members comes from Dulag and Mayorga.

RESEARCH METHODS

The study used a researcher-developed interview questionnaire written in English. They were translated to Waray during the interview.

The researcher identified keywords taken from the research questions of the study. From the keywords, the researcher wrote as many open-ended questions related to those keywords. Then the questions were sorted according to their inter-relatedness guided by the keywords selected. After which the questions were examined, similar questions were merged, and vague ones were deleted. The interview questionnaires were piloted on three individuals for a dry-run. The result of the trial interview formed the basis for the review of the questionnaire. The researcher edited the research instrument based on the dry-run and trial interviews.

The general research methodology and procedure used in the study are outlined hereunder:

STAGE 1: ONE-ON-ONE INTERVIEW

1. Interviewed the participant—recording the conversation
2. Asked the participants to fill out demographic profile after the interview
3. Transcribed the interview
4. Conducted data analysis of the interview using Colaizzi's method
5. Created phenomenological explication of the participants' experiences

The first stage of data gathering was an in-depth interview of identified participants for the study. They were the Returned Migrant Workers (RMWs), and the second group was the Household Members of the Returned Migrant Workers (HHMs of RMWs). The researcher selected RMWs and HHM of RMW who could articulate their experiences of the phenomenon being investigated through purposive sampling.

STAGE 2: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

1. Conducted focus group discussion
2. Transcribed FGD proceeding
3. Coded of the FDG responses
4. Analyzed FDG output using Colaizzi's Method
5. Wrote the FDG findings

The focus group discussion was another in-depth interview involving half of the previous set of respondents. The FGD aims to clarify and validate units of meaning and themes of their experiences that emerged from the first round of interviews.

STAGE 3: KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW

1. Orientation on the study
2. Arranged for an online interview via Zoom
3. Transcribed interview

After the focus group discussion, the researcher selected three personalities who have expertise and or involvement in the Balik Probinsya Bagong Pag-Asa Program. The KII informants are composed of personnel from Provincial Government, a sociology professor from the national university, and the Department of Labor and Employment. The researcher formulated questions based on themes that emerged from

TABLE 2. PARTICIPANTS AND TIME FRAME PER STAGE

Participants	Time Frame
12 Returned Migrant Workers 12 Household Members of returned Migrant Workers	2 weeks - 1 week for interview, 1 week for transcription and analysis
6 FGD Participants	1 week - transcription and analysis
3 Key Informant Interview	45 minutes to 60 minutes 4 days transcription

the Interviews and Focus Group Discussion.

The purpose of the Key Informant Interview is to provide additional information on the issue. They can also offer insights on the emerging themes that is revealed from the interviews.

Table 2 shows the time frame spent for each stage of data gathering. There were separate sets of procedures of analysis for the interview transcript and the focus group discussion. For both sets of data, Colaizzi's method was used to analyze content. Interviews were transcribed verbatim from the audiotapes. The Key Informant Interview served to additional input on the subject.

Below is the flow chart to summarize the procedure of data analysis for the Interview and Focus Group Discussion

SAMPLING

Purposive sampling was used in the recruitment of returned migrant workers as participants for this study. Purposive sampling is commonly used in qualitative research. It involves selecting research participants according to the study's needs (Tesch 1990; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Morse, 1994). Researchers choose participants who have undergone the experience they are investigating. It provides informants who give a richness of information suitable for detailed research (Patton, 1980). The researcher specifically selected study participants who could articulate their experiences of the phenomenon being investigated.

DATA COLLECTION

Tesch (1990) posits that the appropriate number of participants in a phenomenological study depends on the phenomenon investigated. She suggests that between 10 and 15 participants are usual. Still, she mentions as few as six and as many as 25 participants have been used in phenomenological studies.

The instrument of the research is a researcher-designed interview schedule duly validated by experts. The interviews were taped and transcribed. After the interview, the participants were asked to fill out a respondent's profile to record their demographic information.

The collection of data was in the form of audiotaped in-depth interviews. Consent was obtained from the interviewee to glean a description of the research participants' lived. A follow-up contact enabled clarification and validation. The researcher used a non-directive style of questioning (Kozier, Erb, Blais & Wilkinson, 1995; Porritt, 1990), which became more directive as appropriate.

A non-directive style of interviewing involved the researcher using open-ended questions that allowed participants freedom to control the pacing and subject matter of the interview. Participants were encouraged to express their feelings. A more directive questioning style was used during the interviews whenever the researcher required clarification regarding the participants' information. This involved using a more closed and structured questioning style that elicited specific information from the participants.

For ethical reasons, the study's purpose was explained to participants, and they were encouraged to ask questions or seek clarification. Participants were told of the voluntary nature of their participation and that they could withdraw at any time. They were advised that they could decline to answer any question during the interview or request that the tape recorder be turned off or terminate the interview altogether. Consent was obtained from the participants to tape the interviews.

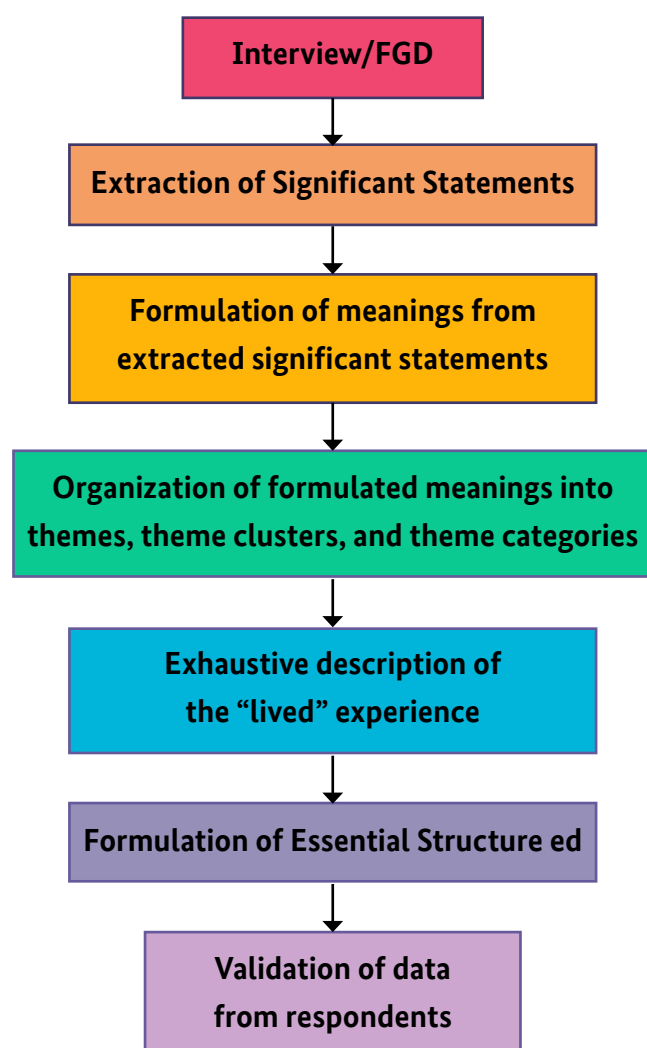


FIGURE 2. SUMMARY OF DATA ANALYSIS

TREATMENT OF DATA

The respondents' interview consists of the primary data. The interviews were taped and transcribed. The transcribed interview, called the protocol, was analyzed using Colaizzi's Seven Steps Method to reveal the themes in the respondents' narratives. Following the Colaizzi method, the significant statements from the respondent's answers to the questions were extracted, and meanings were formulated from their conversational statements. These formulated meanings were then organized into themes, and themes that belong together were then grouped into clusters.

The themes that emerged were ranked to reveal the dominance of each theme. Returning to the organized significant statements from the transcribed interview, the researcher tallied how many times the themes were mentioned in the conversation, then calculated the average number they were mentioned to reveal the dominant theme.

The dominant themes that emerged under each category are identified and highlighted. Under the dominant themes are the subthemes that are of utmost significance and relevance in expressing their lived experiences as returning migrant workers and receiving household members of returning migrant workers.

The discussion of the themes that emerged from the study will address the dominant themes first, followed by the less dominant and then the least dominant. Each theme is composed of subthemes, which will be discussed to provide the phenomenon a broader treatment.

Regardless of the stratification given to each theme, it is crucial to understand that these themes merge in more ways than one despite the categories. Moreover, each respondent brings with him/her conditions that are unique to him/herself. Thus, reactions and reflections vary as much as the lines on the palms of our hands.



04 Results

The following section presents the study findings. The section is divided into two sections. The first section displays the basic demographic information of the respondents. The last section answers the three research questions. The themes gathered from reviewing the transcripts are interwoven throughout the findings to provide richer detail and validation. All the responses are direct quotes from the participant's perspective.

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

There was a total of 24 participants in this study. Twelve returned migrant workers (RMWs) and twelve members of their respective households participated in the face-to-face open-ended interviews. The first eight questions of the interview guide captured basic demographic information from each participant.

The 12 RMWs ages range from 19 to 51 with a mean age of 30; nine are males and three females. The majority of the RMW is single (5), only two reported themselves married, four are

TABLE 3. DEMOGRAPHICS OF 12 RETURNED MIGRANT WORKERS

AGE	
15 – 27	6
28 – 40	3
41- 53	3
54 – 66	0
GENDER	
Male	9
Female	3
RESIDENCY	
Tacloban	4
Dulag	4
Mayorga	4

Table continued on the next page >>

CIVIL STATUS	
Single	5
Married	2
Domestic Partnership	4
Separated	0
Divorced	0
EDUCATION	
Some Elementary Grades	1
Elementary Diploma	1
Some High School	3
High School Diploma	1
Some College	1
College Degree	3
Vocational Education Certificate	2
Post Graduate	0
YEAR MIGRATED TO MANILA	
2011 – 2013	1
2014 – 2016	1
2017 – 2018	2
2019 – 2020	8
JOBS HELD IN MANILA	
Farm Manager	1
Hotel Employee	1
Part-Time Teacher	1
Grocery Store Personnel	1
Sound Technician	1
Construction Work	2
Security Guard	1
Delivery Crew	1
Farm Hand	2
Vendor	1
MONTH RETURNED TO LEYTE	
January to March 2020	1
April to June 2020	1
July to September 2020	5
October to December 2020	5

living in with their common-law spouse. All 12 RMWs come from a very diverse educational background. Four participants are Tacloban City residents, another four from Dulag, and the remaining four from Mayorga. Eight of the twelve have migrated to Manila very recently within the last two years. Only three out of the 12 RMWs held a skilled position; the rest held low-skilled to non-skilled jobs. Ten out of the 12 returned to Leyte only in the second half of the year 2020.

The 12 household members (HHM) of the RMWs 20 to 56 mean age of 35, out of which 11 are females and one male. Five of the HHM participants (5) are legal and or common-law spouses of the RMWs, five are immediate family members, and only two are extended family members. In terms of their civil status, five of the HHM are Domestic Partners of the RMWs, four are married to the RMWs, while three are

TABLE 4. DEMOGRAPHICS OF 12 HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS OF THE RETURNED MIGRANT WORKERS

AGE	
15 – 27	4
28 – 40	4
41- 53	3
54 – 66	1
GENDER	
Male	1
Female	11
RESIDENCY	
Tacloban	4
Dulag	4
Mayorga	4

Table continued on the next page >>

RELATIONSHIP TO RETURNED MIGRANT WORKER	
Immediate Biological Family Member	5
Sibling	2
Mother	3
Spouse	5
Extended Family Member Living in the same house	2
Cousin	1
In-Laws	1
CIVIL STATUS	
Single	3
Married	4
Domestic Partnership	5
Separated	0
Divorced	0
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT	
Some Elementary Grades	0
Elementary Diploma	3
Some High School	3
High School Diploma	1
Some College	1
College Degree	3
Vocational Education Certificate	1
Post Graduate	0
CURRENT OCCUPATIONAL ENGAGEMENT	
Seeking for Opportunities	1
Employed Full Time	3
Employed Part Time	2
BHW-1	
Self Employed	4
Sells longanisa/tocino	1
Raises pigs to sell	1
Cooks ulam/gulay to sell	2
Sells fish	1
Full Time Homemaker	1
Student	1

single. All of the HHM respondents come from a very diverse educational background. Four participants are Tacloban City residents, another four from Dulag, and the remaining four from Mayorga. Out of the 12, only three are employed full time. Four are self-employed, such as selling/ vending food items and raising piglets within their backyard; the rest are divided equally as homemakers and students job-hunting.

EMERGING THEMES

The interviews were taped and transcribed. The transcribed interview, called the protocol, was analyzed using Colaizzi's Seven Steps Method to reveal the themes in the respondents' narratives. Following the Colaizzi method, the significant statements from the respondent's answers to the questions were extracted, and meanings were formulated from their conversational statements. These formulated meanings were then organized into themes, and themes that belong together were then grouped into clusters. The themes that emerged were ranked to reveal the dominance of each theme. Returning to the organized significant statements from the transcribed interview, the researcher tallied how many times the themes were mentioned in the conversation, then calculated the average number they were mentioned to reveal the dominant theme.

The dominant themes that emerged is presented below. Under the dominant themes are the subthemes of utmost significance and relevance in expressing their lived experiences as returning migrant workers and receiving household

members of returning migrant workers. The discussion will address the dominant themes first, followed by the less dominant and then the least dominant. Each theme is composed of subthemes, which provide the phenomenon a broader treatment. The themes are presented per research site to show the difference in the responses of each research site.

Regardless of the stratification given to each theme, it is crucial to understand that these themes merge in more ways than one despite the categories. Moreover, each respondent brings with him/her conditions that are unique to him/herself. Thus, reactions and reflections vary as much as the lines on the palms of our hands.

DOMINANT THEMES FROM RETURNED MIGRANT WORKERS

The result of the themes that emerged from each area, were ranked to arrive at the final dominant themes and their respective subthemes for the entire study. Below is the final listing of dominant themes and their subthemes of the study.

1. CURRENT SITUATION AS RMW

The current situation of the returned migrant worker is the dominant theme that emerged across three research sites. All the RMWs respondents talked about the difficulties they are currently experiencing. These difficulties include the loss of a source of income that came with their job in Manila. When the RMWs returned to Leyte, they also lost their jobs. Some were already jobless before they

decided to come home because their employers ceased operations. One RMW reported being kicked out of their job, and still another one reported being abandoned by their employer. In Tacloban, Mayorga, and Dulag, all the RMWs share the difficulty of finding new jobs. Out of the 12 respondents, only one RMW landed a job as a receptionist in a hotel in Tacloban. The remaining 11 are looking for new opportunities. In the meantime, these 11 RMW employ various coping strategies to survive or at least contribute to the household income. Some are engaged in subsistence farming, subsistence fishing, gardening for food, vending or selling food, and various day jobs as a farmhand, kargador (porter). Along with the forms of livelihoods that occupy the RMWs in the study group, one thing is common, instability as a source of income. They are one problem, one accident, one disease, or one disaster away from hunger.

Just fishing. These days it's difficult to fish because of big waves. It's hard to fish at night. If I can't go fishing, then I'm unemployed.

– Dulag RMW, Male, 20 years old

Trying to do my best and looking for some odd jobs. My cousins are going around selling fruits, so I just join them to earn extra. There is some work here in Rizal like planting and weeding out some grasses.

– Tacloban RMW, Male, 20 years old

[I'm just] trying to save. We're trying to make ends meet. We try to save money at every turn.

– Mayorga RMW, Male, 27 years old

2. CELLPHONE AND INTERNET SIGNAL

The second dominant theme in the entire body of data is the quality of cellphone and internet signals. In the three research sites, this is a dominant theme in Mayorga and Dulag, but this theme did not emerge as the second dominant theme in Tacloban. Cellphone and internet signal within Tacloban City, even in the Northern barangays, is not a problem. A poor and erratic cellphone signal remains a pressing problem for municipalities outside Tacloban.

RMWs respondents from Mayorga and Dulag spoke about how unreliable the cellphone signal. One RMW who sells food for a living spoke of how customer sends a text to place an order of puto/panicit/gulay. They would not be able to reply because they receive the texts several hours later. Often, they are caught unaware when a customer would come to their house to personally get their order, tired of waiting for their reply. The poor internet signal is also a problem for the RMWs and their household members because their children cannot access learning platforms linked to their online and modular learning.

Just to contact my relatives and for online classes... It is another thing to add to the budget. But it's okay because it's for my safety.

– Tacloban RMW, Male, 27 years old

The signal is slow when I am inside the house. It can be a problem for example when someone texts an order, sometimes we are not able to receive it. Later we learn somebody sent a message saying, "We have

an order for you." Then, we will tell them that we did not receive that message. That is the effect of not having a good signal.

– Mayorga RMW, Male, 47 years old

I'm not sure and there had been plans to put up a new cell site. I'm not sure if it's true though. They say it's for the students so they'll have a good signal.

– Dulag RMW, Female, 31 years old

3. CURRENT CONSUMPTION OF BASIC NEEDS

The third dominant theme is the consumption of RMWs and their households. The subthemes in this cluster included the type of basic needs they prioritize, the prices, their access to their basic needs, and the quality. This theme is the third dominant theme for Dulag and Mayorga but not in Tacloban, whose third dominant theme is Reasons for Migration.

Food is the priority expense for the RMWs and their households in all three research sites. Prices for basic food items have increased, according to them. The RMWs and their household members have given up buying unnecessary items for now, such as clothes, children's toys, and cellphone load. Some RMWs and their households are cutting down expenses by gathering firewood instead of buying gas tank for cooking. Some are doing backyard gardening and subsistence farming to provide food on the table. One household stopped paying debts from their local microloan company.

Yes, sometimes we cannot even give the needs of my child especially when s/he asks for new clothes or shoes. We can't buy those. Food, we can give that.

– Mayorga RMW, Male, 47 years old

Almost everything is (more) expensive now. Considering that there's a pandemic and things should be cheap but (everything) is more expensive.

– Tacloban RMW, Female, 30 years old

Maybe, it's 50 pesos per bundle of firewood. We don't have gas because it's expensive.

– Dulag RMW, Male, 20 years old

4. MIGRATION TO MANILA

The majority of RMWs went to Manila because there are more job opportunities. The income they earned in Manila was far better than what they would earn in Leyte. Only 2 respondents went to Manila for other reasons: the first wanted to review for a licensure examination, while another wanted to be closer to her partner.

Out of the 12 RMWs, nine held semi-skilled to non-skilled jobs. All 12 respondents shared that they endured the way of life in Manila because of the pay. One respondent raised issues of not getting the right benefits from their employer because they were registered as self-employed. When the lockdown was implemented in Manila, their situation went from bad to worse. Some employers couldn't provide the appropriate employment papers for the RMWs. One respondent said their employer abandoned them,

and another said that their employer kicked them out. Most lost their jobs because their employer could no longer sustain the business.

I was a farm manager. There was no separation pay because it was not really that big of a company or farm. Yes, there were benefits. We receive our salary intact and then we'll be the ones to pay our contributions like to the Philhealth and SSS. It kind of makes us self-employed because we are given all our salary.

– Dulag RMW, Female, 31 years old

Yes, that is to support my children and hopefully let them finish their studies. That is my purpose. Yes, if we are not struggling that much, I will not want to be far from my family.

– Mayorga RMW, Male, 43 years old

When I arrived there, it felt like hell. I did not have a day off. Working for several hours. And if I was five minutes late, your attention will be called regardless of who your supervisor is. Also, you are not allowed to be absent even when you're sick. You need to go to the clinic first. Then, they will decide if you're still fit to work or not.

– Tacloban RMW, Female, 30 years old

5. LEAVING MANILA/ RETURNING TO LEYTE

The RMWs were gripped by fear of the pandemic in Manila. Jobless and penniless, they worried about their situation. They had nobody to turn to. In the same vein, families in Tacloban, Dulag, and Mayorga were also anxious about their kin in Manila. Except for one RMW who

could avail of the Balik Probinsiya program, 11 RMWs relied on the money sent by their families to pay for their way home. According to the family members, they borrowed money, broke open their piggy banks, and sold hogs to send money to the RMWs in Manila.

All of the RMWs expressed relief that they are back home because they also worried about their families in the province. One even admitted he had plans of walking home. However, they also feel frustrated and unhappy about the absence of a job and income. They feel helpless in the situation. None of the RMWs received any compensation from their employers. Some reported that their employers still owe them for unpaid wages. However, nobody mentioned pursuing or collecting their unpaid wages.

Only one RMW was able to apply to the Balik Probinsiya Bagong Pag-Asa Program (BP2). He returned to Leyte through the BP2 assistance and received a livelihood starter package of 8 sacks of rice from DOLE, which he used to start his rice retailing business.

Of course, I still miss the job there. But I can't be there anymore. The cost of living especially that I was just a part-time teacher there.

– Tacloban RMW, Female, 28 years old

I asked my mother to send me money for the fare so I'll be able to go home. It was more than eight thousand (8,000). Then, the needed papers include a certification from the barangay, a medical certificate, an ID, and Travel Authority.

– Dulag RMW, Male, 19 years old

Yes, I am kind of happy. My family is with me even if we don't have money. It's okay.

– Mayorga RMW, Male, 43 years old

6. COMMUNITY RULES AND REGULATIONS RELATED TO LOCKDOWN

The RMWs exercise the usual protocol mandated and enforced by local government units and barangay executives at the village level. They all wear masks, face shields and observe hand sanitation, especially when going out to public places. In general, all the RMW's comply with the barangay rules

One RMW participates actively with barangay activities. He volunteers to handle the sound system during barangay assembly. The rest of the RMWs are not participative in barangay activities, even before the pandemic. Most replied that they are too busy making ends meet to be bothered by a barangay assembly. But in general, they recognize the benefits that the barangay executives perform, especially during the pandemic.

The RMWs mentioned some issues that they felt the barangay officials should attend to. These are lack of reliable and stable supply of water, garbage collection, young people who roam around the barangays to hang out or play, and monitoring drunkenness in the villages, which disturbs the peace and order of the barangay.

Several people are having complaints about the garbage. They do not have garbage cans. Some houses do not even have running water. They have faucets but no water.

– Mayorga RMW, Male, 27 years old



© Jon alvin Merin | Unsplash

Yes, wearing masks and using alcohol when going out. I always wear a mask when I need to go somewhere. It's prohibited to go out and not wear a mask. If a tanod sees not wearing one, you will be apprehended.

– Dulag RMW, Male, 20 years old

We hear these announcements because of the health workers' monitoring. Social distancing, use of face mask, and sanitizing are strictly implemented.

– Tacloban RMW, Male, 27 years old

7. FUTURE PLANS

Out of the 12 RMWs, only two expressed the desire to go back to Manila to work once this pandemic is over. The lone BP2 assistance recipient said that he would only leave if it's an opportunity to work abroad instead of in Manila.

The remaining nine RMWs expressed that they would prefer to stay if they can find a way to get a job or start a form of livelihood that can provide them a stable income for the family. Since some of them are already engaged in some form of food business, they said that a capital infusion would help them stay for good in the province. The construction workers, welders, and laborers said that more job opportunities in the province, with a better rate, will keep them from leaving and working in Manila.

I will just look for a job here, maybe a business but I need capital for a sari-sari store.

– Tacloban RMW, Female, 30 years old

I will apply and go back to working abroad if it will be allowed.

– Mayorga RMW, Male, 47 years old

Not anymore. I plan to take up some supplemental studies. I plan to work as an assistant where I'll be studying or whatever it is I can apply for there even if it's working Monday to Friday to Saturday to Sunday, just to have income.

– Dulag RMW, Female, 31 years old

8. ACCESSING HEALTH SERVICES AND POLICE ASSISTANCE

In all three sites, the RMWs explained that access to a medical service requires coordination with the Barangay Health Worker (BHW) council. The BHW creates the referral to the Rural Health Unit or RHU for Dulag and Mayorga. Those living in Tacloban City will need the referral to enter any hospital in the city for a medical check-up.

In case of an emergency, the BHW coordinates with the municipal office for a vehicle to bring the patient to the RHU or bigger hospital in Tacloban City. Any admission to the big hospitals in Tacloban City requires a referral from the municipal health doctor.

You need to go see a barangay official. If there's a need, like there was an accident, the barangay officials are the ones who will contact people in the municipal office to get the ambulance.

– Dulag RMW, Male, 20 years old

They ask for the health pass and the QR code. If it is a mild case, you can just go to the Center. If it's serious, the ambulance can come and pick you up.

– Mayorga RMW, Male, 51 years old

Before you go to the hospital, you need to go to the barangay hall first. If you go to the EVRMC right away, then you will not be entertained. You need to have a consultation first. You also need to bring a health pass.

– Tacloban RMW, Male 20 years old

The RMWs explained that the barangay tanod (village public safety officer) and the barangay officials coordinate with the police if a citizen needs assistance. If a person needs police assistance, they must report to the barangay and lodge their request for police assistance. Barangay tanods patrol the vicinity and is the first point person in the process to request police assistance. The tanod then makes the call to the police.

In Tacloban City, one RMW said that there is a SafeCityApp that she has downloaded on her smartphone. The city administration launched the app in Tacloban City to increase the public's access to police assistance.

9. RELIEF GOODS RECEIVED

Most of the RMWs and their households received a relief pack from the government. In the Tacloban group of RMWs, only one RMW did not receive a relief pack from the government. In Mayorga and Dulag, all the RMWs households received a relief pack from the government. The relief pack from the barangay consists of 5 kilos of rice, noodles, and canned goods—the municipal relief consists of 10 kilos of rice and a chicken for food.

As for the government's SAP cash assistance, only one RMW received the Php6,000.00 assistance for the 1st tranche. She did not receive a second tranche.

When were still there (Manila), we received some from the DSWD. These were one sack of rice, a tranche from the SAP which was 6,000. Then, nothing after that.

– **Dulag RMW, Female, 31 years old**

We got rice, vitamins, and chicken.

– **Tacloban RMW, Male, 20 years old**

The barangay captain gave some. But just once. It was 10 kilos. Just rice. Some were from the municipal office.

– **Mayorga RMW, Male, 43 years old**

already. Maybe after three or, I mean, four days or so, I was called that I was good to go. It was on the 20th of May that I got on the bus and arrived here on the 22nd.

The 8 sacks of rice and a weighing scale from the Balik Probinsiya (and DOLE). By the way, back there in Manila, when we got on the bus, we were given pocket money of Php5,000.

– **Mayorga RMW, Male, 47 years old**

10. BALIK PROBINSIYA

Out of the 12 RMWs, only one able to apply and became a beneficiary of the Balik Probinsiya Bagong Pag-Asa Program (BP2). The BP2 program assisted him in returning to Leyte. The remaining 11 RMWs were not able to apply for the BP2. Some were unaware of the process. One RMW applied to this program, but he could no longer wait and decided to push ahead. He was already traveling home when the Balik Probinsiya office called him regarding his application.

I was able to know about it (BP2) and so I readily applied online. So that's what happened. After three days, I received a call and was interviewed if I was really interested. I was so eager and interested because I did not have a job and (Manila) was in lockdown

The results of the research are analyzed and organized below, based on the research questions.

HOW HAS REVERSE MIGRATION AFFECTED THE HOUSEHOLD (IN THE COMMUNITY OF ORIGIN) VULNERABILITY AND ADAPTIVE CAPACITY TO SLOW-ONSET CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS?

The first research question explored the effect of reverse-migration the household (in the community of origin) vulnerability and adaptive capacities to slow-onset climate change impacts. The phenomenon of returning migrant workers rendered these migrant workers, their families, and their communities more vulnerable. It has reduced any existing ability towards adaptive capacity for slow-onset climate change impacts, if such capacity existed in the community in the first place. The discourse of climate change, and adaptive capacity to slow-onset climate change impacts, is moot and unrealistic in the face of poverty and precarity. Governments and stakeholders must address the subject in conjunction with the food and livelihood security of the community. Impoverished families will prioritize food over the issue of preventing soil erosion and siltation of the reefs. They will cut trees for firewood to cook their food. They will plant and exert more demands on exhausted farmlands. Typhoons and changing weather patterns damage crops, resulting in lost income and thus, deepening poverty. They cannot repair or build a livable house, let alone a typhoon-resistant one that follows prescribed building codes. In situations like this, adaptive capacities are relegated to the sidelines because communities prioritize their food and livelihood needs. Reverse migration has increased the vulnerability of households, including to slow onset climate change impacts. It has also rendered them unable to adapt to prevent the adverse effects of the slow onset of climate change.

05

Interpretation of findings

The conclusion above emanated from the dominant themes that emerged from the responses of the RMWs, namely:

Use of firewood for cooking

We have no problem with firewood, we chop bamboo in the backyard.

– **Mayorga RMW, Male, 51 years old**

Yes we gather firewood, we help my father to look for wood.

– **Dulag RMW, Male, 21 years old.**

Subsistence farming

We try a bit of farming, we plant what we can like okra, lagikway, gaway, cassava, we sell some to buy coffee and sugar.

– **Mayorga RMW, Male, 43 years old**

We have some vegetables to eat with rice, we have a garden at the back. There are plenty of ferns we just pick them up.

– **Mayorga RMW, Male, 51 years old**

No, it never crossed my mind, because we can't really plant a lot of vegetables here because we don't own this land... We'd have salt, or fermented fish with rice, just so we can eat.

– **Mayorga RMW, Male, 43 years old**

We planned to plant some vegetables and sell, but we realise our harvest was just enough for our consumption.

– **Dulag RMW, Female, 31 years old**

Here we make do with what we have, we can get vegetables from the backyard, just so we can eat.

– **Mayorga RMW, Male 27 years old.**

Subsistence fishing

We help carry fishing boats into the beach, they give us fish. Sometimes we go out to fish...

It's hard to go out to fish these days because the sea is rough, the waves are big. We can't fish everyday, so we just hang around.

– **Dulag RMW, Male, 20years old**

We don't buy viand, we just help the boats in exchange for some fish.

– **Dulag RMW, Male, 21 years old**

– **Dulag RMW, Male, 20 years old**

We fish (for food).

– **Dulag RMW, Male, 19 years old**

Inadequate and unsafe water

Here in the housing resettlement, there are taps in place but there is no water supply, it's the same in all the other houses... We buy our drinking water.

– **Mayorga RMW, Male, 27 years old**

They gave us water connection, but the water is turbid.

– **Mayorga RMW, Male, 51 years old**

Garbage collection

The people living in the housing projects are complaining about garbage disposal, there are no garbage bins here. Some houses have no water.

– **Mayorga RMW, Male, 27 years old**

House repair

I can't (don't have the resources to) fix my house, I have this tarpaulin as roof, and I hang used sack for walls.

– **Mayorga RMW, Male, 43 years old**

When the RMWs returned to Leyte, they had to contend with the issue of loss of income. Their families in the provinces lost remittance, which provides poor households with an economic lifeline. Aldrich et al. 2020, opine that a decline in remittance flows could increase poverty and decrease households' access to much-needed health services (Aldrich et al. 2020).

To cope, household members of the RMWs had to cut costs and prioritized food. The first item that all RMW households would buy is rice. Then they plant vegetables in their backyard to supplement rice because they couldn't afford to buy fish or chicken. In Dulag and Mayorga's coastal towns, RMWs would go to the beach and lend a hand to drag a fishing boat to the beach, and they are given a few pieces of fish in return. Some would go out to fish, but only if they could afford diesel for the boat's engine; otherwise, they could only fish closer to the shore with a paddle and only when the sea is calm.

RMWs and their households also saved money by gathering firewood for cooking to save on gas. In actual practice, the gathering is as encompassing as picking up coconut branches and splitting them to smaller sizes for the earthen stove, chopping up some trees in the grasslands, and even cutting some mangroves. Traditionally, mangroves, locally known as miyapi, had been used as firewood. Although municipal ordinances are in place that prohibits the chopping of mangroves for firewood, the implementation of the ordinance is a different story altogether

COVID-19 lockdown measures, which resulted in the loss of jobs and eventual return-migration of these workers, have made starvation an even more acute risk for RMWs and their families. As these migrants are not formally registered or tracked, it is highly unlikely that they will receive any—much less adequate—government or NGO support (Aldrich et al., 2020). In this study, only one out of the 12 RMWs was a beneficiary of the Balik Probinsiya Bagong Pag-Asa (BP2).

Climate change is a silent driver of outmigration. An average of about 20 typhoons every year visit the Philippines. Out of this, five will have the potential to be very destructive. Destructive or not, typhoons almost always damage crops. Additionally, increasing temperature also affect rice yields (Bohra-Mishra et al. 2017). These factors spur many young men from the rural areas of Eastern Visayas to try their luck in urban centers (Germanwatch 2017, UNICEF 2012). These factors cause greater migration from agriculturally dependent provinces with large rural populations (ibid.).

HOW HAS REVERSE MIGRATION AFFECTED HOUSEHOLD INCOME, LIVELIHOODS, AND CONSUMPTION PATTERNS IN THE COMMUNITY OF ORIGIN?

The second research question looked at how reverse migration affected households in the community of origin, in terms of income (including remittances), livelihoods, and

consumption patterns. The research question is analyzed below, using emergent themes from the responses of the RMWs and their household members, and organized by topic as follows.

Consumption of basic needs

Rice is the most important. Sometimes we get rice on credit. My daughter works, she earns a little though, but then she sends every fortnight, about a thousand pesos which we budget for food.

– **Mayorga RMW, Male, 51 years old**

These times we can only afford food, we can't buy clothes for the kids because we prioritize food and vitamins for the children, over material things. We could afford them before, when I had my regular salary.

– **Dulag RMW, Female, 31 years old**

We make do, we just have vegetables like papaya or banana blossoms.

– **Dulag RMW, Male, 20 years old**

ACCESS TO BASIC NEEDS

When the lockdown started there were long lines, so we had to come early to avoid the lines.

– **Tacloban RMW, Female, 28 years old**

Before the lockdown, everything was accessible, it wasn't difficult to go to the market. But now only one member of the household can go out to but for the family.

– **Tacloban RMW, Female, 30 years old**

We buy a sack of rice to save, we have it delivered.

– **Tacloban RMW, Male, 27 years old**

Price of goods

The prices all went up.

– **Mayorga RMW, Male 43 years old**

Before a tank of (liquefied petroleum) gas cost Php700.00, now its Php850.00. Pork used to be Php200.00 per kilo, now its Php270.00.

– **Tacloban RMW, Male, 27 years old**

Nothing is affordable now, the price for almost everything went up. Even spices like onions is expensive. Rice is expensive, sugar, canned goods, everything.

– **Tacloban RMW, Female, 30 years old**

Health care

Before (my pregnant wife) had vitamins, but we can't buy it anymore. We couldn't afford a maternity check-up since we came home to Leyte.

– **Mayorga RMW, Male, 27 years old**

Livelihoods

I consigned to sell rice, so I earn a bit which helps. We augment it by selling cooked vegetables. We have a very small capital, so we have to work hard. We start very early in the morning. My wife also sells rice cakes, banana-cue, and other snacks. I help her.

– **Mayorga RMW, Male, 47 years old**

We just go to the beach to get fish, we help with the fishing boats, then they give us fish.

– **Dulag RMW, Male, 20 years old**

Now there is nothing. I am still thinking where I can get driving jobs, even if it's just pinch hitting.

– **Mayorga RMW, Male, 43 years old**

It's hard because I am just a laborer, and we only have this store to live on.

– **Tacloban RMW, Male, 27 years old**

I lost my job; I have been unemployed for two months.

– **Dulag RMW, Male 20 years old**

Remittances

I have siblings in Manila, and now they are able to return to their jobs. When I am really broke, sometimes I ask them to help me out a bit, they send me a bit of money... We used to have a motorbike which we pay in installments, but since I lost my job I was behind on the payments. Luckily, my father took it and continued the payments.

– **Mayorga RMW, Male, 27 years old**

One of my children would send money, we would buy by three gantang of rice. We buy in bulk.

– **Mayorga RMW, Male, 51 years old**

ON REMITTANCES

Internal migrants to urban areas remit more than migrants to rural areas or children who stay in the same barangay (Quisumbing and McNiven 2010). Internal remittances are sent mainly via money transfer operators. 69% of Filipinos do not have bank accounts, and for adults in the poorest 40% of households, this figure rises to 82%. These remittances significantly impact the receiving households' expenditures, especially in clothing, footwear, and education. Households receiving remittances also can accumulate consumer durables and



non-land assets (Quisumbing and McNiven 2010). Internal remittances generate more welfare among poorer households than international remittances (Ang, Sugiyarto, and Jha 2009). However, not all internal migrants attain better jobs after migrating and can afford to send remittances to their families.

When internal migrants returned home because of the COVID-19 pandemic, there is a loss of essential remittances. In poor households, these remittances are essential contributions to the family's survival and contribute to the home village's economy. These remittances are often used for family education, health costs, and food (NMS 2018). Additionally, a decline in remittance flows could increase poverty and decrease households' access to much-needed health services (Aldrich et al., 2020).

ON LIVELIHOODS

The COVID-19 pandemic led to massive disruption in the Filipino labor force, causing widespread unemployment, underemployment, decrease in the labor force participation rate (LFPR) in the regions and among women. According to the October 2020 Labor Force Survey (PSA, 2020), the country's unemployment rate in October 2020 was estimated at 8.7 percent. This is equivalent to 3.8 million unemployed Filipinos who are 15 years old and over. Meanwhile, the country's underemployment rate was at 14.4 percent. On the other hand, the LFPR was 58.7 percent, or 43.6 million Filipinos reported as either

employed or unemployed. All regions reported a decrease in LFPR from July to October this year. LFPR was lower among women at 45.0 percent, compared to men at 72.3 percent. Employment rates for men and women were reported at 91.3 percent and 91.1 percent, respectively. However, the underemployment rate was higher in men (15.9%) than in women (12.0 percent).

A significant number of the migrants who returned home are expected to enter local labor markets. This will likely depress wage rates in agricultural lands in the upcoming monsoon crop season and beyond (Verderosa, 2020). A large unoccupied workforce entering local labor markets could also take work away from the more marginalized and impoverished population segments (ibid.), causing anti-migrant sentiments from locals.

ON CONSUMPTION PATTERNS

During the interviews, RMWs and their household members were asked to list down five most essential items that they consumed in their households before the RMW left for work in Manila, during the RMWs stay in Manila, and those they consume after the return to Leyte. The difference in the items consumed is listed in Table 5 below.

Table 5 shows that food is the priority expense for the RMWs and their households in all three research sites. Next to food, the next priorities are drinking water, soap, and diaper for the baby. The RMWs and their household members have given up buying unnecessary

items for now, such as clothes, children's toys, and even cellphone load. Some RMWs and their households are cutting down expenses by gathering firewood instead of buying gas tank for cooking. Some are doing backyard gardening and subsistence farming to provide food on the table. One household stopped paying debts from their local microloan company.

Table 5 reflects Fitch Solutions Country Risk and Industry Research's pronouncement, which predicted that household spending in the Philippines would decline by 7.8% in 2020 due to

the pandemic and related economic shock that has hit households through several channels. In terms of cost, a Nielsen study showed that with less disposable income, consumers are looking for ways to maximize their budgets (Ordinario, 2020). Across Southeast Asia, consumers continued to demonstrate a focus on in-home consumption, where food and dairy saw strong uptake in the Philippine market at 11.4 percent (ibid.). According to PSA, the Household Final Consumption Expenditure grew by 0.2 percent in the first quarter of 2020 (2020). Of which,

TABLE 5. CONSUMPTION OF BASIC NEEDS

Pre Migration to Manila	During Migration to Manila	After Return Migration
Sack of rice	Sack of rice	Rice (per kilo; on credit)
Viand – fish	Viand – fish, pork, chicken	Vegetables
Drinking Water	Drinking Water	Drinking Water
Soap (bath and laundry)	Soap (bath and laundry)	Soap (bath and laundry)
Diaper for baby	Diaper for baby	Diaper for baby
Toiletries (shampoo, deodorant, toothpaste, lotion)	Toiletries (shampoo, deodorant, toothpaste, lotion)	Electricity bill
Canned goods	Vitamins of children	Formula milk
Vitamins of children	House rent	Toiletries (shampoo, deodorant, toothpaste, lotion)
House rent	Electricity bill	Gasoline (for motorbike)
Electricity bill	Formula milk	School supplies
Formula milk	Pig's Feeds	House rent
Pig's Feeds	LPG (for cooking)	
Firewood	Firewood	
Gasoline (for motorbike)	Gasoline (for motorbike)	
School supplies	School supplies	
	Pay debt	
	Children's toys	
	Savings	
	Remittance to province	
	Cellphone load (for wifi)	

essential items such as food and non-alcoholic beverages, housing, water, electricity, gas, and other fuels, health, and communication posted a growth of 4.9 percent, lower than the 6.1 percent in first-quarter 2019. Meanwhile, non-essential items declined by 4.7 percent from a growth of 6.4 percent during the same period last year.

HOW HAS REVERSE MIGRATION AFFECTED OTHER HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS' MIGRATION ASPIRATIONS?

The third research question explored how the reverse migration affected other household members' future migration aspirations. Seven household members of RMWs were supportive of their migration aspirations, while five were not receptive to migration aspirations.

A majority of the household members of the RMW still viewed migration as an opportunity for economic improvement, despite their misgivings and concern for their kin's experiences working in Manila. This sentiment manifests most families' overall perspective in rural areas, as these families are often stuck in a cycle of poverty perpetuated by lack of opportunities and exacerbated by natural disasters. These were reflected in the responses of the RMWs and their household members, organized by topic as follows.

Supportive/accepting of future migration to manila for work

It's sad when he was away because when he got sick in Manila he had no one to take care of him, he had to take care of

himself. It's a sacrifice to work in Manila in exchange for a bigger salary. I would also go to Manila because you can earn better.

– Tacloban HHM, Female, 20 years old

She has been trying for years to get a teaching job here in Tacloban, but she never gets called back. In Manila, her friend promised to help her. So off she went because she really wanted to teach, and the pay was so much better because she had more students. I was hoping she would get promoted, but then COVID happened. It's really a sacrifice, but I think it's easier if you like your job. Of course, we miss her, but it's really for herself and her future. I'd rather have it that way because she earns.

– Tacloban HHM, Female 30 years old

It was really about the money, and she also wanted to earn more for (our kid), for a better future. We have debts to pay, so the reason is really financial. It is for our kid... We miss her, it's made more difficult because we have a kid. A videocall can only do so much. It cannot take the place of having her with us... It's really a sacrifice, but it is what it is.

– Tacloban HHM, Male, 35 years old

The salary in Manila is better, so one can save up. He will have a better life. He will have more money. There are very few opportunities in Tacloban. The downside is, it's difficult because he is alone in Manila, if he gets sick or if he is broke, he has nobody to turn to for help.

– Tacloban HHM, Female, 28 years old

To save money, so we can buy things, and even a house. So he will also learn to stand on his own. I think its ok to leave for work as long as we can communicate well.

– Mayorga HHM, Female, 28 years old

It was because of our poverty. In Leyte, everything is difficult. We don't even have a house, we lost our house during (Typhoon) Yolanda. I am ashamed to be living at a relative's house. We were hoping that with his overtime pay we could earn more and provide for the children's needs. If he stays here, he only earns a pittance. In Manila one can earn a lot. When COVID is over, it is okay to go back and work there again.

– Mayorga HHM, Female, 45 years old

I miss him a lot but I endured it, I didn't want him to be thinking about us too much, I wanted him to focus on his job. It's different if one child is away. But we endure because it's his job.

– Dulag HHM, Female, 50 years old

Not keen or supportive of future migration (self or kin) to manila

We miss him when he is away from the family, but no he shouldn't leave anymore because our children are all grown. He should just stay.

– Mayorga HHM, Female, 43 years old

There are no jobs here. Someone recruited him to go to Manila, they told him the pay is good. But it didn't turn out that way. He was unlucky with his employer. I didn't want him to go but he wanted to, because of the better wage. But I won't let him go back

again. If we have a little capital, it's better that he stays. Besides he is getting on in age and construction work is very physical, it's taking toll on his body. But we don't have capital. He would like to go fishing, but that would require that we buy an outrigger boat.

– Mayorga HHM, Female, 28 years old

If it's all up to me, I wouldn't want her to go back and work in Manila. I was worried but I kept it to myself because she has to decide for her child, she is a single mom. I didn't want her to be dependent on me all the time.

– Tacloban HHM, Female, 56 years old

Now that there is this COVID, it's no longer okay. I don't like it anymore, I worry a lot.

– Dulag HHM, Female, 50 years old

We were worried because of COVID, I was afraid that he would get infected. We also sent money for their food and expenses because nobody will help them in Manila. I sent Php1000, I borrowed money. We saved money here to send a van to get them. In the beginning, I didn't want him to go but he insisted.

– Dulag HHM, Female, 40 years old

People migrate to urban areas to seek better employment prospects (Quisumbing and McNiven 2006). Rural and agricultural poverty has driven internal migrants to seek opportunities in urban areas (IOM 2013). Agriculture's share in total employment declined from 43% to 27.7% between 1991 and 2017 (World Bank 2018, in UNESCO, UNDP, IOM, UN-Habitat, 2018). Its contribution to the country's

GDP dropped from 23.2% in 1990 to 13.9% in 2010 (IOM 2013) and 9% in 2017 (PSA, 2017, UNESCO, UNDP, IOM, UN-Habitat, 2018).

Individuals move as part of their effort to improve their lives and their families' lives, learn new skills, gain new experiences, find a job, or flee insecurity, disaster, or famine. Migration is an economic, social, and political process that affects those who move, those who stay behind, and the places where they go. And with the advent of globalization, labor migration has become a worldwide phenomenon. People are crossing borders to search for better job opportunities and provide a better future for their families. Economic reasons such as employment opportunities and income differentials between places are drivers for migration (Black, 2011).



This paper describes the study phenomenon of returning migrant workers (RMWs) who were forced to return to Leyte due to the direct or indirect results of the lockdowns and community quarantine brought by the COVID-19 pandemic. This study has explicitly focused on the migrant workers who left their home province and worked in Manila. At the onset of the Enhanced Community Quarantine in Metro Manila, the Philippines, being labor exporting country, was able to roll out a program to assist Overseas Filipino Workers. However, no specific plan was tailored for internal migrant workers, who are largely unaccounted for, and range from highly skilled to unskilled daily wage workers. This research sought to bring to light the lived experience of these returned migrant workers during the SARS-Cov-2 pandemic.

This study reported the effects of this type of return migration on the households of the returning migrant workers in the receiving/original community in terms of loss of remittance, livelihood, consumption patterns, migrations aspirations, and vulnerability and adaptive capacity to slow-onset climate change, where possible. This study forms part of the early literature on the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic with its accompanying lockdown and quarantine on internal migrant workers' lives.

This is a phenomenological study on the lived experiences of returning migrant workers who lost their jobs or livelihoods in Metro Manila due to the community lockdowns and quarantines to control the spread of COVID-19. Specifically, this is a Husserlian descriptive phenomenological study. In descriptive phenomenology, researchers look for the general meaning of the phenomena by staying close to the richness of the data collected and restrict themselves from making assertions (Finlay, 2009).

06

Conclusions and recommendations

A phenomenological study attempts to understand the study participants' lived experiences in the phenomenon studied (Finlay, 2009; Giorgi, 2008; Reid, Flowers, & Larkin, 2005; Starks & Trinidad, 2007). It uses rich descriptive interviews and in-depth study of lived experiences (Finlay, 2009; Giorgi, 2008; Reid, Flowers, & Larkin, 2005; Starks & Trinidad, 2007). In phenomenology, the study begins with "concrete descriptions of lived experiences, in the first person, void of intellectual generalizations" (Finlay, 2009, p. 10), followed by analyses of the data and presentation of a summary account of the phenomenon's themes (Finlay, 2009). Phenomenology results in a rich and detailed interpretation of the lived experiences by reflecting on views of values that may be otherwise dismissed as common knowledge (Finlay, 2009; Giorgi, 2008; Reid, Flowers, & Larkin, 2005; Starks & Trinidad, 2007).

The study included 12 returning migrant workers (RMW) and the household member of each RMW. They were selected through purposive sampling techniques. The household members are immediate family members, spouses, or extended relatives of the RMW who lived in the same household and the RMW. Four RMW and four members of their households are residents of Tacloban City. Another set of the same number of RMW and their household members come from Dulag and Mayorga, Leyte.

Data for the study was collected using a qualitative method involving in-depth interviews, focus group discussions in the three research sites, key informant interviews, and interviewer-led demographic questionnaire. The data from the 24 interviews and three FGDs were taped and transcribed. The transcribed interview, called the protocol, was analyzed using Colaizzi's Seven Steps Method to reveal the themes in the respondents' narratives. Following the Colaizzi method, the significant statements from the respondent's answers to the questions were extracted, and meanings were formulated from their conversational statements. These formulated meanings were organized into themes, and themes that belong together were grouped into clusters. The key informant interview results were used to provide additional information on the emerging data from the protocol. Likewise, it was used as a reference when there was a need to return to the research participants to clarify or revalidate meanings formulated from the emerging themes.

The first research question explored the effect of reverse-migration the household (in the community of origin) vulnerability and adaptive capacities to slow-onset climate change impacts. The phenomenon of returning migrant workers rendered these migrant workers, their families, and their communities more vulnerable. It has reduced any existing ability towards adaptive capacity for slow-onset climate change impacts, if such capacity existed in the community in the first place. The discourse of climate change, and

adaptive capacity to slow-onset climate change impacts, is unrealistic in the face of poverty and precarity. Governments and stakeholders must address the subject in conjunction with the food and livelihood security of the community.

The second research question looked at how reverse migration affected households in the community of origin, in terms of income (including remittances), livelihoods, and consumption patterns. Results showed that some RMWs and their households cut down expenses by gathering firewood instead of buying gas for cooking. Some are doing backyard gardening and subsistence farming/fishing to provide food on the table. One household stopped paying debts from their local microloan company.

The third research question explored how the reverse migration affected other household members' future migration aspirations. Majority of the household members of the RMW still viewed migration as an opportunity for economic improvement, despite their misgivings and concern for negative work experiences in Metro Manila. This sentiment manifests most families' overall perspective in rural areas, as these families are often stuck in a cycle of poverty perpetuated by lack of opportunities and exacerbated by natural disasters.

This study is an introductory look into the phenomenon of returning migrant workers (RMWs) in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. This study's findings contribute to the early literature on the impact of COVID-19 on the lives of RMWs in Leyte;

how it has affected their families and communities in terms of vulnerability and adaptive capacities to slow-onset climate change impacts, livelihoods, consumption patterns, and migration aspirations. To end, the following recommendations are presented:

1. A continuation of the research with a broader population sample to uncover a broader experience of returning migrant workers and their community.
2. The findings from this study offer numerous areas for continued research in various aspects, such as but not limited to the assessment of the Balik Probinsiya, Bagong Pag-asa program; the exploration of possible interventions developed for returning migrant workers and their families.
3. Further research is needed in areas of public policy and governance to address the socio-political impact of thousands of internal migrant workers and OFWs who have lost their jobs due to the pandemic.



References

- "Internal migration." (2019). Glossary on Migration. International Organization for Migration, p. 108. Retrieved January 10, 2020 from https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/iml_34_glossary.pdf
- "Return migration." (2019). Glossary on Migration. International Organization for Migration, p. 186. Retrieved January 10, 2020 from https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/iml_34_glossary.pdf
- Albright, A. & Naybor, D. 2010. Reverse Migration: The Impact of Returning Home. UCLA Thinking Gender Papers. <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/73c8v2zq>
- Anderson, K., Aplan, K., Dunaiki, M. and Yarrow, E. (2017). Women in the Wind: Analysis of Migration, Youth Economic Empowerment and Gender in Vietnam and the Philippines. Plan International.
- Ang, A., Sugiyarto, G. and Jha, S. (2009). Remittances and Household Behavior in the Philippines. ADB Economics Working Paper Series. [online] Manila, Philippines: Asian Development Bank.
- Asian Development Bank Institute, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, and International Labour Organization. (2018). Labor Migration in Asia: Increasing the Development Impact of Migration through Finance and Technology.
- Black, et al. (2011). The effect of environmental change on human migration. *Global Environmental Change* 21S S3–S11
- Bohra-Mishra, P., Oppenheimer, M., Cai, R. and Licker, R. (2017). Climate variability and migration in the Philippines. *Population and Environment*, 38(3). https://www.researchgate.net/publication/308955008_Climate_variability_and_migration_in_the_Philippines
- Boillat, S., & Zähringer, J. (2020, September). COVID-19, reverse migration, and the impact on land systems. COVID-19, reverse migration, and the impact on land systems | Global Land Programme. <https://glp.earth/news-events/blog/covid-19-reverse-migration-and-impact-land-systems>.
- Bonifacio, J. (2020, May 28). 1st coronavirus cases in 2 Leyte LGUs came from Balik Probinsya program. Retrieved January 06, 2021, from <https://www.rappler.com/nation/new-coronavirus-patients-leyte-balik-probinsya-program>
- Cayon, M. (2020, May 17). Six local government units approve inclusion in 'Balik Probinsya' program: Manuel Cayon. *BusinessMirror*. <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2020/05/18/six-local-government-units-approve-inclusion-in-balik-probinsya-program/>.
- Cayubit, R. (2020, June 18). 'Balik Probinsya' beneficiaries in Leyte to be given priority on TESDA scholarship, skills trainings. *Manila Bulletin*. <https://mb.com.ph/2020/06/19/balik-probinsya-beneficiaries-in-leyte-to-be-given-priority-on-tesda-scholarship-skills-trainings-2/>.
- Colaizzi, P.F. (1978). Psychological research as the phenomenologist views it. In R. Valle, (Ed). *Existential phenomenological alternatives for psychology*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Dustmann, c. & Weiss, Y. (2007, June). Return Migration: Theory and Empirical Evidence from the UK *British Journal of Industrial Relations* 45:2, 0007–1080 pp. 236–256
- Finlay, L. (2009). Debating phenomenological research methods. *Phenomenology & Practice*, 3(1), 6–25.
- Friborg, S. (2020, November 29). The Reverse Migration Paradox During COVID-19. *BORGEN*. <https://www.borgenmagazine.com/reverse-migration-paradox-during-covid-19/>.
- Gabieta, J. (2020a, May 27). 100 Metro Manila workers return to Leyte under Balik Probinsya program. <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1281808/100-metro-manila-workers-return-to-leyte-under-balik-probinsya-program>
- Gabieta, J. (2020b, May 30). 2 Balik Probinsya returnees bring COVID-19 cases to 2 Leyte towns. Retrieved January 06, 2021, from <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1283473/2-balik-probinsya-returnees-bring-covid-19-cases-to-2-leyte-towns>
- Germanwatch (2017). *Global Climate Risk Index 2017: Weather-related Loss Events in 2015 and 1996 to 2015*. <https://germanwatch.org/de/download/16411.pdf>
- Giorgi, A. (2008). Difficulties encountered in the application of the phenomenological method in the social sciences. *The Indo-Pacific Journal of Phenomenology*, 8(1), 1–9.
- Glaser, B., & Strauss, A. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory*. New York: Aldine.
- Gotinga, J. C. (2020, June 14). Año: Balik Probinsya arrivals confusion in Leyte an 'isolated incident'. *Rappler*. <https://www.rappler.com/nation/ano-says-balik-probinsya-arrivals-confusion-leyte-isolated-incident>.

- IAS, TNEXT. (2020, May 28). Impacts of Reverse migration. NEXT IAS - Current Affairs Blog. <https://blog.nextias.com/impacts-of-reverse-migration>.
- Ibañez, J. P. (2020, May 31). DTI offers up to P15,000 in seed capital for Balik Probinsya. BusinessWorld. <https://www.bworldonline.com/dti-offers-up-to-p15000-in-seed-capital-for-balik-probinsya/>.
- International Labour Organization (ILO) (2011). Domestic Workers in the Philippines: Profile and Working Conditions. Geneva. http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_protect/--protrav/---travail/documents/publication/wcms_167021.pdf.
- International Organization for Migration (IOM), Scalabrini Migration Center (2013). Country Migration Report: The Philippines 2013. Makati City, Philippines. <https://www.iom.int/files/live/sites/iom/files/Country/docs/CMReport-Philippines-2013.pdf>.
- Jolipa, N. (1980). Internal migration: why do Filipinos move? Initiatives Popul. 6(1-2):8-14. PMID: 12311952.
- Kozier, B., Erb, G., Blais, K., & Wilkinson, J. (1995). Fundamentals of nursing: Concepts, process and practice. California: Addison-Wesley.
- Longley, Robert. (2020, October 30). All About Relative Deprivation and Deprivation Theory. Retrieved from <https://www.thoughtco.com/relative-deprivation-theory-4177591>
- Meniano S. (2020, September 30). Leyte's 'Balik Probinsya' recipients get livelihood aid. Philippine News Agency RSS. <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1116964>.
- Meniano, S. (2020, July 10). 42 'Balik Probinsya' recipients in Leyte listed as TESDA scholars. Philippine News Agency RSS. <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1108551>.
- Morse, J.M. (1994). Critical Issues in Qualitative Research Methods. London. Sage Publication.
- Noble, L. W. T. (2020, August 6). PHL consumer spending seen declining 7.8% in 2020 - Fitch. BusinessWorld. <https://www.bworldonline.com/phl-consumer-spending-seen-declining-7-8-in-2020-fitch/>.
- Norwegian Refugee Council (2013a). Living in the shadows: Displaced Lumads locked in a cycle of poverty. <http://www.refworld.org/publisher,IDMC,,PHL,5208909f4,0.html>
- Norwegian Refugee Council (2013b). Philippines: Internal displacement in brief - As of December 2013. <http://www.refworld.org/publisher,IDMC,COUNTRYNEWS,PHL,53c3ab2e4,0.html>
- Norwegian Refugee Council (2015). Global Overview 2015: People internally displaced by conflict and violence - Protracted displacement in the Philippines. <http://www.refworld.org/publisher,IDMC,,PHL,554c6cd224,0.html>
- Ogena, N. B. (2015). Internal Migration and Development in the Philippines. Presentation at the 2015 Internal Migration Summit: Filipinos on the Move, 25 June 2015, Century Park Hotel, Metro Manila. <http://www.popcom.gov.ph/rm/downloads?download=3:internal-migration-anddevelopment-in-the-philippines>
- Ordinario, C. (2020, September 8). Nielsen tracks Covid-era consumption patterns. BusinessMirror. <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2020/09/09/nielsen-tracks-covid-era-consumption-patterns/>.
- Patton, M. (1990). Qualitative evaluation and research methods (2nd ed.). Newbury Park, Sage. CA.
- Porritt, L. (1990). Interaction strategies: An introduction for health professionals. Melbourne: Churchill Livingstone.
- Perez, J. A. III (2015). Filipinos on the Move: Current Patterns and Factors of Internal Migration in the Philippines. Presentation at the 2015 Internal Migration Summit: Filipinos on the Move, 25 June 2015, Century Park Hotel, Metro Manila. <http://www.popcom.gov.ph/rm/downloads?download=2:filipinos-on-the-move-current-patterns-and-factors-of-internal-migration-in-the-philippines>
- Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) and University of the Philippines Population Institute (UPPI). (2019). 2018 National Migration Survey. Quezon City, Philippines: PSA and UPPI.
- Philippine Statistics Authority. (2020a, January 28). More than half of Filipinos 15 years and over have ever migrated (Results from the 2018 National Migration Survey). Philippine Statistics Authority. <https://psa.gov.ph/content/more-half-filipinos-15-years-and-over-have-ever-migrated-results-2018-national-migration>.
- Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA). (2020b, June). Retrieved January 2, 2020 from <https://psa.gov.ph/statistics/survey/labor-and-employment/survey-overseas-filipinos>
- Philippine Statistics Authority. (2020c, July 20). Consumption Patterns of Resident Households in the Philippines. Philippine Statistics Authority. <https://psa.gov.ph/content/consumption-patterns-resident-households-philippines>.

- Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA). (2020d, December). Employment Situation in October 2020. <https://psa.gov.ph/content/employment-situation-october-2020>
- Quisumbing, A. and McNiven, S. (2006). Migration and the Rural-Urban Continuum: Evidence from Bukidnon. *Philippine Journal of Development*, 33(1-2). <https://dirp4.pids.gov.ph/ris/pjd/pidspjd06migration.pdf>.
- Quisumbing, A. and McNiven, S. (2010). Moving Forward, Looking Back: the Impact of Migration and Remittances on Assets, Consumption, and Credit Constraints in the Rural Philippines. *The Journal of Development Studies*, 46(1). <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00220380903197960>.
- Reid, K., Flowers, P., & Larkin, M. (2005). Exploring lived experience: An introduction to interpretative phenomenological analysis. *The Psychologist*, 18(1), 20-23.
- Salamanca, C. (2020, June 29). Hatid Probinsya and Balik Probinsya, more harm than good? IBON Foundation. <https://www.ibon.org/hatid-probinsya-and-balik-probinsya-more-harm-than-good/>.
- Sengupta, J. (2020, April 4). Reverse migration: An opportunity for the government. ORF. <https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/reverse-migration-opportunity-government-64123/>.
- Skoufias, E et al. (2019). Identifying the Vulnerable to Poverty from Natural Disasters: The Case of Typhoons in the Philippines World Bank Group, Policy Research Working Paper.
- Stark, O. (2019). Behavior in reverse: reasons for return migration. *Behavioural Public Policy*, 3: 1, 104-126. doi:10.1017/bpp.2018.27
- Starks, H., & Trinidad, S.B. (2007). Choose your method: A comparison of phenomenology, discourse analysis, and grounded theory. *Qualitative Health Research*, 17, 1372-1380.
- Tesch, Renata. (1990). *Qualitative research: analysis types & software tools*. Hampshire. Routledge
- The Manila Times. (2020, June 24). Covid-19 cases surge in Leyte. The Manila Times. <https://www.manilatimes.net/2020/06/25/news/national/covid-19-cases-surge-in-leyte/734702/>.
- UNESCO, UNDP, IOM, UN-Habitat. (2018). Overview of Internal Migration in Philippines.
- University of the Philippines Population Institute (UPPI) and Demographic Research and Development Foundation, Inc. (DRDF). (2020, May). Balik Probinsya in time of COVID19. Retrieved from <https://www.uppi.upd.edu.ph/sites/default/files/pdf/COVID-19-Research-Brief05.pdf>.
- Verderosa, D. (2020, July 22). How Will Reverse Migration Affect Agriculture and What Can the Government Do? Tata-Cornell Institute. <https://tci.cornell.edu/blog/how-will-reverse-migration-affect-agriculture-and-what-can-the-government-do/>.
- What is Consumption Patterns. IGI Global. <https://www.igi-global.com/dictionary/consumption-patterns/55112>.
- What is Reverse Migration. IGI Global. <https://www.igi-global.com/dictionary/reverse-migration/67355>.
- World Bank. (2020). COVID-19 Crisis Through a Migration Lens. Migration and Development Brief, no. 32. World Bank, Washington, DC. © World Bank. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/33634> License: CC BY 3.0 IGO.

