

Saving and Investing Behaviors of Overseas Filipinos in Four Destination Countries and Migrant Families in the Seven Provinces of Origin in the Philippines

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This action research was conducted in the course of the implementation of the IFAD project entitled, *Scaling Up Initiatives in Mobilizing Migrant Resources to Agriculture Development in the Philippines*. The main purpose of the action research is to understand the savings and investing behavior of the OFWs and families and help out in building transnational linkages and developing partnerships needed to promote the use of remittances of Filipino migrants in Italy, Singapore, Qatar and United Arab Emirates on productive investments in the provinces of Agusan del Sur, Batangas, Ifugao, Laguna, Oriental Mindoro, Tarlac and Surigao del Sur.

A total of 549 in the four destination countries and 931 individuals participated in the surveys, FGDs and key informant interviews in the seven provinces. the following data gathering activities were conducted:

- survey on savings and investing behavior of overseas Filipinos in Italy, Singapore, UAE and Qatar
- survey on savings and investing behavior of families of overseas Filipinos in Laguna, Batangas, Tarlac, Ifugao, Orriental Mindoro, Surigao del Sur and Agusan del Sur
- interviews of leaders of overseas Filipino organizations and NGOs and organizations providing assistance to overseas Filipinos, Philippine ambassadors and other key officials of Philippine embassies and consulates in the four countries of destinations
- focus group discussions of overseas Filipinos in the four countries of destination
- interviews and talks with provincial and other local government officials, leaders of associations of families of migrants and migrant returnees, and key people of various stakeholders in the provinces
- FGDs of migrant families and migrant returnees and
- case studies of successful migrant returnees.

Data gathering and analysis of data in the four countries and seven provinces was conducted from March 2015 to June 2016.

The main research findings and the corresponding actions taken by Atikha are summarized as follows:

A. Findings on the general situation, savings, business and investing behavior and indebtedness of overseas Filipinos in the four countries

1. *Segmented migrant population.* The four countries have a substantial number of overseas Filipinos with at least 100,000 Filipinos. The migrant Filipino population in the four countries is comprised of permanent immigrants, contract workers and undocumented migrants. The population is highly segmented into different occupational groups. These various groups are very much different in terms of income, work and living conditions and in terms of capacities to save and invest and even to give back to their home communities and country.

Characterization of migrants				
Category	Italy	UAE	Qatar	Singapore
Filipino population	184,638	679,819	342,442	180,000
Segment 1: highly skilled professionals (oil and gas, consultants, manager of multinationals) earning about \$6,000 to \$12,000 per month	a minimal number working in UN agencies	5% of the population working in the oil and gas industry	5% of the population working in the oil and gas industry	5% working in banking and IT and multinational corporations
Segment 2: professionals earning \$3,000 to \$5,999- nurses, teachers, manager service industry, engineers, IT middle level managers		15%	15%	25% young professionals
Segment 3: professionals, semi-skilled workers working in the hotels and other service industry and domestic workers earning \$1,000-\$3,000	60% (domestic workers)	35%	35%	25%

Segment 4: unskilled workers working in hotels, malls, domestic workers, construction workers and other service industry earning \$400-\$900	40% (domestic workers)	45% some domestic workers as low as \$200 (undocumented or with contract substitution)	45% some labor camps and domestic workers as low as \$200	45%
Working and living conditions	can acquire citizenship if working for a long time problem with job security because of crisis in Europe	unskilled workers in labor camps and domestic workers have miserable working conditions and no day offs	unskilled workers in labor camps and domestic workers have miserable working conditions and no day offs problem with job security because of drop in oil prices	domestic workers have day off and experience less contract violations can acquire permanent residency but not citizenship

2. *Migration corridors*—country of destination and province of origin—are discernible in terms of relative concentrations and presence of active partner overseas Filipino leaders and organizations. Identified significant migration corridors are as follows: 1) Italy-Batangas; Italy-Laguna; Italy-Tarlac, Italy-Surigao del Sur and Italy-Oriental Mindoro; 2) Singapore-Laguna; Singapore-Batangas; Singapore-Ifugao; 3) UAE-Batangas and UAE-Laguna and 4) Qatar-Batangas; Qatar-Laguna; and Qatar-Tarlac. Agusan del Sur is not really a rich source of overseas Filipinos so there were no corridors identified in destination countries.

Among the four countries, Italy and Qatar are currently facing economic difficulties. More and more Filipinos are returning back home because of the difficult situation that they are confronted with in these countries.

3. *Organization of overseas Filipinos.* The overseas Filipinos are largely unorganized. There are numerous Filipino organizations in the four countries but they are relatively small in terms of membership and reach. They are also in the main socio-cultural and 'hometown'-based organizations and are not engaged in migration and development nor are involved in savings and investment, and financial literacy initiatives. Hometown associations are still to be drawn into playing a role in the migration and development initiatives of their home province. Very few HTAs and organizations are to be relied upon in terms of such engagements.

4. *Savings behavior of overseas Filipinos.* Although, the survey indicated a big number of savers among overseas Filipinos in the four countries, FGDs and key informants maintain that a large segment still of the migrant population are without savings. Even granting that we have a large number of savers as indicated by the survey data, a further scrutiny, however, point to the fact that they do not have substantial savings, i.e. the majority of the savers can only muster to save 5-10% of their monthly income.

The culture of saving and investing has still to be ingrained into the minds of the vast majority of overseas Filipinos. The problems of dependency of families, indebtedness to scrupulous lenders and credit card companies, leading lavish lifestyles, lack of budgeting and financial management skills were pointed out, among others, as the reasons why many are unable to save and invest. Attendance to financial literacy seminars which tackles and addresses frontally these problems has been seen as a strong correlate to the capacity to save, invest and engage in business.

5. *Indebtedness.* A large segment of the population, professional or otherwise is indebted. Indebtedness per se is not a problem, particularly if such loans or debts are incurred for additional capital for productive investments which a number of overseas Filipinos have done. The concern lies on a significant number who have used such loans and debts for other purposes and also those who still have secured and continuously secure loans and debts from unscrupulous lenders.

6. *Investing behavior of overseas Filipinos.* Around 63% of overseas Filipinos in the four countries have investments and about 37%, have no investments.

From the survey results, FGDs and key informant interviews, the following lessons can be learned from those who were able to save and invest:

- a) They were prudent in spending and budgeting their money, with self-discipline and are conscious not to change their lifestyle and life as simple as possible;
- b) They have set their financial goals for migration and have concrete plans to achieve their goals;
- c) They had access to information about investment opportunities; and
- d) They have reliable and responsible family members (notedly in many cases—women and wives) who were able to manage the family finances well and make wise investments.

A large chunk of savings of overseas Filipinos have been invested in procuring lots and constructing big houses in the Philippines. Substantial savings and profitable investments (in stocks, cooperatives and other investment vehicles) although done by a considerable number of overseas Filipinos must still be widely encouraged and should be a normative practice. Further, savings and investment schemes must be tailor-fit to the type of occupation and profession of overseas Filipinos. "Forced savings" and low capital investment schemes for low-income overseas Filipinos (e.g. domestic workers and workers in labor camps) especially in Qatar and UAE despite being a challenge has to be designed. Concrete and lucrative investment packages must be offered to willing professionals and high income overseas Filipinos. Business opportunities and financial investments in agricultural cooperatives must also be disseminated and offered to overseas Filipinos in the four countries. Furthermore, such schemes must consider that a substantial number of overseas Filipinos intend to go back in 2-5 years and 5-10 years from now. Lack of information and access to savings, investment and business opportunities lead to dismal practices of savings, investment and engagement in business.

7. *Business engagement of overseas Filipinos.* Very few overseas Filipinos are engaged in business. This is not to be hastily interpreted as negative. This could simply indicate that not all overseas Filipinos will engage in business. Those who are interested to engage in business should be ably assisted while those who will not, should be offered profitable investment schemes.

Expressed needs of those who would go into business and are now engaged in different endeavors are information on business opportunity, business training, skills and technical training and business mentoring.

8. *Philanthropy of overseas Filipinos.* Less than 50% of overseas Filipinos in the four countries donate to projects in the Philippines, especially to projects implemented in their own home provinces. This hometown bias or preference in giving must be cultivated to positive use by offering them development projects that they could support in their provinces of origin. Platforms for giving must be established especially for overseas Filipino professionals who have the capacity to give back to the community and country.

B. Findings on the general situation, saving and investing behaviors, indebtedness and business engagement of overseas Filipino families in the seven provinces

1. *Dependency of families on remittances.* There is marked heavy reliance if not over-dependency of many families on migrant remittances. Dependency would mean also dependency not only of the immediate family but also of other relatives. Dependency is heavy among relatives not working or not engaged in

business. Dependency is observed to be its highest among the low income migrant-earners and its lowest among families of young professionals.

2. *Saving behavior of families.* The great majority of the families is unable to save from the remittances that they receive. To those families that are able to save, they can save, at most, 5%-10% from the remittances that they receive. They are able to save because they have set family goals on savings and investment, other family members in the Philippines are working and contributing to the family and have properly managed their finances well (keeping track of their expenses and spending only on needs and not leading a lavish lifestyle). Educational attainment of the relative was also found to be correlated to the ability of the family to save as well as the level of financial literacy of family members. A good practice among the savers is setting aside some money as savings before spending and paying for the monthly family expenses.

3. *Indebtedness of families.* There is a growing indebtedness of families of overseas Filipinos, almost half of those surveyed in the provinces have outstanding debts or loans. What has to be looked into more closely are the families indebted to lending companies and individuals which exact exorbitant interest rates that put families deep in debt. Marked also is the indebtedness of a growing number of families, particularly in Batangas and Laguna to numerous number of microfinance institutions at the same time. Family problems (e.g. philandering wives and husbands, problematic children) and irresponsible management of family finances were also found to push families into debt. Attendance to financial literacy seminar of migrant relative is found to be correlated with indebtedness. That means, that those who have attended financial literacy seminar are less likely to be indebted.

4. *Investments of families of overseas Filipinos.* Almost half of the families have investments. The top six investments of migrant families are in house and lot, educational fund, business, health insurance and life insurance, and real estate. A few has invested in agriculture/agribusiness. Relatives of overseas Filipinos who have work in the Philippines are more likely than those who have no work to make investments. Also those who have attended financial literacy seminar and of higher educational attainment and those whose migrant relatives work in the Middle East (compared to those in Asia and Europe) are found to have made investments than others.

5. *Business engagements of families.* Only 24% of the families in the seven provinces own and run a business. Most of the businesses are small, the majority of which required only P50,000 or less initial capitalization. The top three businesses set up by the families are of the following types: sari-sari/grocery store; agricultural business; and trading and marketing.

Occupation of relative of migrant, financial literacy attendance and educational attainment of relative of migrant are correlates of engagement in business. That means, that migrant relatives who have work in the Philippines are more likely to be engaged in business than those who have no work. Those who have attended financial literacy seminar and higher educational attainment are also more likely to be engaged in business than their counterparts.

6. *Needed assistance and support of families.* The families need support and assistance on the following: business training, information on business opportunity, skills and technical training, business mentoring and access to capital and resources.

In addition, families expressed their need for financial education. Reintegration assistance and support for returning Filipino migrants has also been expressed.

C. Insights and Lessons Learned in the Conduct of Financial Education and in Forging Partnerships with Overseas Filipinos in the Destination Countries

1. Out of the more than 100 organizations registered in the Philippine Embassy per country of destination, the majority are into social activities whose objectives are to provide venues for getting together and conducting activities based on common bond such as religion, sports, cultural activities/ festivities. These activities help overseas Filipinos cope with their living and working conditions abroad. The leaders of overseas Filipinos involved in Embassy activities are not necessarily the leaders that are interested to promote activities on savings, investing and entrepreneurship. Filipino community leaders interested in promoting savings, investment and entrepreneurship have emerged will emerge from the series of meetings and capacity building activities with the Filipino communities.

2. In UAE and Qatar, there are strong professional organizations of nurses, engineers, accountants, managers whose main activities revolve around professional advancement. However, professional groups are not automatically financially literate. There is great interest for professional groups to conduct training among their members.

3. A few, about one or two organizations per country are involved in financial education, investment mobilization and entrepreneurship. These organizations are normally those that assisted and supported the initiatives of Pinoy WISE. They appreciated the comprehensive work being done by Atikha, working on both sides of the migration corridors which none of the organizations in destination countries are able to do. They appreciated the links with national

and local government as well as with the private sector in their province of origin that were provided to them.

4. The large number of Filipinos (90%) in destination countries are unorganized. The unorganized Filipinos can be reached through the church and schools where their children are studying or through their companies.

5. Pinoy WISE is very much appreciated by the different organizations and its influence is growing in the four countries of destination. There is a growing interest in conducting financial education among Filipino organizations. Many overseas Filipinos have experienced the impact of financial education in changing their behavior in managing their funds and family relations and have endorsed the training to other Filipino organizations and leaders of the Filipino community. There is a need to strengthen Pinoy WISE organizing in the different countries.

6. The Duterte government has endorsed the need for financial education. Companies have used the conduct of financial education to promote the sales of condominiums, insurance and other businesses. Government agencies in partnership with banks are conducting financial education. Other unscrupulous business people are riding on the renewed interest in investment in the Philippines.

D. Actions taken by Atikha on Main Research Findings

Taking into account the main findings of the research, the following were the actions taken by Atikha to be able to forge partnership and scale up the initiatives in mobilizing migrant resources towards agriculture development:

1. Conducted a ladderized program composed of a) financial education b) family and financial counseling; c) investment and business forum; d) linkage with investment and business opportunities as well as with financial institutions and government agencies to assist the OFWs and families in saving, investing and engaging in business;

2. Organized the unorganized OFWs and families into Pinoy WISE International chapters and link the hometown associations with the migration and development initiatives in their provinces;

3. Differentiated savings and investment packages based on the various segments of the OFWs in the 4 countries.

4. Scaled up the Initiatives in mobilizing investments towards agriculture

development by doing the following:

a. To increase the number of partner cooperatives, study the lowering of the required total assets to PHP 70 M for participating cooperatives on the condition that they have a PAR of not more than 5%. They should also be endorsed by the provincial local governments and migration stakeholders;

b) Assist in the development and investment mobilization for the OFW Green Fund of Landbank that will open the doors for funding smaller cooperatives and providing guarantees for investments of OFWs;

c) Explore the potential of crowdfunding for OFW-owned social enterprises and develop strategy to mitigate the risk; and

d) Strengthen partnership with provincial governments, Department of Agriculture and Department of Trade and Industry for assistance and mentoring of individual and group enterprises to mitigate the risks of the enterprises.

5. To sustain the migration and development initiatives in mobilizing migrant resources towards local economic development, mainstreamed the program with the LGUs, schools, NGOs, migrant and family organizations, cooperatives and other financial institutions

6. Forged transnational partnerships and link the initiatives on both sides of the migration corridor.

I. INTRODUCTION

The main purpose of action research is to map migration corridors towards building transnational linkages and developing partnerships needed to promote the use of remittances on productive investments in rural areas.

The research seeks to attain the following specific objectives:

1. Description and analysis of situation of overseas Filipinos and possible partners in Singapore, UAE, Qatar and Italy
2. Description and analysis of 'migration situation' of seven provinces of origin (Ifugao, Surigao del Sur, Agusan del Sur, Tarlac, Batangas, Laguna, Oriental Mindoro)
3. Identification of migration and development projects and establishment of different types of partnerships
4. Identification of potential business and investment opportunities in the seven provinces

To achieve the said research objectives, the following data gathering activities were conducted:

- survey on savings and investing behavior of overseas Filipinos in Italy, Singapore, UAE and Qatar
- survey on savings and investing behavior of families of overseas Filipinos in Laguna, Batangas, Tarlac, Ifugao, Oriental Mindoro, Surigao del Sur and Agusan del Sur
- interviews of leaders of overseas Filipino organizations and NGOs and organizations providing assistance to overseas Filipinos, Philippine ambassadors and other key officials of Philippine embassies and consulates in the four countries of destinations
- focus group discussions of overseas Filipinos in the four countries of destination
- interviews and talks with provincial and other local government officials, leaders of associations of families of migrants and migrant returnees, and key people of various stakeholders in the provinces
- FGDs of migrant families and migrant returnees and
- case studies of successful migrant returnees.

The sampling procedure implemented in the study was purposive and non-

random due to the absence of complete data bases both in the four destination countries and in the seven provinces in the Philippines. Survey respondents, FGD participants and interviewees were identified with the help of some leaders of overseas Filipino associations and migrant returnee and OFW family organizations, and officials and staff of Philippine embassies and local government units.

In the four countries, the particular occupational composition of the Filipino population in each country was considered in the selection of survey and FGD participants. Focus group discussions were conducted separately for professionals and domestic or factory/service workers in the four countries. In the provinces, the survey was conducted among family relatives of overseas Filipinos and the FGDs were held separately among migrant returnees and relatives of overseas Filipinos. These were considered and done to ensure a wide array of views will be gathered reflective of what actually exists in the destination countries and provinces.

Data gathering and analysis of data in the four countries and seven provinces was conducted from March 2015 to June 2016.

This report on the action research conducted by Atikha is divided into three main sections: 1) Introduction; 2) Research Findings and 3) Main Research Findings and Main Actions and Interventions.

II. RESEARCH FINDINGS

A. Description and Analysis of Situation of Overseas Filipinos in Italy, Qatar, Singapore and United Arab Emirates (UAE)

1. Profile and Characteristics of Overseas Filipinos

1. Stock estimate of overseas Filipinos in the four countries. Italy, Singapore, UAE and Qatar count among the 13 destination countries with at least 100,000 Filipinos in 2011. UAE ranks 4th with 679,819, Qatar, 7th with 342, 442, Italy, 11th with 184,638 and Singapore, 12th with 180,000 (CFO Stock Estimate of Overseas Filipinos). Interestingly, Philippine Embassies in the four countries have estimates quite different to that of CFO estimates. Of the four countries, only Italy landed (4th) in the top 10 destination countries of permanent emigrants with an estimated 20, 718 emigrants from 1981-2011. They all, however, are in the list of top destination countries of land-based OFWs (new hires and rehires) in 2012, with UAE 2nd, Singapore 3rd, Qatar 5th, and Italy 7th (Country Migration Report: The Philippines 2013). That would mean that in Italy, what we have is a mix of overseas Filipinos, permanent immigrants and OFWs while what we have in

Singapore, Qatar and Italy are predominantly OFWs, whose stay in those countries are tied to their work contracts.

2. Segmentation of the Filipino diaspora. The Filipino diaspora in the four countries is highly segmented. The Filipinos in the four countries work as professionals, skilled, semi-skilled, and service workers and domestic helpers. These various groups of Filipinos are very much different in terms of income, work and living conditions which also indicate their different and relative capacities to save and invest and even to give back to their home communities and country.

From the discussions with Philippine Embassy officials, interviews and FGDs of migrant leaders and overseas Filipinos, it is estimated that the majority of Filipinos in UAE, Qatar and Singapore are professionals. Age-wise, Filipino professionals in Singapore are younger than those in UAE and Qatar due to earlier and longer history migration in the two Arab countries. These Filipino professionals in the three countries earn relatively high salaries and incomes and are relatively comfortably settled in these countries. Filipino professionals in UAE and Qatar report, however, experiencing discrimination in the workplace and in terms of pay scale, i.e. vis a vis nationals and those from Western countries and partly because of relatively shorter college education and training specifically for engineers in UAE and Qatar.

While the majority in the cited three countries are professionals, domestic workers comprise the great majority of Filipinos in Italy. These domestic workers in Italy are in relatively better situation in terms of wages and working conditions compared with their counterparts in Singapore, UAE, and Qatar. Filipinas in Qatar and UAE are the most exploited and abused among the lot.

Filipino workers in UAE and Qatar are employed in construction companies. Many of them are housed in labor camps and are earning meagre salaries. These skilled and unskilled workers in camps face miserable conditions when compared with those in housing enclaves of oil and gas companies. There are a big number of Filipinos and Filipinas in the two Arab countries who are employed as service workers in hotels, malls and restaurants. There are no Filipino construction workers in Singapore. Aside from the domestic workers, a number of Filipinos work also as service crew in hotels, restaurants and malls.

3. Migration corridors (country of destination and provinces of origin of overseas Filipinos). No government agency has the complete, exact and updated data regarding the exact number of overseas Filipinos (permanent immigrants, OFWs and undocumented migrants) distributed in countries of destination and their corresponding provinces of origin of migrants. POEA listed

Batangas as the 4th and Laguna as the 7th largest province of origin of new hires of OFWs in 2013, respectively. The other five provinces considered in the study are not considered as top ranking source provinces of overseas Filipinos.

The data that is available and important in portraying the migration corridors involving the four countries and seven provinces of this study are the two documents secured by Atikha from the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA), a national government agency that provides welfare assistance services to the overseas Filipino workers. The documents are 1) Consolidated Statistics of OWWA Members (By Country, By Province) and 2) Consolidated Statistics of OWWA Members (By Province, By Country). These two documents as they are entitled only cite figures of OWWA members. That will mean that overseas Filipinos who are not members of OWWA, permanent immigrants, and undocumented Filipinos are unaccounted. Furthermore, even the statistics of the two documents are incomplete because not all of the OWWA members listed their provinces of origin. Nonetheless, the statistical data from the two documents help in describing the migration corridors. Estimates from Philippine Embassy officials and leaders of migrant organizations do not significantly differ from the OWWA data. The identification of the migration corridors is needed to determine where (country-province) interventions and project activities are to be made and concentrated on.

1. Italy

There are 116,206 registered OWWA members in Italy. Around 39% (44,952) of the OWWA members are males while 61% (71,183) are females. Around 26,303 (22.6%) the members did not state their provinces of origin. The distribution (actual number and its percentage in relation to the total number) in terms of province of origin are as follows: (Note: What are cited are the top five provinces of origin and also the figures of the seven provinces of the study if they did not land in the top 5. The seven provinces of the study are highlighted to emphasize the migration corridors important for this study)

1. Batangas: 29,425 (25%)
2. Laguna: 9,347 (8.04%)
3. Pangasinan: 5,086 (4.38%)
4. Tarlac: 5,252 (4.5%)
5. Pampanga: 3,702 (3.19%)

Oriental Mindoro: 3,541 (3%)
Surigao del Sur: 62 (0.05%)
Agusan del Sur: 28 (0.02%)
Ifugao: 23 (0.02%)

From the data, Italy-Batangas is clearly a migration corridor. That can be said, however, in a lesser degree to Italy-Laguna and Italy-Tarlac migration corridors. The Italy-Oriental Mindoro can also be considered because it comes as a close 4th to Italy-Tarlac migration corridor. It is also clear that the IFAD provinces of Surigao del Sur, Agusan del Sur and Ifugao are not significant provinces of origin, not only those in Italy but in the other three countries which are evident in the succeeding statistical data.

2. Singapore

There are 276, 460 OWWA members in Singapore. Around 23% (44,952) of them are males while 77% (211,631) are females. Around 32% (88,336) of the total number of members did not state their provinces of origin. The distribution in terms of province of origin are as follows: (Note: What are cited are the top five provinces of origin and also the figures of the seven provinces included in the study if they did not land in the top 5. The seven provinces of the study are highlighted (underlined) to emphasize the migration corridors and the provinces that are important for and included in this study):

1. Iloilo: 14, 255 (5.16%)
2. Pangasinan: 13, 431 (4.86%)
3. Cebu: 8,635 (3.12%)
4. Isabela: 7,699 (2.78%)
5. Laguna: 7564 (2.73%)
Batangas: 7,114 (2.57%)

Tarlac: 3,800 (1.37%)
Oriental Mindoro: 919 (0.33%)
Ifugao: 528 (0.19%)
Surigao del Sur: 503 (0.18%)
Agusan del Sur: 373 (0.13%)

Singapore-Laguna and Singapore-Batangas are clear migration corridors. Singapore-Tarlac can also be considered. There are no significant concentrations of overseas Filipinos coming from Oriental Mindoro, Ifugao, Surigao del Sur and Agusan del Sur. There is, however, a strong Cordillera alliance of organizations in Singapore which include those Filipinos from Ifugao.

3. UAE

There are 787,036 OWWA members in UAE. Around 36% (284,101) of them are males while about 64% (501,494) are females. A big 40% (314,004) of the total

number of members did not state their provinces of origin. The distribution in terms of province of origin are as follows:

1. Cavite: 27,579 (3.5%)
2. Pampanga: 27,401 (3.48%)
3. Batangas: 25,004 (3.18%)
4. Laguna: 24, 293 (3.09%)
5. Bulacan: 24,035 (3.05%)

Tarlac: 8,749 (1.11%)
Oriental Mindoro: 3,702 (0.47%)
Surigao del Sur: 1,838 (0.23%)
Agusan del Sur: 1,069 (0.14%)
Ifugao: 432 (0.05%)

Again, the most overseas Filipinos in UAE aside from those coming from Cavite and Pampanga, came from the provinces of Batangas and Laguna. Thus, UAE-Batangas and UAE-Laguna are also clear migration corridors that are important for this study.

4. Qatar

There are 316, 957 OWWA members in Qatar. Around 54% (172,557) of them are males while 46% (144,151) are females. Around 42% (133,092) of the total number of members failed to state their provinces of origin. The distribution in terms of province of origin are as follows:

1. Cavite: 10,522 (3.32%)
2. Pampanga: 9,923 (3.13%)
3. Batangas: 9,875 (3.12%)
4. Laguna: 8,794 (2.77%)
5. Tarlac: 3,075 (0.97%)

Oriental Mindoro: 1,183 (0.37%)
Surigao del Sur: 675 (0.21%)
Agusan del Sur: 517 (0.16%)
Ifugao: 206 (0.06%)

From the data there are three clear migration corridors that can be established which are important for this study: Qatar-Batangas, Qatar-Laguna and Qatar-Tarlac.

4. Migration policies and economic situation of host countries. Among the four countries, it is only in Italy that Filipinos can both acquire permanent residency and citizenship. Italy is slowly emerging as emigrant country for Filipinos due to its reunification program and liberal immigration and citizenship policies. In Singapore, it is possible at least for Filipino professionals to avail of permanent residency and enjoy some benefits enjoyed by Singaporean nationals.

Among the four countries, Italy and Qatar are currently facing economic difficulties---Qatar with its problems with oil production and oil prices; Italy facing economic depression and a consequent rise in unemployment. These economic difficulties of the two countries have impacted on Filipino migrants working in the two countries. From the discussions with the embassies in the two countries and the FGDs conducted, it has been noted that in Qatar thousands of Filipinos have been laid off from work in gas and oil companies like Qatar Gas and RAS Gas.

A number of migrant Filipinos are coming home from Italy because of difficulty in finding work and earning decent incomes. It is observed that there is a decline in the volume of remittances from Filipinos in Italy.

5. Organizations of overseas Filipinos. Largely overseas Filipinos are not organized. There are numerous organizations of Filipinos in the four countries but their members could not even account for 10% of the total Filipino population in each country. Except for some hometown associations (HTAs), religious organizations, and professional organizations, these Filipino associations are small in terms of size of membership.

From the list provided by the Philippine Embassy in Qatar, there are 164 Filipino organizations in the city of Doha alone. The Philippine Embassy in Singapore accounts for about 100 Filipino organizations. Philippine Consulate in Milan lists 96 Filipino organizations in Milan and 87 associations in Northern Italy. The Philippine Embassy in Italy that is based in Rome reports 26 religious communities and 51 other organizations. The organizations in UAE are 110 migrant organizations.

In the main, the Filipino organizations in the four countries can be categorized as follows: 1) hometown associations (based on town, province or region of origin in the Philippines); 2) professional organizations; 3) religious organizations; 4) organizations based on city of residence in the host country; 5) alumni associations of different schools, colleges and universities in the Philippines; and 6) fraternities and 7) cultural and sports associations.

There are numerous HTAs in the four countries. The most active HTAs are the

associations of those who hailed from the province of Batangas. Interestingly, this is true in all the four countries of Italy, Singapore, UAE and Qatar. Aside from the Batangas HTAs, there are organizations of those from Tarlac, Laguna, Surigao del Sur in Italy; those from the Cordillera provinces in Qatar, Singapore and Northern Italy; those from Mindoro in Italy and Qatar. It can be noted however, that by and large, these HTAs are not actively engaged in the affairs nor are actively aiding projects in their home provinces in the Philippines. They are by and large social and cultural organizations. They are capable of raising decently large amounts of money which are often spent in their social gatherings. An exception is the Tarlac Hometown Association in Italy. The organization regularly gathers funds to provide assistance to indigents in communities in Tarlac. It can be noted, however, that other HTAs which are largely social organizations, extend financial and material support to their provinces and communities of origin in the Philippines in times of calamities.

In UAE and Qatar, it can be noted that the most active organizations are professional organizations like those of nurses, accountants, teachers, and engineers. Their activities revolve around upgrading their members' skills and knowledge.

There are some organizations that are involved in conducting financial literacy seminars and mobilizing savings and investments such as Pinoy WISE-UAE, Pinoy WISE-Qatar and ACFIL-Pinoy WISE-Italy, Overseas Filipino Investor and Entrepreneurs Movement (OFIEM)–Qatar and The Global Filipino Investor (TGFI) – Singapore.

2. Saving, Business, Investing Behavior and Indebtedness of Overseas Filipinos

In this section of the report, the savings, business and investing behavior and indebtedness of overseas Filipinos are described and analyzed. The data came mainly from the survey and FGDs conducted among overseas Filipinos working in the four countries. The insights of key informants like migrant leaders, NGO workers and Philippine Embassy officials were also included in the description and analysis of behaviors of overseas Filipinos.

Table 1. Research Participants By Country of Destination

Country	Survey Respondents	No. of FGDs/(No. of Participants)	Key Informant Interviews
Italy	100	2 (12)	10
Qatar	113	2 (16)	5
Singapore	158	2 (13)	6
UAE	101	2 (9)	6
Total	472 respondents	8 FGDs (50 participants)	27 key informants

A total of 472 overseas Filipinos from the four countries participated in the survey. The breakdown of the respondents per country is as follows: Italy (100); Qatar (113); Singapore (158); and UAE (101). A total of 8 FGDs were conducted with the following number of participants per country: Italy (12); Qatar (16); Singapore (13); and UAE (9). In addition, a total of 27 key informant interviews of government officials, migrant leaders and NGO workers were conducted.

2.1. Background characteristics of FGD participants and survey respondents

Participants in separate FGDs were professionals and domestic workers in Singapore and UAE. In Italy, FGDs were held solely for domestic workers. In Qatar, aside from FGDs with professionals, an FGD was conducted among construction workers in a workers camp.

The survey conducted had 472 survey respondents. The study used the snowball technique in engaging survey participants. It also considered the occupational composition of each country in selecting overseas Filipinos to participate in the survey. Table 1 summarizes the background characteristics of the survey respondents. About 66% of them are women while 37 % are men. Age wise, many of them (41% of the total) are in the 26-35 age bracket; 25% are in 46-55 age range while about 19% are relatively old and are in 56-65 age range already. The majority of the respondents, about 74% are college graduates while the rest finished high school/technology and vocational education.

Professionals comprise about 38% of the total number of respondents, domestic workers around 32% while service staff, about 25% and other workers, around 3% respectively. Italy respondents are largely domestic workers, while professionals comprise the majority of respondents in UAE. In Singapore, the domestic workers and professional respondents are almost break-even while service staff workers are more numerous in Qatar.

Table 2. Percent distribution of background characteristics of overseas Filipinos by country

Background characteristics	Italy	Qatar	Singapore	UAE	Total
Age					
25 years &<	1.00	6.19	2.53	7.92	4.24
26-35 years	12.00	38.05	52.53	33.66	36.44
36-45 years	41.00	38.05	35.44	33.66	36.86
46-55 years	25.00	15.04	5.70	17.82	14.62
56-65 years	19.00	2.65	3.80	5.94	7.20
66 years & >	2.00	0	0	0.99	0.64
Sex					
Male	33.00	53.98	31.01	31.68	37.08
Female	67.00	46.02	68.99	68.32	62.92

Civil Status					
Married	75.76	52.21	46.20	53.00	55.32
Single	15.15	32.74	45.57	44.00	35.74
Divorced/ Separated	3.03	12.39	6.96	1.00	6.17
Widowed	6.06	2.65	1.27	2.00	2.77
Spouse, where?					
Philippines	19.70	55.71	52.31	57.41	45.88
Host country	80.30	44.29	47.69	42.59	54.12
Children, where?					
Philippines	35.71	73.61	81.25	75.56	65.34
Host country	64.29	26.39	18.75	24.44	34.66
Number of children					
0	18.00	23.89	48.08	38.61	33.83
1-2	58.00	46.02	37.18	44.55	45.32
3-5	22.00	29.20	12.82	14.85	19.15
>5	2.00	0.88	1.92	1.98	1.70
Educational attainment					
Elementary	2.00	0.88	1.90	0	1.27
High School	13.00	10.62	13.29	13.86	12.71
Tech- Vocational	13.00	19.47	7.59	8.91	11.86
College	67.00	63.72	73.42	77.23	70.55
Postgraduate	5.00	5.31	3.80	0	3.60
Occupation					
Worker	4.49	8.26	0.66	1.02	3.35
HSW	62.92	6.42	42.11	18.37	32.37
service staff	21.35	56.88	7.89	18.37	24.78
Professionals	11.24	26.61	49.34	61.22	38.84
Seafarers	0	1.83	0	1.02	0.67

Table 2. (continued). Percent distribution of background characteristics of overseas Filipinos by country

Background Characteristics	Italy	Qatar	Singapore	UAE	Total
Years of stay abroad					
< 5 years	9.00	48.67	32.38	56.44	36.44
5-10 years	25.00	29.20	52.53	19.80	34.11
11-15 years	22.00	15.04	8.86	9.90	13.35
16-20 years	13.00	1.77	3.80	6.93	5.93
>20 years	31.00	5.31	2.53	6.93	10.17
Member of an organization					
Yes	68.00	61.95	49.37	51.49	56.78

No	32.00	38.05	50.63	48.51	43.22
Years still will work abroad					
1-3 years	4.71	21.50	29.68	25.81	22.05
4-5 years	11.76	31.78	17.42	24.73	21.36
5-10 years	32.94	33.51	30.97	31.18	32.50
11-15 years	22.35	6.54	9.03	11.83	11.59
16 years & >	28.24	4.67	12.90	6.45	12.50

Around 55% of the respondents are married while 36% of them are still single. A majority consisting of 66% of the total respondents have children. Around 65% of the respondents have children in the Philippines while the rest, 35% have their children with them in the host countries. Around 46% of the respondents have their spouses in the Philippines while 54% have their spouses with them in the host countries.

A majority of the respondents (57%) are members of overseas Filipino associations but a substantial number (43%) remains unorganized. Key informants even say that the figure of unorganized overseas Filipinos is a lot larger. They estimate that only about 10% of overseas Filipinos are not members of any organization abroad. Although a large majority (about 86%) intends to permanently return to the Philippines, they differ in terms of when they intend to go back. About 55% of them want to still work abroad for 4-10 years; 24% for more than 10 years while 21% intends to go home in three years' time. Such intent of going back home after five years to ten years in the host countries, were also expressed by FGD participants.

The above background characteristics of the sampled group of overseas Filipinos not only portrays a segmented population of Filipinos in the four countries in terms of occupation but also in many other respects. Such differences will be taken into account if they would have any effects on saving, business, investing behavior and indebtedness of overseas Filipinos.

2.2. Savings Behavior

About 81% of the survey respondents remit regularly, that means, monthly to their families in the Philippines. This is also affirmed in the FGDs, participants reported that they indeed, almost without fail, every month they remit to their families which expect and depend a lot from what they send to them. About 74% of them remit from PhP 10,000-25,000, 16% from PhP 26,000-50,000 while 10% remit more than PhP 50,000 a month.

Their average monthly expenses in their host countries are as follows: below PhP10,000 (35.38%); PhP10,000-25,000 (27.97%); PhP 26,000-50,000 (20.13 %); 51,000-100,000 (12.71%) and above 100,000 (3.81%).

The majority of the overseas Filipino respondents are able to save some money from their earnings. Around 61% of those who are able to save money place 25-75% of their savings in a bank. Only about 23% of them have money in time deposit. A majority of the respondents, about 61%, has no emergency fund. Only 39% have allotted some money for emergencies.

How many are able to save? About 74% of the respondents are able to save while 26% are not able to save money. The breakdown per country in terms of how many are able to save as reflected in Table 2 are as follows: Singapore (84%), Italy (74 %), UAE (73%), and Qatar (62%).

These survey results run contrary to what were expressed in the FGDs regardless of occupational composition of the discussion groups. Some of the professionals said that they have savings but not much as they wanted to. Others said that despite their high salaries, have also difficulty saving money. Some of the service staff workers and domestic workers said that they are able to save some money but most of the time are also sent to their families for emergencies and social obligations. Many of domestic workers and construction workers said they had no savings at all. There is a general perception among the participants in the FGDs that the great majority of overseas Filipinos in the four countries regardless of occupation and income do not have substantial savings nor are able to save and invest their hard earned money to profitable endeavors.

The higher figure of savers obtained in the survey when compared with the FGD estimate can be explained by the fact that about 51% of the survey respondents have attended financial literacy seminars and hence, have most likely imbibed the importance of saving money and consequently have done so. Key informants when asked and seemingly taking the middle ground (i.e. between the different results in the survey and FGDs), estimate that probably half of the migrant population are able to save while the other half is really unable to do so. This study also shares this position. The study acknowledges that that savings awareness and financial literacy are gaining ground (which will explain a growing number of savers among overseas Filipinos) but maintains that a significant segment of the migrant population are still unable to save.

Table 3. Percent distribution regarding savings behavior of overseas Filipinos by host country

Savings Behavior	Italy	Qatar	Singapore	UAE	Total
Able to save					

Yes	74	61.95	83.54	73.27	74.15
No	26	38.05	16.46	26.73	25.85
Percentage of monthly income able to save					
0%	7.69	12.5	0.76	11.76	7.20
5%	21.79	28.75	19.70	24.71	23.20
10%	28.21	20.00	15.91	16.47	19.47
15%	8.97	12.50	14.39	11.76	12.27
20% & >	33.33	26.25	49.24	35.29	38.87
When set aside money as savings					
After paying expenses and sending remittances	58.23	55.00	33.33	52.5	47.55
Before paying expenses and sending remittances	41.77	45.00	66.67	47.5	52.45
Percentage of savings in bank deposit					
0%	16.42	25.33	7.02	24.68	17.12
25%	56.72	60.00	60.53	54.55	58.26
50%	8.96	0	18.42	14.29	13.21
75%	2.99	8.00	4.39	6.49	3.60
100%	14.93	6.67	9.65	0	7.81
Emergency Fund					
Yes	26.26	28.32	55.84	37.62	38.97
No	73.74	71.68	44.16	62.38	61.03

How much is saved by overseas Filipinos? How much is saved by those who were able to save can be gleaned from the survey data as summarized in Table 2. Of those overseas Filipinos that are able to save, around 38% of them are able to save around 20% of the monthly earnings; around 12% is able to save 15% of their income, while the majority, about 43% of them can only save 5-10% of their monthly income. In terms of the differences among overseas Filipinos the four countries, the following can be noted: More Filipinos in Singapore are able to save (about 84% of them) when compared to their counterparts in the other countries. Filipinos working in Singapore are also able to save more when compared with those in other countries. Around 49% of those who are able to save in Singapore

can save 20% of their income while a lesser number from the other countries can save the same amount, 35% in UAE, 33% in Italy and 26% in Qatar.

What could explain that there are more Filipino savers in Singapore and even among the savers, it is those from Singapore that can save the most? Insights from the discussions in the FGDs and with key informants could explain these survey results. The young Filipino professionals abroad, in general, are relatively very conscious of the need to save, invest and start a business. Professionals in Singapore are lot younger when compared with those in Qatar and UAE, which have a number of Filipino professional. Many of the young professionals, especially those in Singapore, have learned the art of saving, investing and business on their own. What is going more for them is that they have higher incomes and their families in the Philippines are relatively well-off or financially stable and thus, do not expect financial help from these young professionals.

Chi-square tests results validate that indeed those from Singapore have more propensity to save when compared from those from the other three countries.

Chi-square tests were run to test a number of variables that are possibly related to the ability to save. The Chi-square test for independence or chi-square test of association is used to determine if there is a relationship between two categorical variables (those at the nominal or ordinal levels). The Chi-square statistic reflects the strength of the relationship, the greater it is, the stronger the relationship. The probability associated with the Chi-square statistic refers to the probability of the relationship between the two variables being tested. In this test and the succeeding Chi-square tests, the probability is set at $p=.05$ which means that probability level must be lower than 0.05 before one can say that a relationship exists between the two variables.

What are the characteristics of those who are able to save? The following variables/characteristics of overseas Filipinos were tested whether they are associated with the ability to save: 1) age; 2)sex; 3) civil status; 4) country of work; 5) residence of children; 6) residence of spouse; 7) occupation of migrant; 8) educational attainment; 9) years of stay abroad; 10) membership in an organization; 11) monthly expenses; 12) attendance to a financial literacy seminar and 13) intention to permanently return to the Philippines.

Table 4. Summary of Chi-square test results regarding the ability to save of overseas Filipinos

	Are you able to save?
Independent Variables Tested	Chi-square value; degrees of freedom (df) and probability value (p)
1. Age	Chi-square= 0.221 df=1 p=0.638
2. Country of work	Chi-square=16.096 df=3 p=0.001*
3. Sex	Chi-square= 0.072 df=1 p=0.078
4. Civil status	Chi-square= 1.510 df=1 p=0.219

5. Residence of spouse	Chi-square= 1.601 df=1 p=0.205
6. Residence of children	Chi-square= 5.368 df=1 p=0.020*
7. Have children?	Chi-square= 2.147 df=1 p=0.142
8. Educational attainment	Chi-square= 9.904 df=1 p=0.001*
9. Occupation	Chi-square=19.632 df=2 p=0.000*
10. Years of stay abroad	Chi-square= 9.487 df=4 p=0.050007
11. Membership in an organization	Chi-square= 1.771 df=1 p=0.183
12. Monthly expenses	Chi-square=16.217 df=3 p=0.001
13. Financial literacy seminar	Chi-square=37.938 df=1 p=0.000*
14. Intent to permanently return	Chi-square= 4.594 df=1 p=0.032*

***significant at $p < .05$**

Results as can be gleaned from Table 3 indicate that country of work, residence of children, educational attainment, occupation, monthly expenses, attendance to financial literacy seminar and the intention to return permanently to the Philippines (those with asterisks) are correlated with the ability to save. Such significant relationships between the ability to save and background characteristics of the respondents are to be interpreted as follows: Those in Singapore are more able to save when compared with other countries. Those with children in the Philippines can save more than those who have children with them abroad. This is probably due to the fact that the cost of living is a lot expensive in the host countries than in the Philippines, thus, it is a lot difficult to save with migrants having their children with them abroad. It was also established in the tests that those with higher educational attainment (with college education) are more likely able to save than those who finished high school and technology and vocational education. They are most likely have access to knowledge and information regarding financial vehicles that their counterparts with lower educational attainment.

Further, those overseas Filipinos who spend PhP 50,000 or less monthly are able to save than those who spend more than PhP 50,000. This can easily be understood that those who spend less can save more. Overseas Filipinos who have attended a financial literacy education seminar are also more likely to save than those who have not. Interestingly, most of them have attended the seminars conducted by Atikha. It would seem that these seminars have been effective in inculcating saving among them. And lastly, those Filipinos who intend to return are able to save than those who seek to permanently stay abroad. They are more likely to save for they have substantial amount of money when they return back to the Philippines.

Why are those who have savings able to save? The top five answers of those who are able to save in explaining their being able to save are as follows: 1) They have forced savings program (20.59%); 2) They have set goals on savings and investments (19.12%); 3) They have been working abroad for a long time; 4) Other members are working (10.96%) and 5) They have attended a financial

literacy seminar and they have been working abroad for a long time (both with 10.43%).

Overseas Filipino respondents who had difficulty saving were also asked to explain. The top four answers (which were cited by at least 10% of the respondents) are as follows: 1) They are the only breadwinner of the family (25.82%); 2) They have a low salary and income (23.36%); 3) They are still paying off debts (21.93%); and 4) Their spouses and children are totally financially dependent on them (10.66%).

The cited reasons in the survey were also echoed by participants in the FGDs and key informants. They point to serious problems that are confronted by overseas Filipinos. Family dependency on migrant earnings, which is almost total dependency among many of their families, is a serious problem. Their relatives in the Philippines stopped working and relied mainly on the remittances sent by overseas workers.

Indebtedness of overseas Filipinos, particularly with loan sharks and credit companies were also cited as serious among a number of Filipino professionals and non-professionals alike. What is not reflected in the survey but cited in the FGDs and pinpointed by key informants are the lavish lifestyle of both overseas Filipinos and their families as another big reason why most overseas Filipinos lack savings and investments.

2.3. Indebtedness of overseas Filipinos

More than half of the overseas Filipino respondents (61%) has a current loan or debt. The breakdown of indebtedness in the four countries are as follows: provinces who have more than half of the families which are indebted are as follows: Italy (61%); Qatar (53.47%); UAE (47.78%); Singapore (40.48%).

Table 5. Percent distribution of incurring of debt and loan of overseas Filipinos by host country

Debt/Loan Behavior	Italy	Qatar	Singapore	UAE	Total
Current debt/loan					
Yes	61.36	53.47	40.48	47.78	49.88
No	38.64	46.53	59.52	52.22	50.12
Source of debt/loan					
Banks	46.15	46.88	55.77	66.67	52.82
Cooperatives	2.56	4.69	0	1.85	2.42

Employer	5.13	7.81	7.69	3.70	6.05
financial institutions	0	4.69	1.92	7.41	3.23
individual lenders	5.13	17.19	11.54	1.85	8.87
lending companies	19.23	3.13	3.85	7.41	9.27
microfinance institutions	3.85	1.56	0	1.85	2.02
Relatives	17.95	14.06	19.23	9.26	15.32
Credit card					
Yes	43.18	55.56	32.61	34.83	40.82
No	56.82	44.44	67.39	65.17	59.18
Uses of credit card					
Emergency	1.72	2.38	1.45	5.66	2.65
acquire real estate	27.59	16.67	15.94	11.32	17.80
buy a car	0	2.38	2.90	0	1.52
buy gadgets	6.90	4.76	8.70	7.55	6.82
buy personal things	17.24	25.00	33.33	33.96	27.27
earn rebates	0	0	4.35	0	1.14
capital for business	12.07	8.33	13.04	11.32	10.98
family needs	31.03	27.38	8.70	15.09	20.83
travel/vacation	3.45	10.71	10.14	15.09	9.85
celebration of occasions	0	2.38	1.45	0	1.14

Indebtedness has also been a subject of discussions in the FGDs. The participants are also of the opinion that a majority of overseas Filipinos are in debt. And such indebtedness has been a cause of why many of them are not able to save and invest.

Where are loans and debts incurred? A little more than half of those who have loans or debts (35.29%) have secured them from banks. Other sources of loans and debts are relatives (15.32%) lending companies (9.27%) and individual lenders (8.87%). Combined together, those indebted to lending and individual lenders, are about 18% of the respondents. They are most likely the ones who still suffer from the usurious interest rates exacted on them by these companies and individuals.

Domestic workers and service workers in the FGDs related how many of their colleagues have been victimized by loan sharks; many of whom have continuously try to pay off debts incurred a long time ago. Such debts were

incurred for payment of processing documents and travel costs when they first migrated to the host country or for expenses for family emergencies like hospitalization and surgical and other medical procedures that were needed by their relatives in the Philippines. Others, incur debts to shoulder increasing family needs which their meager incomes as domestic workers in Qatar and UAE are not able to compensate for.

About 59 % of the respondents also have and use credit cards. When asked for what purpose do they use their credit cards, the following were cited: to buy personal things (27.27%); to send to family for needs (20.83%); to acquire real estate property (17.8%); to provide additional capital for business (10.98%); to travel and have vacation (9.85%). Only 41% pay their credit bills on time while others pay as early as they can (27%) and the rest (30%), pay only the minimum payment. In an FGD of professionals in UAE, some of the participants narrated that there was a time that a number of their fellow professional Filipinos were deep in debt from the credit card companies. They said a number of them have been incarcerated in UAE jails for failing to pay their debts. The participants narrated how easy it was at that time for an overseas Filipino to get as many as three credit cards and many have not prudently used their cards and ended up heavily indebted by having led a carefree and lavish lifestyle.

What are the characteristics of those who are indebted? Who are those that comprise the 61% of the total number of respondents who have debts or loans? Chi-square tests were run to test the following possible correlates of indebtedness (having a loan or debt): 1) age; 2)sex; 3) civil status; 4) country of work; 5) residence of children; 6) residence of spouse; 7) occupation of migrant; 8) educational attainment; 9) years of stay abroad; 10) membership in an organization; 11) monthly expenses; 12) attendance to a financial literacy seminar and 13) intention to permanently return to the Philippines.

Table 6. Summary of Chi-square test results regarding having debts or loans of overseas Filipinos

Independent Variables Tested	Do you have a current debt or loan?		
	Chi-square value; degrees of freedom (df) and probability value (p)		
1. Age	Chi-square= 9.196	df=1	p=0.002*
2. Country of work	Chi-square= 9.774	df=3	p=0.020*
3. Sex	Chi-square= 4.332	df=1	p=0.037*
4. Civil status	Chi-square=17.474	df=1	p=0.000*
5. Residence of spouse	Chi-square=14.102	df=1	p=0.000*
6. Residence of children	Chi-square=13.266	df=1	p=0.000*
7. Have children?	Chi-square= 2.095	df=1	p=0.147
8. Educational attainment	Chi-square= 2.459	df=1	p=0.116
9. Occupation	Chi-square= 9.480	df=2	p=0.008*
10. Years of stay abroad	Chi-square=27.034	df=4	p=0.000*
11. Membership in an organization	Chi-square=13.694	df=1	p=0.000*
12. Monthly expenses	Chi-square=25.839	df=3	p=0.000*

13. Financial literacy seminar	Chi-square=10.089 df=1 p=0.001*
14. Intent to permanently return	Chi-square= 2.407 df=1 p=0.120*

***significant at p <.05**

Results indicate that age, country of work, sex, civil status, residence of husband, residence of children, occupation, length of stay abroad, membership in an organization, monthly expenses and attendance to financial literacy are correlated with indebtedness. That means, that those who are 26-45 years old are more likely to have debts/loans than those who are 46-65 years old. It would seem that prudence is a virtue among the older individuals in terms of incurring debts or loans. Females and married overseas Filipinos are also more likely to incur loans than their counterparts. Those who have their husbands and children with them in the host country are also more likely to have loans than those who have both their spouse and children in the Philippines. This would indicate that indeed the cost of having your spouse and children with you in the host country is a lot higher than when they are in the Philippines, so much so that many of overseas Filipinos have to secure debt or loan to make both ends meet for the whole family to live in the host country, especially if they are leading a lavish lifestyle.

Professionals are also more indebted than household, factory and service workers. Those who spend PhP 10,000-50,000 per month are also indebted more than those who spend more monthly. These two correlates should be further examined because some professionals in the FGDs who spend more or less PhP 50,000 a month argued that securing loans and debts is not necessarily a bad thing. They said they have debts and loans not to live lavishly but to secure additional capital for their investments and businesses. Those who do so comprised about 11% of the total. Those who are members of organization are also more likely to incur debts. Surprisingly, it would seem that also those who have attended financial literacy seminars have more loans than who have not attended them. This could be interpreted that that the seminars have taught them how to secure safe loans or borrow for business purposes and be responsible in paying them off.

As a final note, indebtedness of overseas Filipinos should not be seen hastily as bad especially if what was secured are intended to be invested to profitable endeavors. What is lamentable is the observation that many of them have incurred loans and debts in order to sustain a lavish lifestyle as indicated in the FGD discussions. Also, sadly yet clearly the problem of securing loans from unscrupulous lending companies and individuals among overseas Filipinos persists. A big 18% of the total number of survey participants still do. FGD participants and key informants estimate even a higher figure. This is still a major concern.

2.4. Investment behavior

Around 63% of overseas Filipinos in the four countries have investments. The minority of them, about 37%, have no investments. In terms of percentages, more overseas Filipinos in Singapore (74%) and Italy (72%) have investments when compared to those in UAE (58.54%) and Qatar (42%).

Table 7. Percent distribution of investing behavior of overseas Filipinos by host country

Investing Behavior	Italy	Qatar	Singapore	UAE	Total
Have investments					
Yes	72.62	42.22	73.98	58.54	62.80
No	27.38	57.78	26.02	41.46	37.20
Investments in...					
agribusiness	0	0	2.08	0	0.88
other business	7.30	4.17	7.29	14.17	8.06
capital share in cooperatives	6.74	2.08	4.17	5.00	4.69
educational fund	3.93	7.29	4.17	5.83	4.84
health insurance	10.11	7.29	14.24	9.17	11.29
life insurance	14.61	12.50	15.63	10.83	14.08
house and lot	27.53	31.25	12.50	22.5	20.82
real estate	14.61	11.46	11.46	15.00	12.90
retirement fund	10.67	3.13	6.60	6.67	7.18
mutual fund, stocks, etc.	4.49	20.83	21.88	10.83	15.25

The top six investments of OFs are as follows: 1) house and lot (20.82%); 2) mutual fund, stocks, trust fund (15.25%) and 3) life insurance (14.08%); 4) real estate (12.9%), 5) health insurance (11.29%) and business (8.06%).

For Italy, Qatar and UAE, the top investment is on house and lot. In fact, if we take the average of those who invested in house and lot in the three countries, excluding those in Singapore, that would be about 27%. That is more than a quarter of the total. This is reflected even in the results of FGDs regardless of occupational composition which also portray a propensity in prioritizing house and lot among overseas Filipinos. And such is not a simple priority for most overseas Filipinos. It meant investing millions of hard earned money in purchasing

good parcels of land and constructing big and well-furnished houses for their families to the envy of other people in their communities.

Quite different are the overseas Filipinos in Singapore whose top investment is in mutual fund, stocks, and trust fund. Around 22% them have invested in these financial vehicles.

If we take another look at the total investments of OFs in the four countries we would also appreciate that a growing number, at least a third of the total are into non-traditional investments. If we add to those who invested financial vehicles like mutual funds, stocks and trust fund (15.25%), those who invested in retirement (7.18%), and health insurance (11.29%) funds, then we have a considerable segment (about 34% of the total) that are into non-traditional investment like purchasing house and lot. Not many (only about 9%), however, have invested in agribusiness and other businesses.

Why are those who have invested a part of their money able to do so? The top three answers of those who are able to invest are as follows: 1) They have a family goal on savings and investment that they want to achieve (24.43%); 2) They have self-discipline and spend on necessary things (20.14%); and 3) They know how to budget and keep track of their expenses (14%). Almost of the same percentage (13.57%) said that they are aware of various investment vehicles; 4) Aside from the overseas Filipino, other members of the family are working (10%). In sum, those who have savings and investment goals, are prudent in spending and budgeting their money and have access to information about investment opportunities are more likely to invest than others. Clearly, this is also what was expressed in the FGDs, a resolve (having a plan), self-discipline and information about opportunities separate those who have investments from those without investments.

Those who had difficulty investing were also asked to explain. The top answers that they gave are as follows: 1) They are afraid of risks and just want to keep their money in ordinary savings account (36.64%); 2) They have no investment goals (20.69%); 3) they have had earlier investments that failed; 4) They are happy with what they have (14.66%).

What are the characteristics of those who invested? Chi-square tests were run to test the following possible correlates of being able to invest: 1) age; 2)sex; 3) civil status; 4) country of work; 5) residence of children; 6) residence of spouse; 7) occupation of migrant; 8) educational attainment; 9) years of stay abroad; 10) membership in an organization; 11) monthly expenses; 12) attendance to a financial literacy seminar and 13) intention to permanently return to the Philippines.

Table 8. Summary of Chi-square test results regarding having investments of overseas Filipinos

Independent Variables Tested	Do you have investments?		
	Chi-square value; degrees of freedom (df) and probability value (p)		
1. Age	Chi-square=15.125	df=1	p=0.000*
2. Country of work	Chi-square=27.002	df=3	p=0.000*
3. Sex	Chi-square= 6.344	df=1	p=0.011*
4. Civil status	Chi-square= 6.406	df=1	p=0.011*
5. Residence of spouse	Chi-square=19.178	df=1	p=0.000*
6. Residence of children	Chi-square=13.266	df=1	p=0.000*
7. Have children?	Chi-square= 0.013	df=1	p=0.905
8. Educational attainment	Chi-square=25.926	df=1	p=0.000*
9. Occupation	Chi-square=31.381	df=2	p=0.000*
10. Years of stay abroad	Chi-square=31.699	df=4	p=0.000*
11. Membership in an organization	Chi-square=13.418	df=1	p=0.000*
12. Monthly expenses	Chi-square=39.574	df=3	p=0.000*
13. Financial literacy seminar	Chi-square=63.918	df=1	p=0.001*
14. Intent to permanently return	Chi-square= 2.460	df=1	p=0.116

*significant at $p < .05$

Results indicate that age, country of work, sex, civil status, residence of spouse, location of children, educational attainment, occupation. Length of stay abroad, membership in an organization, monthly expenses and attendance to financial literacy are associated with the ability to invest. That means, that those overseas Filipinos that younger (26-45 years of age), in Singapore, female and married are more likely to have investments than their counterparts. Those who have their spouses with them abroad are more likely to have investments than those with husbands left behind in the Philippines. Those, however, with their children in the Philippines have more investments than those whose children are with them in their country of work. Those who have college education and are professionals are more likely to have investments than others who have lower educational attainment and are household or factory or service workers. Those who also have stayed for about 5-10 years in the host country are also more likely able to invest than those who have not stayed that long or have stayed longer than 10 years. Also those whose monthly expenses are PhP 10,000-50,000 are more likely than those who spend lesser or more than them. Those who have attended financial literacy seminars are more likely to invest than those who have not attended any.

2.5. Business behavior

The overwhelming majority, 79% of the overseas Filipinos in the four countries are not engaged in any business endeavor. Only 21 % of them, has business to run.

Table 9. Percent distribution regarding business behavior of overseas Filipinos by host country

Business Behavior	Italy	Qatar	Singapore	UAE	Total
Business in the Philippines					
Yes	19.05	13.79	23.48	27.16	20.98
No	80.95	86.21	76.52	72.84	79.02
Business engaged in					
Agricultural business	28.00	21.74	22.73	27.66	25.18
Food/restaurant	4.00	17.39	18.18	8.51	12.23
Manufacturing	0	0	0	6.38	2.16
Real estate rental	48.00	17.39	22.73	25.53	27.34
Sari-sari/grocery store	0	13.04	25.00	10.64	13.67
Trading/marketing	8.00	8.70	0	8.51	5.76
Van/car rental, tricycle/jeepney	8.00	13.04	9.09	4.26	7.91
Small business franchise	4.00	8.70	2.27	8.51	5.76
Initial capital invested					
PhP 50,000 or less	25	20	47.37	55.56	41.23
PhP 51,000-200,000	15	40	21.05	13.89	21.05
PhP 201,000-500,000	5	5	13.16	5.56	7.89
PhP 501,000-1 million	10	10	7.89	13.89	10.53
Above PhP 1 million	45	25	10.53	11.11	19.30
Business profitable?					
Yes	85	57.14	77.78	78.57	75.63
No	15	42.86	22.22	21.43	24.37

The top four businesses set up by overseas Filipinos are of the following types: 1) agribusiness (25.18%); 2) real estate rental (27.34%); 3) sari-sari/grocery store (13.67%); and 4) food and restaurant business (12.23%). Most of the businesses are small. About 41% of them required only a capital of PhP 50,000 or less, 21% with an initial capital outlay of PhP 51,000-200,000; 8% with more than 200,000-500,000 capital; and about 11% of them required more than half to a million pesos outlay while the rest, 19% have more than a million capitalization. Most of these businesses do not even hire employees (52%). The other 42% of the businesses set up have only 1-5 employees.

What do these data mean with regards the business behavior of overseas Filipinos in the four countries? The big majority does not have businesses. This is also confirmed in the FGDs. Most of the participants are not currently engaged in business. Though, some are interested to set up their own businesses in the future, they clearly have no definite ideas and plans about them. These data in the survey and results of FGD discussions could indicate that a substantial number of them are not really business-minded and are not likely to become businessmen. The impression that migrants will all be engaged in business when they return home is thus not true. This highlights the importance of linking migrants to investments that can provide them passive income upon their return.

Secondly, those currently engaged in business, are clearly small businessmen as seen in the type of business they run, the initial amount of capital invested and the number of people they have employed. Further, the staple businesses of sari-sari store and small food/restaurant business are still currently in vogue among them. Such businesses, they are engaged in do not require much feasibility study nor are well-thought of in terms of profitability. There is clearly a need to assist those who are already in business and those who will like to become businessmen.

What are the characteristics of those who are engaged in business?

Chi-square tests were run to test the following possible correlates of being able to have a business: 1) age; 2)sex; 3) civil status; 4) country of work; 5) residence of children; 6) residence of spouse; 7) occupation of migrant; 8) educational attainment; 9) years of stay abroad; 10) membership in an organization; 11) monthly expenses; 12) attendance to a financial literacy seminar and 13) intention to permanently return to the Philippines.

Table 10. Summary of Chi-square test results regarding having business in the Philippines of overseas Filipinos

Independent Variables Tested	Do you have business in the Philippines?
	Chi-square value; degrees of freedom (df) and probability value (p)
1. Age	Chi-square= 4.337 df=1 p=0.036*

2. Country of work	Chi-square= 5.198 df=3 p=0.157
3. Sex	Chi-square= 1.821 df=1 p=0.177
4. Civil status	Chi-square=11.186 df=1 p=0.000*
5. Residence of spouse	Chi-square= 0.127 df=1 p=0.721
6. Residence of children	Chi-square= 0.110 df=1 p=0.739
7. Have children?	Chi-square= 0.286 df=1 p=0.592
8. Educational attainment	Chi-square= 0.245 df=1 p=0.620
9. Occupation	Chi-square= 1.859 df=2 p=0.394
10. Years of stay abroad	Chi-square= 6.541 df=4 p=0.162
11. Membership in an organization	Chi-square= 4.004 df=1 p=0.045*
12. Monthly expenses	Chi-square=12.899 df=3 p=0.004*
13. Financial literacy seminar	Chi-square=17.641 df=1 p=0.000*
14. Intent to permanently return	Chi-square= 0.061 df=1 p=0.804

***significant at p <.05**

Results indicate that age, civil status, membership in an organization, monthly expenses and attendance to financial literacy are correlates of engagement in business. That means, that overseas Filipinos who are 26-45 year of age and married are more likely engaged in business than others who are older and single. Courage and aggression exuded by young people and the responsibility on the shoulders of married overseas Filipinos to provide for their families will help explain their propensity to engage in business. Those whose members of an organization are also likely to engage in business than those who are not; most likely because business information has been provided through interactions among other members of the association. Those who have attended financial literacy seminar are also more likely to engage in business than those who have not. Which is not surprisingly, because, among others, engagement in feasible and profitable businesses are highly encouraged in these seminars.

In what businesses are they interested and what were expressed assistance that they need? The respondents should they engage in business are interested in the following: food business (18.26%); agribusiness (16.44%); investments in mutual fund and other investment vehicles (12.72%), in real estate (12.72%) and in cooperatives (12.53%).

The respondents have expressed the following assistance that they need in relation to business engagement: 1) information on business opportunity (30.36%); 2) business training (26.05%); 3) skills/technical training (22.87%) and business mentoring (19.28%). Around 84% of the total respondents has also expressed the need for financial education while only 16% has expressed no need for it. Half of the respondents have attended a financial literacy education seminar. The larger percentage of attendance in financial literacy seminars are in Singapore with 71% and Italy with 54%. Only 40% of UAE and 34% of Qatar respondents have attended such seminars.

2.6. Return to the Philippines and philanthropy

The survey also asked overseas Filipinos in the four countries about their plan in returning home and their attitude towards giving back to their country of origin. About 34% of the respondents plan to go home for good in 2-5 years while 30% intend to be back home by 6-10 years. Around 24% seek to return home after more than 10 years from now.

About 63% of the respondents said they have retirement and or reintegration plan while the rest of 37% do not have any plan at all. After they return to the Philippines, they intend 1) run a business (73.86%); 2) retire (17.22%) and 3) seek employment (7.05%). In order to fulfill the plan to return they and their family are 1) saving money (34.89%); 2) making investments (28.59%) and 3) addressing family issues and concerns (11.21%).

Less than half of the respondents, around 43% said that they give contributions to projects in the Philippines. Those in Italy give more with 59% of them giving donations and contributions; lesser percentages are recorded in Qatar (44%), UAE (44%) and Singapore (31%).

Those who give back to the Philippines, the majority (75%) donate to projects in their own province while others prefer to give to other places (21%). Many contribute cash (40%), others donate both cash and in kind (40%) while the remaining 17% prefer to donate in kind. Their area preferences for projects that they will support are as follows: relief (30%), education (24%), health (21%) and livelihood (14%). When asked to support specific projects, they have expressed openness to the following projects: renewable energy (67.78%); agricultural inputs to farmers (75.77%) and scholarships for skills training (80.75%).

2.7. Summary of findings on the general situation of overseas Filipinos in Italy, Qatar, Singapore and UAE and their savings and investing behavior

The following are the main findings with regards the general situation of and savings, business and investing behavior and indebtedness of overseas Filipinos in the four countries.

2. The four countries have a substantial number of overseas Filipinos with at least 100,000 Filipinos. The migrant Filipino population in the four countries is comprised of permanent immigrants, contract workers and undocumented migrants. In terms of occupation, the population is also highly segmented into different groups of professionals, household workers, service staff and construction workers. These various groups are very much different in terms of income, work and living conditions and in terms of capacities to save and

invest and even to give back to their home communities and country.

Table 11. Characterization of Filipino migrants in Italy, UAE, Qatar and Singapore

Characterization of migrants				
Category	Italy	UAE	Qatar	Singapore
Filipino population	184,638	679,819	342,442	180,000
Segment 1: highly skilled professionals (oil and gas, consultants, managers of multinationals) earning about \$6,000 to \$12,000 per month	minimal number working in UN agencies	5% of the population working in the oil and gas industry	5% of the population working in the oil and gas industry	5% working in banking and IT and multinational corporations
Segment 2: professionals earning \$3,000 to \$5,999 (nurses, teachers, manager service industry, engineers, IT middle level managers)		15%	15%	25% young professionals
Segment 3: professionals, semi-skilled workers working in the hotels and other service industry and domestic workers earning \$1,000-\$3,000	60% (domestic workers)	35%	35%	25%
Segment 4: unskilled workers working in hotels, malls, domestic workers, construction workers and other service industry earning \$400 to \$900	40% (domestic workers)	45% some domestic workers as low as \$200 (undocumented or contract substitution)	45% some labor camps and domestic workers as low as \$200	45%

working and living conditions	can acquire citizenship if working for a long time problem with job security because of crisis in Europe	unskilled workers in labor camps and domestic workers in miserable working conditions and no day offs	unskilled workers in labor camps and domestic workers in miserable working conditions and no day offs problem with job security because of drop in oil prices	domestic workers have day off and experience less contract violations can acquire permanent residency but not citizenship
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2. Migration corridors—country of destination and province of origin—are discernible in terms of relative concentrations and presence of active partner overseas Filipino leaders and organizations. Identified significant migration corridors are as follows: 1) Italy-Batangas; Italy-Laguna; Italy-Tarlac - Italy Surigao del Sur and Italy - Oriental Mindoro; 2) Singapore-Laguna; Singapore-Batangas; Singapore- Ifugao; 3) UAE-Batangas and UAE-Laguna and 4) Qatar-Batangas; Qatar-Laguna; and Qatar-Tarlac. The province of Oriental Mindoro and the three IFAD provinces of Ifugao, Surigao del Sur and Agusan del Sur are not really rich source of overseas Filipinos so there were very few corridors identified in destination countries.

Among the four countries, Italy and Qatar are currently facing economic difficulties. More and more Filipinos are returning back home because of the difficult situation that they are confronted with in these countries.

3. Organizations of overseas Filipinos. The overseas Filipinos are largely unorganized. There are numerous Filipino organizations in the four countries but they are relatively small in terms of membership and reach. They are also in the main socio-cultural and 'hometown'-based organizations and are not engaged in migration and development nor are involved in savings and investment, and financial literacy initiatives. Hometown associations are still to be drawn into playing a role in the migration and development initiatives of their home province. Very few HTAs and organizations are to be relied upon in terms of such engagements.

4. Savings behavior. Although, the survey indicated a big number of savers among overseas Filipinos in the four countries, FGDs and key informants maintain that a large segment still of the migrant population are without savings. Even

granting that we have a large number of savers as indicated by the survey data, a further scrutiny, however, point to the fact that they do not have substantial savings, i.e. the majority of the savers can only muster to save 5-10% of their monthly income.

The culture of saving and investing has still to be ingrained into the minds of the vast majority of overseas Filipinos. The problems of dependency of families, indebtedness to scrupulous lenders and credit card companies, leading lavish lifestyles, lack of budgeting and financial management skills were pointed out, among others, as the reasons why many are unable to save and invest. Attendance to financial literacy seminars which tackles and addresses frontally these problems has been seen as a strong correlate to the capacity to save, invest and engage in business.

5. Indebtedness. A large segment of the population, professional or otherwise is indebted. Indebtedness per se is not a problem, particularly if such loans or debts are incurred for additional capital for productive investments which a number of overseas Filipinos have done. The concern lies on a significant number who have used such loans and debts for other purposes and also those who still have secured and continuously secure loans and debts from unscrupulous lenders.

6. Investing behavior. Around 63% of overseas Filipinos in the four countries have investments and about 37% have no investments.

From the survey results, FGDs and key informant interviews, the following lessons can be learned from those who were able to save and invest:

1. They were prudent in spending and budgeting their money, exercise self-discipline and are conscious not to change their lifestyle and lead their lives as simple as possible;
2. They have set their financial goals for migration and have concrete plans to achieve these goals;
3. They had access to information about investment opportunities; and
4. They have reliable and responsible family members (notedly in many cases—women and wives) who were able to manage the family finances well and make wise investments.

A large chunk of savings of overseas Filipinos have been invested in procuring lots and constructing big houses in the Philippines. Substantial savings and profitable investments (in stocks, cooperatives and other investment vehicles) although

done by a considerable number of overseas Filipinos must be highly encouraged and should be a normative practice. Further, savings and investment schemes must be tailor-fit to the type of occupation and profession of overseas Filipinos. "Forced savings" and low capital investment schemes for low-income overseas Filipinos (e.g. domestic workers and workers in labor camps) especially in Qatar and UAE despite being a challenge has to be designed. Concrete and lucrative investment packages must be offered to willing professionals and high income overseas Filipinos. Business opportunities and financial investments in agricultural cooperatives must also be disseminated and offered to overseas Filipinos in the four countries. Furthermore, such schemes must consider that a substantial number of overseas Filipinos intend to go back in 2-5 years and 5-10 years from now. Lack of information and access to savings, investment and business opportunities lead to dismal practices of savings, investment and engagement in business.

7. Very few overseas Filipinos are engaged in business. This is not to be hastily interpreted as negative. This could simply indicate that not all overseas Filipinos will engage in business. Those who are interested to engage in business should be ably assisted while those who will not, should be offered profitable investment schemes.

Expressed needs of those who would go into business and are now engaged in different endeavors are information on business opportunity, business training, skills and technical training and business mentoring.

8. Less than 50% of overseas Filipinos in the four countries donate to projects in the Philippines, especially to those implemented in their own home provinces. This hometown bias or preference in giving must be cultivated to positive use by offering them development projects that they could support in their provinces of origin. Platforms for giving must be established especially for overseas Filipino professionals who have the capacity to give back to the community and country.

B. Description and Analysis of Migration Situation in the Provinces of Agusan del Sur, Batangas, Ifugao, Laguna, Oriental Mindoro, Surigao del Sur and Tarlac

1. Profile and characteristics of families of overseas Filipinos who participated in the FGDs and survey in the seven provinces

A total of 789 respondents were engaged in the survey. The breakdown of the respondents per province is as follows: Agusan del Sur (119); Batangas (130); Ifugao (128); Laguna (102); Oriental Mindoro (108); Surigao del Sur (91); and Tarlac (111).

A total of 90 individual family relatives of overseas Filipinos and migrant returnees participated in the 14 FGDs conducted in the seven provinces. In addition, 52 key informant interviews of leaders of organizations of OFW families, selected migrant successful returnees, NGO and religious leaders, and local government agency officials were also done. A total of 931 were engaged in the survey, key informant interviews, and FGDs in the research in the provinces.

Table 12. Research Participants By Province

Province	Survey Respondents	No. of FGDs/(No. of Participants)	Key Informant Interviews
Agusan del Sur	119	2 (9)	5
Batangas	130	2 (10)	10
Ifugao	128	2 (18)	7
Laguna	102	2 (12)	6
Oriental Mindoro	108	2 (13)	8
Surigao del Sur	91	2 (8)	8
Tarlac	111	2 (20)	8
Total	789 respondents	14 FGDs (90 participants)	52 key informants

Table 13 describes the profile of the survey respondents in the seven provinces. Half of the total respondents are within the 26-45 years range, the great majority are female, married and have children. About 40% of them has finished college education while about 37% has finished high school. Occupation-wise, a big bulk of them, 40% has no current work. Most of their relatives who are working abroad, about 40%, are employed as domestic workers in different countries. Other relatives are service staff personnel (16%), workers (16%) and in various other occupations.

The relatives abroad have been working there for different periods of time, with more than half (52%) for less than 5 years, about 33% for 5-10 years already and the rest for longer periods of time.

Table 13. Percent distribution of background characteristics of OF families by province

Background Characteristics	Agusan del Sur	Batangas	Ifugao	Laguna	Oriental Mindoro	Surigao del Sur	Tarlac	Total
Age								
25 years & <	3.36	10.77	7.81	8.82	5.56	1.10	11.71	7.22
26-35 years	16.81	23.85	39.84	23.53	20.88	20.88	19.82	24.59
36-45 years	19.33	19.23	34.38	17.65	31.87	31.87	28.83	25.35
46-55 years	33.61	19.23	15.63	24.51	14.29	14.29	23.42	21.17
56-65 years	17.65	17.69	2.34	19.61	19.78	19.78	15.32	14.96
66 years & >	9.24	9.23	0	5.88	12.09	12.09	0.90	6.72
Sex								
Male	30.25	26.15	25.78	20.59	22.22	17.58	36.94	25.98
Female	69.75	73.85	74.22	79.41	77.78	82.42	63.06	74.02
Civil Status								
Married	85.71	74.62	56.25	76.47	71.30	81.32	75.68	74.02
Single	11.76	11.54	35.16	9.80	9.26	4.40	17.12	14.83
Divorced/ Separated	0.84	4.62	7.03	4.90	7.41	0	4.50	4.31
Widowed	0.84	9.23	1.56	7.84	9.26	13.19	0	5.70
Number of children								
0	9.24	14.62	35.16	7.84	7.41	8.79	20.72	15.46
1-2	26.89	30.77	42.19	39.22	37.96	32.97	29.73	34.22
3-5	42.02	36.92	20.31	46.08	35.19	36.26	44.14	36.88
>5	21.85	17.69	2.34	6.86	19.44	21.98	5.41	13.43
Educational attainment								
Elementary	8.40	28.46	1.56	6.86	13.89	13.19	0.90	10.65
High School	61.34	26.15	19.53	33.33	37.96	32.97	48.65	36.88
Tech- Vocational	8.40	3.85	2.34	12.75	19.44	5.49	13.51	9.13
College	21.85	37.69	73.44	43.14	26.85	48.35	27.03	40.05
Postgraduate	0	3.85	3.13	3.92	1.85	0	9.91	3.30
Occupation								
Worker	2.52	3.23	3.23	6.40	4.95	4.00	2.25	5.62
Farmer	26.05	2.42	2.42	21.60	0.99	20.00	17.98	13.59
health prof/worker	0.84	7.26	7.26	0.80	0	0	1.12	1.57
government employee	0	3.23	3.23	0.80	0	1.00	1.12	1.31
office employee	5.88	16.94	16.94	10.40	9.90	14.00	16.85	12.42
self-employed	0	0	0	1.60	0	0	0	0.26
service staff	4.20	2.42	2.42	8.80	6.93	3.00	0	4.58

Businessman	7.56	4.03	4.03	14.40	14.85	3.00	4.49	8.76
Teacher	0.84	3.23	3.23	1.60	4.95	2.00	5.62	2.61
Student	0	1.61	1.61	4.00	2.97	0	0	1.31
no work	52.10	54.03	54.03	25.60	54.46	49.00	49.44	46.14
Unspecified	0	1.61	1.61	4.00	0	4.00	1.12	1.83

Table 13 (continued). Percent distribution of background characteristics of OF families by province

Background Characteristics	Agusan del Sur	Batangas	Ifugao	Laguna	Oriental Mindoro	Surigao del Sur	Tarlac	Total
Occupation of relative								
Finance staff	2.52	1.54	2.38	2.00	0.93	0	1.80	1.66
engineer/ architect	3.36	15.38	5.56	10.00	0.93	5.49	2.70	6.37
Entrepreneur	0	0	0	0	0	0	1.80	0.25
Worker	0	14.62	13.49	19.00	17.59	20.88	16.22	16.31
health professional	4.20	4.62	7.14	8.00	0.93	4.40	2.70	4.59
Domestic worker	48.74	27.69	61.11	33.00	62.96	37.36	34.23	43.82
office personnel	8.40	13.08	2.38	6.00	1.85	2.20	6.31	5.99
Seafarer	1.68	0	0.79	3.00	2.78	13.19	2.70	3.06
service staff	15.97	22.31	7.14	19.00	6.48	13.19	28.83	16.18
Teacher	0.84	0.77	0	0	0	1.10	0	0.38
not specified	0	0	0	0	5.56	2.20	2.70	1.40
Years of stay of relative abroad								
< 5 years	66.39	51.54	56.25	35.29	54.63	49.45	50.45	52.47
5-10 years	28.57	30.00	35.94	36.27	27.78	39.56	36.04	33.21
11-15 years	3.36	4.62	4.69	20.59	8.33	6.59	3.60	7.10
16-20 years	0	3.85	1.56	1.96	3.70	3.30	1.80	2.28
>20 years	1.68	10.00	1.56	5.88	5.56	1.10	8.11	4.94
Average monthly expenses								
<PhP 10,000	56.30	26.92	48.44	29.41	64.81	49.45	30.63	43.47
PhP 10,000-25,000	41.18	48.46	40.63	42.16	34.26	41.76	51.35	42.97
PhP 26,000-50,000	2.52	18.46	10.16	21.57	0.93	7.69	15.32	11.03
PhP 51,000-100,000	0	6.15	0.78	3.92	0	1.10	2.70	2.15
>PhP 100,000	0	0	0	2.94	0	0	0	0.38

% of expenses shouldered by remittances								
10% & <	10.08	39.23	9.38	28.43	49.07	39.56	19.82	27.25
11-25%	15.97	11.54	25.00	14.71	16.67	8.79	15.32	15.72
26-50%	27.73	7.69	14.84	22.55	10.19	17.58	18.02	16.73
51-75%	22.69	14.62	20.31	15.69	10.19	12.09	25.23	17.49
76-100%	23.53	26.92	30.47	18.63	13.89	21.98	21.62	22.81

2. Saving, investing and business behavior and indebtedness of families of overseas Filipinos in the seven provinces

The results of the survey in relation to savings and investment behavior and indebtedness and needs of families of overseas Filipinos in the seven provinces are as follows:

2.1. Reliance on remittances

About 44% of the families surveyed needs lower than PhP10,000 for their monthly expenses while another 43% of them needs PhP 10,000-25,000. Around 11% needs P26,000-50,000 while the rest needs more than 50,000 a month.

Survey data point to dependency of families on remittances to cover their monthly expenses. Around 23% of the families relied on migrant remittances to shoulder 76-100% of their monthly expenses. Another 18% of them needs the remittances to shoulder 51-75% of their monthly expenses. That means that 41% are almost dependent on their relatives' remittances in order to cover half of their monthly expenses. About 17% of them needs the remittances to cover for 26-50% of their needs. The rest of the families (around 43%) are able to cover the great part of their expenses, only needing remittances to cover for 10-25% of their monthly expenses. From the data, it would seem that those in Tarlac are the least dependent from the remittances with 49% of the families covering 90% of their expenses and only needs the remittances to cover for the 10% of the expenses. It would also seem that the families in Ifugao are the most dependent, with 30% of them relying on the remittances to cover 76-100% of their monthly needs.

Results of interviews and FGDs also indicate that the dependency of families of migrants to the remittances from their relatives is very high. Based on their own estimates, key informants and FGD participants said that about 70-100% of their household expenses are shouldered by their migrant relatives abroad. This holds true to all the seven provinces. What is alarming is that dependency, it seems, is at the highest among families of lower income overseas Filipinos, i.e. household service workers, construction workers, skilled and non-skilled workers.

Dependency would mean also dependency not only of the immediate family but also of other relatives to the money sent by overseas Filipinos. This indicate a growing dependency on migrant remittances among a number of Filipino families.

Dependency, it seems, is at its lowest among families of young professionals whose families are relatively well-off, i.e. from upper middle class to a higher class, and were able to send these young professionals to prestigious schools in the Philippines earlier on. This was also expressed not only in some of the FGDs in the provinces but also among Filipino professionals in the four countries. Dependency is low among families, especially those of professionals in Singapore. Such is not case among professionals in Qatar and UAE, who have also expressed that they also shoulder the financial needs of their families and relatives in the Philippines.

2.2. Savings behavior of families

The great majority of the families, 63% is unable to save some from the remittances that they receive. Only 37% is able to save some of the money that they receive from their relatives. Agusan del Sur (82%) and Surigao del Sur (79%) registered the most number of families being unable to save from the remittances. This is not surprising because the two provinces are among the poorest in the country. This does not mean that the majority of the families from the provinces of Oriental Mindoro, Ifugao, Laguna and Tarlac fared a lot better. Only those from Batangas registered more families that are able to save (65%) than those who have no savings (35%). All the other provinces counted more families that are unable to save than those who are able to save from the remittances of their relatives.

Table 14. Percent distribution regarding savings behavior of OF families by province

Savings Behavior	Agusan del Sur	Batangas	Ifugao	Laguna	Oriental Mindoro	Surigao del Sur	Tarlac	Total
Able to save								
Yes	17.65	64.62	35.16	39.22	31.48	20.88	43.24	36.88
No	82.35	35.38	64.84	60.78	68.52	79.12	56.76	63.12
Percent of remittance Saved								
0-4	17.39	16.35	15.22	4.65	23.81	36.11	20.63	18.78
5%	34.78	47.12	17.39	23.26	52.38	30.56	26.98	35.98
10%	21.74	28.85	6.52	32.56	17.46	22.22	22.22	22.49
15%	8.70	0.96	6.52	20.93	3.17	2.78	14.29	7.14
20% & >	17.39	6.73	54.35	18.60	3.17	8.33	15.87	15.61
When set aside								

money as savings								
After paying for expenses	85.71	60.22	72.09	67.39	82.69	57.58	85.19	71.35
Before paying for expenses	14.29	39.78	27.91	32.61	17.31	42.42	14.81	28.65
Percent of family savings in bank								
0	63.16	26.32	27.50	12.50	45.28	62.50	33.96	36.36
25%	26.32	45.61	35.00	81.25	47.17	25.00	56.60	46.85
50%	5.26	14.04	32.50	6.25	3.77	3.13	3.77	10.14
75%	5.26	3.51	5.00	0	1.89	3.13	5.66	3.50
100%	0	10.53	0	0	1.89	6.25	0	3.15
Emergency fund								
Yes	4.20	70.54	14.84	31.37	14.85	5.56	18.45	24.09
No	95.80	29.46	85.16	68.63	85.15	94.44	81.55	75.91

How much is saved by those who are able have savings? Of those families that are able to save, around 16% of them are able to save around 20% of the monthly remittances; around 7% is able to save 15%, and the rest, about 58%, is able to save 5-10%. That will mean that at most, 5%-10% can be saved from the remittances by most of the families left behind.

Around 61% placed their 25-75% of their savings in a bank. Only about 23% have money in time deposit. The great majority, 77.91%, have no emergency fund. Only 24% have allotted some money for emergencies. Of those who have emergency fund, 79.6% of them have an emergency fund equivalent to a month of their family income 13,43% have a fund 2 times of their income, while 6.97% of them have a fund 3 or more times than their family income.

How are they able to save? The vast majority 71% sets aside some of the remittances as savings after they have paid their monthly expenses. A good number of them, around 29% sets some money as savings before spending and paying for the monthly expenses.

Why are they able to save? The top three answers of those who are able to save are as follows: 1) They have set family goals on savings and investment (33.4%); 2) Other family members are working (23.23%); and 3) They keep track of their expenses and spend only on their needs (19.91%).

Those who had difficulty saving were also asked to explain. The top three answers that they gave are as follows: 1) Their relative abroad receives a low salary or earns a low income (31.13%); 2) They are still paying off debts (25.13%); and 3) Their relative abroad is the only breadwinner of the family (20.5%).

What are the characteristics of the families that are able to save? Chi-square tests were run to test the following possible correlates of being able to save: 1) occupation of relative of migrant; 2) occupation of migrant; 3) financial literacy attendance; 4) country where migrant works; and 5) educational attainment of relative of migrant.

Table 15. Summary of Chi-square test results regarding the ability to save of families of overseas Filipinos

Are you able to save from the remittances that you receive?	
Independent Variables Tested	Chi-square value; degrees of freedom (df) and probability value (p)
1. Having work of relative in the Philippines	Chi-square= 1.735 df=1 p=0.118
2. Educational attainment of relative in the Philippines	Chi-square=26.498 df=4 p=0.000*
3. Host country of relative abroad	Chi-square= 3.196 df=3 p=0.0788
4. Occupation of relative abroad	Chi-square=24.425 df=4 p=0.000*
5. Financial literacy seminar	Chi-square= 1.601 df=1 p=0.205

***significant at p <.05**

Results indicate that only educational attainment of migrant relative is correlated with the ability to save. That means, that the higher the educational attainment of the relative in the Philippines, the more likely is the ability of the family to save.

Results of the survey are validated and confirmed by the conducted FGDs and interviews in the provinces. From the interviews and discussions, savings of families depend on the following:

Salary/income of OFs. From the FGDs, participants noted that the ability to save hinges on the salary and income of the migrants. This is so because a large part of the remittances goes to family expenses. Thus, according to them, not much can be saved from a lesser income earned by the migrant. Thus, it is observed that those professionals in UAE, Qatar and Singapore, with relatively higher incomes, are more likely to be able to save compared to domestic workers, especially those in Qatar and UAE who really earn meagre incomes. To them saving a measly P1,000 is an accomplishment.

This does not mean, however, that higher income automatically equates to higher savings. It has been raised in the interviews and FGDs, that many Filipinos

who have more in income have also no savings to boast of. They said the ability to save also hinges on the attitudes and behaviors of both the migrants and their relatives in the Philippines. Below are the other factors cited in the discussions and interviews that will explain the ability to save or inability to save of migrant families:

Employment/income or lack of it of members of families left behind. It has been observed that many relatives of migrants have stopped working when a member of their family started working abroad. These are also the families that have no savings. It has been raised in the discussions that relatives have to continuously contribute to the family income which will help in increasing the capacity of the family to save.

Proper management and use of remittances of families. It has been cited by those who have successfully integrated back into the country, that their success is largely due to having responsible partners and family members who have not squandered the money that they have sent them.

Lifestyle (extravagant or living beyond the means or not) of families. Many migrant families are able to save by leading a relatively frugal lifestyle compared to others who have been observed to leading a luxurious lifestyle.

Level of financial literacy of members of families left behind (i.e. ways and means of saving money, budgeting, etc.). Interestingly, it has also been raised that many families do not really know the simple basics of budgeting and saving money.

Many start saving money after taking care of the education of their children and the construction of their houses in the Philippines. Only then, do they start of thinking of investing their money. Saving, investing and doing business seems to largely depend on the attitude and aptitude of those left behind in the Philippines who are in charge of managing the remittances and other income of the families. Most of these responsible and capable of finance management are women.

2.3. Indebtedness of families

Almost half of the families (47.63%) has a current loan or debt. The provinces who have more than half of the families which are indebted are as follows: Batangas (60.42%); Tarlac (53.54%); Laguna (52.58%); Oriental Mindoro (51.96%) and Surigao del Sur (51.85%). Only Agusan del Sur and Ifugao have lesser families who are indebted, 30.39% and 40.91% respectively.

Table 16. Percent distribution regarding acquiring loans/debts behavior of OF families by province

Loans/Debts Behavior	Agusan del Sur	Batangas	Ifugao	Laguna	Oriental Mindoro	Surigao del Sur	Tarlac	Total
Current debt/loan								
Yes	30.39	60.42	40.91	52.58	51.96	51.85	53.54	47.63
No	69.61	39.58	59.09	47.42	48.04	48.15	46.46	52.37
Source of debt/loan								
Banks	12.61	40.54	18.18	20.00	25.86	31.15	13.11	21.04
cooperatives	1.80	8.11	36.36	7.14	10.34	1.64	1.64	7.69
credit card	0	2.70	0	0	0	0	0	0.23
employer	0	5.41	2.27	2.86	1.72	1.64	3.28	2.04
financial institution	0	0	4.55	2.86	3.45		1.64	1.58
Individual lenders	12.61	10.81	18.18	18.57	3.45	11.48	9.84	12.22
lending companies	11.71	0	2.27	11.43	5.17	11.48	4.92	10.63
microfinance institutions	0.90	16.22	2.27	12.86	32.76	1.64	6.56	9.28
relatives	60.36	16.22	15.91	24.29	17.24	40.98	40.98	35.29
Credit card								
Yes	11.61	44.05	32.08	36.08	18.10	20.59	34.34	27.72
No	88.39	55.95	67.92	63.92	81.90	79.41	65.66	72.28
Uses of credit card								
education	0	4.65	19.44	2.38	3.45	0	7.32	6.36
emergencies	0	2.33	0	0	0	0	0	0.45
acquire real estate	12.50	4.65	11.11	23.81	3.45	19.05	12.20	12.27
avail benefits	0	4.65	0	0	0	4.76	0	1.36
buy a car	0	6.98	2.78	2.38	0	0	0	2.27
buy basic needs	0	2.33	16.67	2.38	0	9.52	2.44	5.00
buy gadgets	0	9.30	0	4.76	0	0	2.44	3.18
buy personal things	75.00	41.86	27.78	45.24	72.41	47.62	29.27	43.64
celebrate occasions	0	2.33	5.56	0	0	0	2.44	1.82
pay off other debts	0	0	5.56	0	0	0	0	0.91
capital for business	12.50	11.63	11.11	19.05	20.69	19.05	43.90	20.91
vacation	0	9.30	0	0	0	0	0	1.82

Where are loans incurred? Many of them (35.29%) have secured loans/debts with their relatives. Other sources of loans and debts are as follows: banks (21%); individual lenders (12.22%); lending companies (10.63%) and microfinance institutions (9.27%). Interest rates of the loans/debts that are paid by the respondents are as follows: About 58.87% pay an interest rate of 1-7%; 12.07% of them pay a rate of 8-12%; about 8.35% of them pay a rate of 12-18% or more.

Results of FGD discussion and key informant interviews run parallel with was gathered in the survey. It would seem that there is a growing indebtedness of families. What is alarming is the reported indebtedness of a growing number of families to numerous number of microfinance institutions, particularly in the provinces of Batangas and Laguna. A number of family members are indebted in a number of microfinance institutions at the same time. Participants remarked that families secure debts and loans from a microfinance institution in order to pay their outstanding debts from another microfinance institution. This has to be looked into more closely of how these microfinance institutions operate. Family problems (e.g. philandering wives and husbands, problematic children) which destabilizes families and at the same time drains families' finances which led many to indebtedness, were also shared by interviewees and FGD participants.

What are the characteristics of those who are indebted? Chi-square tests were run to test the following possible correlates of indebtedness (having a loan or debt): 1) occupation of relative of migrant; 2) occupation of migrant; 3) financial literacy attendance; 4) country where migrant works; and 5) educational attainment of relative of migrant.

Table 17. Summary of Chi-square test results regarding having debts or loans of families of overseas Filipinos

Do you have current debt or loan?	
Independent Variables Tested	Chi-square value; degrees of freedom (df) and probability value (p)
1. Having work of relative in the Philippines	Chi-square= 1.617 df=1 p=0.203
2. Educational attainment of relative in the Philippines	Chi-square= 4.081 df=4 p=0.395
3. Host country of relative abroad	Chi-square= 2.876 df=3 p=0.411
4. Occupation of relative abroad	Chi-square= 1.042 df=4 p=0.903
5. Financial literacy seminar	Chi-square= 7.068 df=1 p=0.007*

***significant at p <.05**

Results indicate that only attendance to financial literacy seminar of migrant relative is correlated with indebtedness. That means, that those who have attended financial literacy seminar are less likely to be indebted.

2.4. Investing behavior of families

Around 43% of the families have investments. The majority (57%) have no investments. In terms of percentages, more families in Ifugao, Batangas, and Laguna have investments when compared to those in the other four provinces (which have 40% and less families which have investments).

The top six investments of families from the survey data are as follows: 1) house and lot (37.43%); 2) educational fund (16.40%) and 3) business (16.22%); 4) health insurance (6.06%); 5) life insurance (5.70%) and real estate (5.35%). A far 7th is agriculture/agribusiness at 3.74%.

Table 18. Percent distribution regarding investing behavior of OF families by province

Investing Behavior	Agusan del Sur	Batangas	Ifugao	Laguna	Oriental Mindoro	Surigao del Sur	Tarlac	Total
Have investments								
Yes	26.79	60.71	65.22	51.06	35.29	23.19	40.00	43.08
No	73.21	39.29	34.78	48.94	64.71	76.81	60.00	56.92
Investments in...								
Agribusiness	16.28	2.83	4.72	0.97	1.49	7.32	0	3.74
Bank	0	0.94	0	0	0	0	0	0.18
Other business	44.19	15.09	8.66	9.71	10.45	9.76	32.43	16.22
Capital share in cooperatives	0	5.66	3.15	3.88	10.45	4.88	1.35	4.28
Educational fund	0	4.72	33.86	23.30	17.91	9.76	5.41	16.40
Health insurance	13.95	5.66	1.57	3.88	11.94	7.32	6.76	6.06
Life insurance	4.65	5.66	0.79	7.77	7.46	12.20	6.76	5.70
Memorial plan	0	0.94	0	0	0	0	0	0.18
House and lot	20.93	43.40	41.73	36.89	32.84	36.59	36.49	37.43
Real estate	0	7.55	4.72	3.88	2.99	7.32	9.46	5.35
Retirement fund	0	2.83		5.83	1.49	2.44	1.35	2.14
Mutual fund, stocks, etc.	0	4.72	0.79	3.88	2.99	2.44	0	2.32

Most of the FGD participants, except for a few, have made investments. Most have invested in their lots and houses or in small businesses like sari-sari stores.

From the discussions, the majority of the participants are not aware of other possible investments like those offered by financial institutions and cooperatives. But when presented with the proposed offerings of SIDC and Land Bank, the members of the families were enthusiastic about their own participation and welcomed them as forced savings scheme for their families.

Why are some of the families able to invest? The top three answers of those who are able to invest are as follows: 1) They have a family goal on savings and investment (35.37%); 2) They are disciplined and only spend on necessary things (23.34%); and 3) Members of the family are working and helping out in the expenses (11.31%). These reasons are the very reason that were raised by the FGD participants why some of them are able to invest. They reiterated the need of being able to save for the family and the importance of frugal spending to be able to make good and substantial investments

Those who had difficulty investing were also asked to explain. The top three answers that they gave are as follows: 1) They are happy with what they have and do not have big dreams (25.92%); 2) They do not make investment goals (22.74%); and 3) They are afraid of risks and just want to keep their money in ordinary savings account (19.56%).

What are the characteristics of those who have investments? Chi-square tests were run to test the following possible correlates of being able to invest: 1) occupation of relative of migrant; 2) occupation of migrant; 3. financial literacy attendance; 4) country where migrant works; and 5) educational attainment of relative of migrant.

Table 19. Summary of Chi-square test results regarding having investments of families of overseas Filipinos

Do you have investments?	
Independent Variables Tested	Chi-square value; degrees of freedom (df) and probability value (p)
1. Having work of relative in the Philippines	Chi-square= 34.651 df=1 p=0.000*
2. Educational attainment of relative in the Philippines	Chi-square= 30.42 df=4 p=0.000*
3. Host country of relative abroad	Chi-square= 6.815 df=3 p=0.78
4. Occupation of relative abroad	Chi-square= 11.148 df=4 p=0.025*
5. Financial literacy seminar	Chi-square= 4.656 df=1 p=0.031*

***significant at p <.05**

Results as summarized in Table 16 indicate that occupation of relative of migrant, financial literacy attendance, country where migrant works and educational attainment of relative of migrant are correlates of having investments. That means, that those relatives who have work in the Philippines are more likely than those

who have no work to make investments. Work of relatives means additional family income, some of which can be invested. Also those who have attended financial literacy seminar and higher educational attainment and those whose migrant relatives work in the Middle East (compared to those in Asia and Europe) are more likely to make investments than others. This validates the need and importance for financial literacy among the families of overseas Filipinos.

2.5. Engagement in business of families

A few, around 24% of the families in the seven provinces of origin own and run a business. This essentially the same finding from the FGD discussions, very few of the participants have gone and currently runs a business.

Most of the businesses are micro-enterprises, about 72% of them requiring only P50,000 or less initial capitalization. Around 18% of the enterprises had an initial capital of P51,000-200,000; 5% of the enterprises had P201,000-500,000 and another 5% had a capitalization of more than 500,000.

Table 20. Percent distribution regarding business behavior of OF families by province

Business Behavior	Agusan del Sur	Batangas	Ifugao	Laguna	Oriental Mindoro	Surigao del Sur	Tarlac	Total
Business in the Philippines								
Yes	22.03	46.67	20.49	25.56	16.33	21.25	32.93	24.41
No	77.97	53.33	79.51	74.44	83.67	78.75	67.07	75.59
Business engaged in								
Agribusiness	31.25	12.50	26.67	12.90	36.84	22.73	20.93	22.49
Direct selling	0	3.13	0	0	0	0	0	0.48
Food, restaurant business	6.25	12.50	6.67	12.90	0	0	11.63	8.13
Manufacturing	0	3.13	0	3.23	0	0	0	0.96
Real estate rental	0	0	3.33	9.68	0	9.09	13.95	7.18
Sari-sari/grocery store	40.63	31.25	30.00	29.03	31.58	63.64	39.53	37.32
Service business	3.13	3.13	3.33	3.23	0	0	6.98	3.35
Trading, marketing	15.63	15.63	6.67	12.90	15.79	4.55	6.98	11.00
Van/car rental, tricycle, jeepney	3.13	9.38	23.33	16.13	15.79	0	0	9.09

Initial capital invested								
PhP 50,000 or less	93.93	42.86	62.50	78.26	64.71	78.95	80.00	72.16
PhP 51,000-200,000	6.67	39.29	16.67	17.39	23.53	21.05	5.71	17.61
PhP 201,000-500,000	0	7.14	12.50	0	11.76	0	5.71	5.11
PhP 500,000-1million	0	10.71	8.33	0	0	0	8.57	4.55
Above PhP 1 million	0	0	0	4.35	0	0	0	0.57
Business profitable?								
Yes	80.00	100	93.10	84.00	58.06	95.00	80.95	82.93
No	20.00	0	6.90	16.00	41.94	5.00	19.05	17.07

The top five businesses set up by the families are of the following types: 1) sari-sari/grocery store (37.32%); 2) agricultural business (22.49%); 3) trading and marketing (11%); 4) food and restaurant business (8.13%) and 5) real estate (apartment, condominium, farm). Running a sari-sari store (a very small grocery store) seems to be a staple business among overseas Filipino families. A relative big percentage of them are into agricultural business. FGD participants who have such business expressed the need for financial and technological assistance in order for their businesses to prosper.

What are the characteristics of those who are engaged in business? Chi-square tests were run to test the following possible correlates of being able to invest: 1) occupation of relative of migrant; 2) occupation of migrant; 3. financial literacy attendance; 4) country where migrant works; and 5) educational attainment of relative of migrant.

Table 21. Summary of Chi-square test results regarding having businesses of families of overseas Filipinos

Do you have business?	
Independent Variables Tested	Chi-square value; degrees of freedom (df) and probability value (p)
1. Having work of relative in the Philippines	Chi-square= 6.144 df=1 p=0.013*
2. Educational attainment of relative in the Philippines	Chi-square= 7.026 df=4 p=0.135
3. Host country of relative abroad	Chi-square= 0.916 df=3 p=0.822
4. Occupation of relative abroad	Chi-square=12.814 df=4 p=0.012*
5. Financial literacy seminar	Chi-square= 8.239 df=1 p=0.004*

*significant at $p < .05$

Results indicate that occupation of relative of migrant, financial literacy attendance and educational attainment of relative of migrant are correlates of engagement in business. That means, that migrant relatives who have work in the Philippines are more likely to be engaged in business than those who have no work. Those who have attended financial literacy seminar and higher educational attainment are also more likely to be engaged in business than their counterparts.

Only 12.16% of the total respondents had experienced a failed business venture. Interestingly 48% of these failed businesses were in retail and marketing, more specifically in running sari-sari stores or grocery stores.

The families which are interested to engage in business, would like to run the following top five types: 1) agribusiness (26.76%); 2) food business (22.51%); 3) real estate (17.68%); 4) cooperatives; and 5) trading (8.89%). agribusiness and food business are still the top two choices even when one goes province by province.

2.6. Expressed needs and assistance of families and returnees

About 38% of the migrant relatives of the survey respondents intend to come home permanently in the next 5 years, 26% in the next 10 years and 24% of them in more than 10 years from now. About 73% of them wants to run a business when they come home for good while 19% intends to seek employment and the remaining 7% will retire.

For those who intend to set up their own business especially when their relative comes home for good, what assistance and support do they need? The top five types of assistance and support that the families need are the following: 1) business training (31.49%); 2) information on business opportunity (28.58%); 3) skills and technical training (26.12%); 4) business mentoring (10.55%); and access to capital and resources (2.3%).

In addition, a great majority 88.39% of families expressed their need for financial education. About 22% of the families has a member who had taken a financial literacy seminar.

Some insights on the return to the country of migrants

FGDs with migrant returnees and interviews of successful returnees and migrant entrepreneurs revealed that there are two types of return of overseas Filipinos: crisis and planned return.

Obviously, a planned return is almost always to be equated to a successful return to the Philippines. Planned return is characterized by accomplishment of mutually agreed goals of migrants and their families (e.g. all children have earned college degrees, house and lot purchased and constructed, a business set up) and a time period for work overseas and specific time of return of migrants to the Philippines. To some, it involved concrete plans on what the family and individual members of the family including the returning migrant will do and contribute to the family. In almost all cases, the accomplishment of goals and the attainment of the return plans hinged on a responsible partner, wife or husband left behind. A partner who was not only good in managing the remittances and earning additional income for the family but also was able to raise the children well. In many cases, this has always been a responsible wife and mother.

In the discussions, the participants of FGDs reiterate the need for them to be treated preferentially by the government in assisting them in their investments, businesses and reintegration into their communities. A leader of returnees remarked that for businesses of returning overseas Filipinos to prosper they must be preferentially treated in terms of tax incentives, access to capital, low interest rates for loans, access to trainings in the first 3 years at least. What are accorded to foreign investors must be accorded to Filipino returnees-cum-investors.

Crisis return, is a different matter. This is a return in which overseas Filipinos were forced out of their host countries by 'crisis situations' that have prevailed in those countries such as war and economic depression or through deportation proceedings which involved illegal acts committed by overseas Filipinos. In some cases, return was due to sickness of migrants or emergency situations faced by overseas Filipino families in the Philippines like death, severe illness, accidents of family members. These situations are lumped as crisis return. Helping out these type of returnees remain a challenge. Almost always, many of them will seek re-employment abroad.

2.7. Main findings on saving and investing behavior, indebtedness and business engagement of overseas Filipino families

1. *Dependency of families on remittances.* There is marked heavy reliance if not over-dependency of many families on migrant remittances. Dependency would mean also dependency not only of the immediate family but also of other relatives. Dependency is tied with relatives not working or not engaged in business. Dependency is observed to be its highest among the low income migrant-earners and its lowest among families of young professionals.

2. *Saving behavior of families.* The great majority of the families is unable to save from the remittances that they receive. To those families that are able to save, they can save, at most, 5%-10% from the remittances that they receive.

They are able to save because they have set family goals on savings and investment, other family members in the Philippines are working and contributing to the family and have properly managed their finances well (keeping track of their expenses and spending only on needs and not leading a lavish lifestyle). Educational attainment of the relative was also found to be correlated to the ability of the family to save as well as the level of financial literacy of family members. A good practice among the savers is setting aside some money as savings before spending and paying for the monthly family expenses.

3. *Indebtedness of families.* There is a growing indebtedness of families of overseas Filipinos, almost half of those surveyed in the provinces have outstanding debts or loans. What has to be looked into more closely are the families indebted to lending companies and individuals which exact exorbitant interest rates that put families deep in debt. Marked also is the indebtedness of a growing number of families, particularly in Batangas and Laguna to numerous number of microfinance institutions at the same time. Family problems (e.g. philandering wives and husbands, problematic children) and irresponsible management of family finances were also found to push families into debt. Attendance to financial literacy seminar of migrant relative is found to be correlated with indebtedness. That means, that those who have attended financial literacy seminar are less likely to be indebted.

4. *Investments of families of overseas Filipinos.* Almost half of the families have investments. The top six investments of migrant families are in house and lot, educational fund, business, health insurance and life insurance, and real estate. A few has invested in agriculture/agribusiness. Relatives of overseas Filipinos who have work in the Philippines are more likely than those who have no work to make investments. Also those who have attended financial literacy seminar and of higher educational attainment and those whose migrant relatives work in the Middle East (compared to those in Asia and Europe) are found to have made investments than others.

5. *Business engagements of families.* Only 24% of the families in the seven provinces own and run a business. Most of the businesses are small, the majority of which required only P50,000 or less initial capitalization. The top three businesses set up by the families are of the following types: sari-sari/grocery store; agricultural business; and trading and marketing.

Occupation of relative of migrant, financial literacy attendance and educational attainment of relative of migrant are correlates of engagement in business. That means, that migrant relatives who have work in the Philippines are more likely to be engaged in business than those who have no work. Those who have attended financial literacy seminar and higher educational attainment are also more likely to be engaged in

business than their counterparts.

6. Needed assistance and support. The families need support and assistance on the following: business training, information on business opportunity, skills and technical training, business mentoring and access to capital and resources

In addition, families expressed their need for financial education. Reintegration assistance and support for returning Filipino migrants has also been expressed.

C. Identification and Establishment of Different Types of Partnerships in Italy, Qatar, Singapore and UAE

A number of consultations with possible partners in the four countries were made. A number of Filipino organizations and NGOs in the four countries have been identified to be partners of Atikha in implementing the IFAD project, i.e. in conducting financial literacy seminars and in supporting projects in their home provinces and other initiatives in the Philippines. Migration and development fora with various Filipino organizations were held. Talks have been made with leaders of these organizations, in Italy, UAE, Qatar, and Singapore.

Preliminary talks with some migrant leaders indicate that their organizations can support concrete livelihood projects in the provinces.

The support and assistance of the Philippine embassies and consulates in the four countries have been solicited. In the main, except for the Philippine Embassy in Singapore, they have been very cooperative and supportive of the IFAD project and activities outlined in the four countries.

Talks and agreements were also made with a labor union in Italy and NGOs catering to overseas Filipinos in Singapore and Italy. There are no NGOs that can be partners in Qatar and UAE but individual companies and schools are cooperative and supportive of Atikha's efforts. These relationships, partnerships and agreements resulted in concrete areas of engagement in conducting financial education and promotion of investment and entrepreneurship.

The Pinoy WISE chapters in UAE and Qatar have been strengthened and consolidated. Three new chapters of Pinoy WISE were formed, one in Rome, another in the Piemonte region in Italy and in Singapore. These chapters are to be depended in pushing for and sustaining the activities in their respective countries. More than the partner organizations, NGOs and the Philippine embassies, these Pinoy WISE chapters will be the main conduits of Atikha.

The activities that were done by Atikha in forging partnerships with various overseas Filipino organizations, NGOs, Philippine embassies and other migration stakeholders in the destination countries were the following:

1. Consultations with Philippine embassies, consulates and government agencies to introduce Atikha, Pinoy WISE and the IFAD project;
2. Scanning of overseas Filipino organizations and consultations with a select few among them on possible areas of partnership. The list of organizations were provided by the embassies and leaders of the Filipino communities;
3. Consultations with other stakeholders in the destination countries which are working with migrants such as NGOs, government offices, labor unions and other organizations in the destination countries;
4. Conduct of Migration and Development Forums to introduce Atikha, IFAD project and the various initiatives in the Philippines and identify concrete areas of partnership. The Migration and Development Forums are conducted in cooperation with the Philippine Embassies; and
5. Planning of activities and joint projects that range from assistance in data gathering, conduct of financial education, provision of facilities and resources, provision of resource persons and trainers, promotion of activities, mobilization of investments to entrepreneurship training and other technical assistance.

ITALY

1. Meetings with the Philippine Ambassador and the Consul General of Milan and their staff were held to discuss the IFAD project and to solicit their cooperation and assistance. The Philippine Embassy and Consulate officials expressed support to the project. They provided their lists of Filipino organizations and contact persons in Rome, Milan and Northern Italy cities. The officials vowed their assistance to the activities that will be conducted in Italy.

2. Partnership with Associazione Culturale Filippina Del Piemonte (ACFIL) was renewed and strengthened. ACFIL, a socio-cultural organization in Torino, Italy, has been a partner organization of Atikha since the Atikha IFAD project. Ties with the organization was renewed and strengthened. Facilitated by ACFIL officers, talks with regional government of Piemonte was also made. It was agreed that possible funds will be sourced from the regional government to sustain the conduct of financial education for Filipinos in the whole region.

3. Talks and meetings with officers of some HTAs were also held, specifically those from Batangas and Tarlac, which are large in number and in size in Italy. Not much has progressed from the talks with the Mabini, Batangas HTA because the organization is more into social activities and do not have much interest in the program of Pinoy WISE. Concrete plans were made with the Tarlac Migrant Workers Association of Rome Italy (TAMIWARI) in relation to a project that will

solicit the cooperation of HTA in generating funds for a goat raising project in Tarlac. A PPP project in partnership with the Governor Susan Yap of Tarlac and the Provincial Agriculture Office was forged. The project seeks to establish the OFW goat raising cooperative in Tarlac which will mobilize migrant investments in goat raising. The governor and the Provincial Agriculture Office have agreed to the terms and conditions of the partnership.

Cooperation and coordination with the TAMIWARI is the first attempt in forging ties with an HTA in order to actively engage such type of Filipino organization in supporting economic development projects in their provinces of origin.

There is also a corridor between Surigao del Sur and Italy. Surigao del Sur HTAs are informal but are very active in web-based discussions. The Surigao del Sur HTAs have signified their interest to support investments and tourism promotion of their hometowns. Investment opportunities in aqua-culture and tourism support services are being promoted to members of the Surigao del Sur HTAs.

4. Meetings with European Network of Filipinos in the Diaspora (ENFID-Italy Chapter, a network of Filipino organizations based in Rome led to an agreement that financial literacy seminars will be conducted to its member organizations. ENFID can also be drawn to philanthropy projects in the Philippines. It was able to generate a hundred thousand Euros for a project after Typhoon Haiyan.

5. Overseas Filipinos' Society for the Promotion of Economic Security (OFSPES), a network of individuals, in a meeting with Atikha agreed that a division of tasks between Pinoy WISE and OFSPES in Italy can be drawn. Pinoy WISE will conduct financial literacy seminars and provide investment opportunities for overseas Filipinos in the Philippine provinces while OFSPES will conduct leadership and entrepreneurship seminars. They will cooperate in the conduct of the two seminars in terms of dissemination of training schedules, invitation of possible participants, trainers and resources.

6. Talks were held with UNILAVTORI , an Italian labor union. The union agreed to help source funds for the conduct for the financial literacy seminars and other post arrival seminars for Filipinos in Italy. It also allowed the use of its office for Pinoy WISE chapter meetings and consultations.

7. Two chapters of Pinoy WISE were formed in Italy, one in Rome and another for the region of Piemonte. The chapters sustain the conduct of financial literacy seminars in Italy, promote and mobilize migrant savings and investments especially to agricultural cooperatives and agri-business opportunities in the provinces of Batangas, Laguna, Tarlac and Oriental Mindoro.

SINGAPORE

1. Talks with Philippine Embassy Singapore have not resulted in any concrete agreement. The Embassy is not interested in co-sponsoring the activities or market place events. However, the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) Philippine Overseas Labor Office and the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration have participated in Market Place events and have agreed to promote the Pinoy WISE activities in Singapore.

2. Partnership between Atikha and The Global Filipino Investors (TGFI) was forged and strengthened. TGFI is a network of individual professionals which conduct regular financial education and investment forums that draw hundreds of participants. Many of its participants are young Filipino professionals in Singapore. Atikha and TGFI agreed to hold joint market place-investment events in Singapore. Furthermore, TGFI volunteers were trained by Atikha in conducting financial education and currently form part of the training team of Pinoy WISE- Singapore. They are very committed to reaching out and providing training to domestic workers in Singapore. TGFI has been active in promoting investments in agri-business among its network and has co-sponsored the market place events in Singapore. They are actively seeking various agri-business investment opportunities in cacao production, mushroom production, aqua-culture, and livestock production.

3. Cooperation and coordination with the three largest and active NGOs in Singapore that cater to the needs of Filipina domestic workers, namely, Foreign Domestic Workers Association for Social Support and Training (FAST), Archdiocesen Commission for Migrant and Itinerant People (ACMI), and HOME were established. The NGOs all agreed to coordinate and cooperate with Atikha in the conduct of financial education activities for Filipina domestic workers in Singapore . They offer their offices and resources for such activities.

4. A Pinoy WISE chapter has been established in Singapore. It is composed largely of domestic workers who participated in the Pinoy WISE Family and Income Management Training. It was agreed that TGFI leads in the network building with professionals. It is currently organizing parish-based financial education with venues provided by the churches in Singapore and conducts regular trainings in the conference room of FAST. Pinoy WISE has been a vehicle in organizing a hometown association. Because many members come from Western Visayas, the Pinoy WISE Western Visayas-Singapore was formed.

5. There is an active regional Cordillera Autonomous Region (CAR) hometown association in Singapore that has members from the province of Ifugao. The leaders of the CAR has been linked with Atikha's partner cooperative in Ifugao, the Lagawe Multi-purpose and Development Cooperative (LMDC). The partner

cooperative LMDC has branches not only in Ifugao but also in other provinces of CAR. The leaders of the organization have participated in Pinoy WISE activities in Singapore and are interested in promoting LMDC investment packages and in conducting financial education among their members. Some of the leaders were accredited as investment counselors of LMDC. They plan to organize Pinoy WISE CAR-Singapore.

Although in the main, Atikha's intent and focus was to forge partnerships for the 7 identified provinces, in the process, it opened itself in working and partnering with overseas Filipinos and their organizations regardless of their province of origin. In Singapore, for instance, the active hometown associations are from Western Visayas Region, Cordillera Autonomous Region and Bicol Region. Investments in Atikha's partner cooperatives were also promoted and linked with them. Many of the overseas Filipinos have placed investments in the Pinoy WISE partner cooperatives even if the cooperative does not operate in their province of origin.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES (UAE)

1. A new Philippine Ambassador has been appointed in UAE but since Pinoy WISE was endorsed by the previous ambassador as a key activity to be conducted with the embassy, the new ambassador has pledged support to the Pinoy WISE activities in UAE.

2. The UAE Pinoy WISE Chapter has been consolidated in lieu of the fact that the very active supporter of Pinoy WISE and its activities, the Philippine Ambassador has left her post and returned back to the Philippines. It has elected its officers and planned its activities. The Pinoy WISE UAE conducts financial education training regularly.

3. A large potential partner in UAE is the Couples for Christ (CFC)-UAE. It is the third largest CFC formation with 10,000 members plus 5,000 members in Saudi Arabia under its wings. It has agreed to cascade the financial education to its membership. Meetings have been made and talks about plans of cooperation in livelihood projects in the GK village in Tarlac in partnership with Atikha, SIDC, and Goat Breeders Association of Tarlac have also been done. But the feasibility study of such projects has still be firmed up. The relationship with CFC-UAE can be a prototype in dealing with numerous religious organizations of overseas Filipinos.

4. Another partner organization is the Philippine Nurses Association (PNA) – Abu Dhabi. One of the active professional groups in UAE are the nurses and the PNA Abu Dhabi would like to have separate financial education specially designed for nurses. There was a module specially designed for the nurses that was developed that included health and financial wellness. The PNA is working on the

inclusion of this module as a regular staff development module of nurses in Abu Dhabi. They are also interested in developing their own Pinoy WISE-PNA chapter. The PNA is specifically interested in establishing hospitals and retirement villages in the Philippines.

QATAR

1. Pinoy WISE Qatar has organized the training of trainers and conducted regular financial literacy in Qatar. New trainers have now become active part of the organization. Pinoy WISE Qatar has tapped other organizations to adopt the financial literacy program and they have successfully worked this out with the Filipino IT Qatar (FILTEQ), a professional group of IT professionals involved in training computer literacy to Filipinos in Qatar. The module of FILTEQ in their computer literacy program included financial literacy.

2. A group of individual Filipino engineers and other professionals are interested in investing in an alternative energy enterprise to be set up in the Philippines. This is in partnership with Atikha and a company in the Netherlands. Discussions with ADB Renewable Energy Project were linked with interested OFW to invest in renewable energy project. The recommendation for the group to form a cooperative.

3. Foundation for Family Life (FFL Qatar) is a religious organization in Qatar and its advocacy is the preservation of the family unit. They were specifically interested in the module of Atikha on Family management and have adopted the Pinoy WISE training in their mission to conduct training in workers camps. The leaders of FFL joined Pinoy WISE Qatar.

3. Partnerships with the Philippine School Doha and Philippine International School Qatar has been forged in terms of promoting and conducting financial literacy education in Qatar. The Philippine School Doha provides the use of their auditorium for the Pinoy WISE Market Place event and has endorsed the conduct of the training as a project of the Parents Teachers Association. The Philippine International School Qatar has also adopted the financial education program for the Parents Teachers Association and provides their classrooms as training venues for the Pinoy WISE training.

5. Partnership with the Philippine Embassy has been secured with talks with the new Ambassador and his staff. The embassy has vowed its support to Pinoy WISE, Atikha and its IFAD project. The Philippine Embassy and the Philippine Overseas Labor Office has signified their support for the program. They have sponsored the visa of guest speakers and have endorsed the training and the Pinoy WISE Market Place Event to the Filipino community.

Insights and Lessons Learned in Forging Partnerships in Destination Countries and Conduct of Financial Education

1. Out of the more than 100 organizations registered in the Philippine Embassy per country of destination, the majority are into social activities whose objectives are to provide venues for Filipinos to get together and conduct activities based on common bonds such as religion, sports, cultural activities/ festivities as their coping mechanisms in living and working abroad. The identified leaders involved in embassy activities are not necessarily the leaders that would be interested to promote activities on saving, investing and entrepreneurship. However, Filipino community leaders who will be interested in promoting savings, investment and entrepreneurship will emerge from the series of meetings and capacity building activities designed for them.
2. In the Middle East countries such as UAE and Qatar, there are strong professional organizations of nurses, engineers, accountants, managers whose main activities revolve around professional advancement. However, professional groups are not automatically financially literate. There is great interest for professional groups to conduct training among their members.
3. There are very few, one or two organizations per country that are actively involved in financial education, investment mobilization and entrepreneurship. These organizations are normally those that assisted and supported the initiatives of Pinoy WISE. They appreciated the comprehensive work being done by Atikha, working on both sides of the migration corridors which none of the organizations in destination countries are able to do. They appreciated the links with national and local government units as well as with the private sector in their provinces of origin that were provided to them.
4. The large number of Filipinos (90%) in destination countries are unorganized. The unorganized Filipinos can be reached through the church and schools where their children are studying or through their companies.
5. Pinoy WISE is very much appreciated by the different organizations and its influence is growing in the four countries of destination. There is a growing interest in conducting financial education among Filipino organizations. Some have experienced the impact of financial education in terms of changing their behavior in managing their funds and strengthening family relations and have endorsed the training to other Filipino organizations and leaders of the Filipino community. There is a need to strengthen Pinoy WISE organizing in the different countries.
6. The Duterte government has endorsed the need for financial education. Companies have used the conduct of financial education to promote the sales of condominiums, insurance and other businesses. Government agencies in partnership with banks are conducting financial education.

Other unscrupulous business people are riding on the renewed interest in investments in the Philippines.

III. MAIN RESEARCH FINDINGS AND CURRENT ACTIONS AND INTERVENTIONS TAKEN

This section of the report outline selected main findings of the research and the corresponding actions and interventions made by Atikha:

A. A large number of overseas Filipinos are not organized. Those overseas Filipinos who are organized in associations which are largely social and cultural in character, even those so-called hometown associations. Organizations in the provinces are largely organizations of migrant returnees and not of families of active migrants working abroad. In sum, there is a lack of a number of organizations that can be active and capable partners and conduits of Atikha in advocating for financial literacy and promoting savings and investments among overseas Filipinos in the four countries and in the seven provinces.

Actions and interventions:

1. Pinoy WISE chapters in the four countries and provinces, whose members came from those who have attended the financial literacy seminars conducted by Atikha, were established and formed. The chapters have conducted on their own financial literacy seminars in their respective host countries and provinces. So far the following Pinoy WISE chapters have been established and the corresponding financial literacy seminars that they have conducted: Pinoy WISE International Chapters were organized in Italy, Qatar, UAE and Singapore.

2. Provincial virtual (internet-based) organizations are being set up for the seven provinces. In these websites of overseas Filipinos coming from a specific province, specific savings and investment packages of cooperatives, Public and Private Partnership and philanthropy projects are promoted to overseas Filipinos hailing from the same province in the four countries are promoted. Clear instructions and help are provided in the website regarding making contributions, deposits and investments. Local cooperatives and local government units are to actively engage individual migrants in the website. The virtual organization and site is to be managed by the Atikha area staff assigned to the specific province. So far, the following has been set and is currently operational.

3. Active hometown associations and their leaders are continuously being linked to their local government units and partner cooperatives in the area. Meetings with cooperatives and LGUs were arranged during their visits to forge transnational partnership. Trust building activities and areas of partnership are discussed during meetings. The transnational partnerships (HTA-LGU-cooperative) being forged are between following: Oriental Mindoro – Italy; Surigao del Sur-Italy and UAE; Ifugao-Singapore/HK ; Tarlac – Italy and Qatar; Laguna -UAE and Italy; Batangas- Qatar, UAE and Italy.

B. A lot has still to be desired with the current savings, investment, and business behavior of overseas Filipinos and their families. A strong culture of savings, of making investments and engaging in business among migrants and their families does not yet exist. Indebtedness of overseas Filipinos and their families also remain a problem and must be addressed. Low financial literacy among overseas Filipinos and their families aggravates their financial difficulties and problems. Attendance to the financial literacy seminars conducted by Atikha was found to be a strong correlate of having savings and investments among overseas Filipinos and the families in the provinces.

Actions and interventions:

1. Training of trainers for financial literacy seminars must be conducted to develop a larger pool of individuals who are capable of conducting financial literacy education seminars in the four countries and in the seven provinces.

2. Financial literacy education seminars must be continuously be held in the provinces and in the four countries. Coordination and cooperation of Pinoy WISE and Atikha with local government units, Philippine embassies, selected partner organizations and private companies has been forged. The need for changes in attitudes and behaviors toward savings, investment, business and addressing indebtedness should be strongly emphasized in these seminars.

3. The ladderized financial education seminars must be implemented. Aside from the basic education course, the reintegration planning and counseling is being conducted in the four countries and seven provinces. This second level of financial education course must vigorously present savings, investment, and business options for overseas Filipinos and their families.

C. The Filipino migrant population is segmented into highly skilled professionals, skilled workers and low skilled workers with varying savings and investment capacity and risk appetite. Hence, different strategies for savings and investment mobilization are to be designed for the different segments of the migrant population.

Actions and interventions:

1. The highly skilled professionals of Qatar, UAE and young professionals of Singapore look for investments and business opportunities that can provide them passive income for their return and reintegration. They can invest about \$2,500-\$10,000. SIDC packages are appropriate for them. They are also interested in higher-yield and higher-risk direct investments in agri-business that can provide investment return of 25% -50% per annum. Direct investments in agri-business such as high value crops, organic farming, aqua culture, cacao production are of such nature and will be actively offered to them through the Market Place events and Migration and Development Forum that will be conducted.

To manage the risk and, at the same time, accommodate the needs of highly skilled professionals in direct investment in agri-business, Partnership on Migration and Development (PMD) schemes were discussed with partner cooperatives and local and national government units and organizations of overseas Filipinos. The proposed schemes that will be offered to the professional segment of the migrant population are as follows:

- *Direct investment of migrants to agriculture-based cooperatives such as SIDC which will invest in new agri-business projects.* The local government and national government units will leverage the investment by providing the equipment and raw materials. This is the case for the investments in organic farming and high value crops.

- *Direct investment in agri-business enterprises owned by individuals and/or groups of overseas Filipinos.* This is the scheme for the Pinoy WISE chapters that are assisted by Atikha in their enrollment as beneficiaries of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE)'s grant. DOLE provides raw materials and equipment to deserving beneficiary organizations.

2. Different savings and investment products are to be offered for domestic workers and low skilled workers. The investment products designed for domestic workers in Italy are not applicable to domestic workers in Singapore, Qatar and UAE because of the low wages of these groups of migrant workers. The low income earners like the domestic workers and the low skilled workers also beset with the problem of family dependency. The strong feeling of family obligation prevents them from achieving their goal because they cannot say "No" to family expectation. The only way for them to be able to save is to have a "forced savings program", i.e. regular small amounts of money invested to cooperatives deducted automatically from their monthly remittance. The investment is locked for a period of time for its purpose is to accumulate capital for a future business engagement or save funds for the education of children.

Talks with partner cooperatives were held to convince them to lower their required minimum investment to \$100 dollars and for them, to develop a 'forced savings program' in which the savings are deducted automatically from the monthly remittance. The Lagawe Multi-Purpose Development Cooperative (LMDC) was able to design a scheme and this has been approved by its board.

In concrete these are the agreed upon savings and investment packages by the partner cooperatives:

Table 22. Savings and Investment Schemes Offered by Partner Cooperatives

Partner Cooperative	Target OFW Segment	Savings/Investment Schemes
Soro-soro Ibaba Development Cooperative	Professionals	Investment in cooperative shares with minimum share of Php 50,000 (approximately \$2,000), either with a. (low risk) guaranteed return of 6% b. (high risk) whatever is earned by the cooperative (average-10% in the last 5 years)
	Low Skilled	Koop Pinoy Savings Program Can start monthly savings for as low as PHP 1,000 pesos and while saving, it will earn an interest rate of 2% and once it reached Php 50,000 can be transferred to Investment to earn 6%
Lagawe Multi-purpose Cooperative	Professionals	Guaranteed Return: Investment Php 50,000 and above will get annual deposit with fixed interest of 7% locked for 3 years Equity Savings Fund for minimum investment of Php 50,000 variable interest but year to date performance is 12.8% - lock for 3 years

	Low Skilled Workers Domestic Workers	Special Purpose Savings Fund For as Low as Php 50,000 Savings Goal the investor can pay monthly savings – payable for 3 years – monthly savings of Php 1,290 Payable for 10 years monthly savings of Php 302
Tarlac Credit Surety Fund	Professionals	Investment of PHP 51,000-100,000 - interest rate of 6% per annum non-withdrawable for 3 years Investment of Php 100,001 –Php 500,000- 6.25% per annum locked for 3 years Investment of Php 500,001 and above- 6.5% per annum – lock for 3 years
	Low-skilled workers Domestic workers	Investment of Php 10,000 – 50,000- 5% locked for 3 years
St. Jude Multi-purpose Cooperative	Professional	Coop Value Deposit Php 50,000 locked for 5 years guaranteed return of 6% per annum and 30% discount on all facilities of St. Jude Multi-purpose Coop Time Deposit Php 51,000- Php 300,000- 2% per annum
	Low-skilled workers Domestic Workers	Micro-insurance - Monthly savings of Php 2,000 pesos - Benefits Php 30,000 life insurance Php 50,000 health insurance Php 50,000 worth of funeral package Time Deposit Php 5,000 – 50,000 - 1% per annum

D. There are numerous possible partner organizations, agencies and private entities both in the four countries and in the provinces. However, only a few are willing to engage and commit, and are capable in helping Atikha ensure project sustainability.

Actions and interventions:

1. Meetings that have sought cooperation and coordination with a number of Filipino organizations, NGOs and other entities in the four countries. Only a few, however, have been steadfast in their commitment with the project and cooperation with Atikha. Partnerships were forged with key and reliable migrant organizations, NGOs, Philippine schools in destination countries. Cooperation of Philippine Embassy officials in the four countries were also sought. Except for one (Philippine Embassy in Singapore), all the others have been very cooperative and have offered their Embassy offices as venues and other resources in the conduct of financial literacy seminars and trainings.

The identified and tested key partner migrant organizations, NGOs and institutions per country are the following:

Table 23. Key Partners of Atikha By Country

Country	Key Partner Organization/s	Terms of Coordination and Cooperation
Singapore	1. The Global Filipino Investors (TGFI)	--provides volunteer trainers for the financial education and assists in organizing Market Place Events for young professionals
	2. Pinoy WISE Singapore	--organizes Pinoy WISE chapters and conducts trainings on financial literacy and reintegration counseling; assists in organizing Market Place Events and investment mobilization
	3. Foreign Domestic Worker Association for Social Support and Training	NGO partner in financial education, skills training and entrepreneurship; provides venue and free training
UAE	1. Pinoy WISE-UAE	-- organizes Pinoy WISE chapters and conducts training on financial literacy and reintegration counseling; assists in organizing Market Place Events and investment mobilization
	2. Philippine Nurses Association-Abu Dhabi	-- organizes hospital- based – conducts financial education and assists in investment mobilization
Qatar	1. Pinoy WISE-Qatar	-- organizes Pinoy WISE chapters and conducts

		training on financial literacy and reintegration counseling; assists in organizing Market Place Events and investment mobilization
	2. Philippine School Doha	-- assists in organizing financial education seminars and provides venue for trainings and Market Place event
	3. Philippine International School Qatar	-- assists in organizing financial education seminars and provides venue for trainings and Market Place events
Italy	1. ACFIL-	-- organizes Pinoy WISE chapters and conducts training on financial literacy and reintegration counseling; assists in organizing Market Place events and investment mobilization; provides venue for training
	2. Pinoy WISE Regione Lazio	--assists in organizing, provides training on financial education and assists in linking with hometown associations

E. Most of the provinces do not have local economic development plans. What the five out of seven provinces have are their own Philippine Rural Development Program (PRDP) which identifies and develops the production of the province's lead commodity. The PRDP of the provinces however is silent on how overseas Filipinos can enter, help and make the most of such program. Furthermore, the provincial governments are extremely low in developing migration and development initiatives and projects that can be included in the PDRP and which will harness the investments of overseas Filipinos and their families.

Actions and interventions:

1. Through the initiative of Atikha, migration and development committees (MnD Committee) in the provinces were established and convened. These MnD committees identified investment and business opportunities for the overseas Filipinos in the areas. MnD Committees also determined provincial government's assets and resources like land and equipment in the planned PMD projects. Engagement of overseas Filipinos and business opportunities in the value chain of lead commodities were identified in the 7 provinces.

2. The following are the envisioned and agreed upon PMDs:

Table 24. Partnerships on Migration and Development (PMD) By Province

Province	PMD	Partners	Agreements Forged for Signing of the MOA
Agusan del Sur	Cacao processing	PLGU Agusan del Sur	PLGU to provide free use of facility for processing and free use of building for 18 months
		DOLE-NRCO	Provide equipment for food processing
		Ekolife OFW Cooperative Agusan del Sur	Organize members and mobilize capital share Organize and manage the social enterprise
		Atikha	Assist in investment mobilization Ensure the mentoring of social enterprise
Batangas	High value crops	PLGU Batangas	PLGU to provide technical assistance
		Department of Agriculture	DA to provide technical assistance and raw materials and equipment
		Pinoy WISE Batangas Qatar and Italy	Mobilize Investment Manage the enterprise
		Atikha	Assist in investment mobilization Ensure the mentoring of social enterprise
Ifugao	Coffee shop/ Bakeshop/ Tourist Hub	PLGU Ifugao	Provide technical assistance
		DTI	provided baking equipment worth \$10,000
		Pinoy WISE Singapore/HK	Mobilize members and investments
		Ekolife Ifugao	Manage the coffee shop, bake shop and tourist hub
		Atikha	Assist in investment mobilization Ensure the mentoring of the social enterprise
Laguna	High value crops	PLGU Laguna	PLGU to provide technical assistance
		DA	Provide technical assistance and raw materials

		Pinoy WISE Laguna Dubai	Mobilize Investment Manage the organic farms
		Atikha	Mobilize Investment Ensure the mentoring of the enterprises
Oriental Mindoro	High value crops	PLGU	PLGU to provide technical assistance and raw materials
		Department of Agriculture	Provide technical assistance and raw materials and equipment
		Pinoy WISE Oriental Mindoro HK	Organize Membership Manage the social enterprise
		Atikha	Mobilize investment Ensure the mentoring of the enterprise
Surigao del Sur	Coffee shop Tourist hub and aqua culture	PLGU Surigao del Sur	PLGU to provide land and funds for construction of tourist facilities and technical assistance in aqua culture
		ACFIL Pinoy WISE Piemonte Italy	Organize membership Mobilize the investment
		Ekolife Surigao del Sur	Organize members Manage the coffee shop and tourist hub Manage the social enterprise
		Atikha	Mobilize investment Ensure the mentoring of the enterprise
Tarlac	Goat raising	PLGU Tarlac	PLGU to provide technical assistance and additional goats for those investing in goat raising
		TAMIWARI-Italy	Organize members Mobilize Investment
		Tarlac Agriculture Cooperative	Organize members Manage the farms
		Atikha	Mobilize investment Ensure the mentoring of the social enterprise

E. Replicating Atikha- SIDC partnership and experience in mobilizing investments is not easy as it seemed as earlier envisioned and planned. Atikha and Pinoy WISE partners earlier agreed that only those cooperatives that have more than PhP 100 million asset and are endorsed by partner rural financial institutions will be promoted for investment of overseas Filipinos. As experienced, it was extremely

difficult to find additional cooperatives in the provinces with assets of PhP 100 million. Many those cooperatives which are financially stable and capable, are credit cooperative and not agribusiness cooperatives. Many agricultural cooperatives are not interested in mobilizing additional investments because they are currently awash with cash. Most of the agri-based cooperatives which need additional investments (including those from the migrants) are small cooperatives.

Actions and interventions:

1. Lower the required total asset to PhP 70 M for the participating cooperatives on the condition that it has PAR of not more than 5% and endorsed by the provincial local government and migration stakeholders.
2. Assist the development and investment mobilization for the OFW Green Fund of Landbank that will open the doors for funding cooperatives and providing guarantees for investments of OFWs.
3. Explore the potential of crowdfunding directly to OFW owned social enterprises and develop strategy to mitigate the risk.
4. Strengthen partnership with Department of Agriculture and Department of Trade and Industry for assistance and mentoring of individual and group enterprises