



## Reintegration of the Foreign Domestic Worker

*Title*

Planning Your Return

*Target Audience*

FDW, NGO's, grassroots, civil society

*Objectives*

1. To discuss some steps and methods in re-entry planning.
2. To prepare FDW in homecoming with their families.
3. To encourage civil society like people in the community to understand the need of sustainable development of FDW income and investment in the community.
4. To require government agencies in charge of overseas contract workers in the countries to provide safety net for FDW and identify income generating projects/program, social welfare related to FDW

*Materials*

White board, flip chart, markers

*Time Needed*

Minimum of two hours; maximum of four

*Instructions*

1. Draw three columns on the board.
2. Ask each participants what do they dream about their lives when they come back home. You may also would want to let them draw what they dreamed about.
3. Write down answers or post drawings on the board on the last column.
4. Possible answers are the following:
  - House and lot
  - Children to finish their studies
  - To buy a land (to plant rice, have orchard, build townhouses for lease etc.)
  - Create own business
  - Siblings to graduate in college
  - Pay debts
  - To be a complete family
  - To marry and have a family
  - To take care of old parent/s
  - To retire, enjoy life and see the world



5. Thank them of their answers and process it by saying: All of us dream of an ideal world for us to live in. The reason for living is because we dreamed of good things in life we value to live in dignity as a human person including our families. This is essentially the value of human rights. Shelter, education, money, health etc. are just examples of why we are striving to live away; sacrifice our own well being because we want to provide a better future for our families.
6. Ask the second question: What do we do now to reach these dreams? Write the answers on the first column. Possible answers are the following:
  - "I send money to my husband to send our children to school"
  - "Send money to pay for loan"
  - "Send money to save"
  - "I save it here and will bring it home when I go back to my home country"
  - "Send money to my parents"
  - "I send money and keep some for myself"
  - "I join "paluwagan"
  - I buy lotto, sweepstakes,
  - Etc.
7. When everyone has given their strategies. Tell them that the first column symbolises the status they are in now. State the commonalities and even some contrast (if any) of the answers. It may be stable and unstable. If time permits you could ask more questions and encourage discussions. Then point again to the last column and say: the last column is our vision. Point to the first column saying: this is the real world we are confronted in. Point to the last column and say: This is our ideal world.
8. Take their attention to the middle column which is blank. Give them a reality check that sometimes in our lives things may not happen the way we wanted them to. Solicit answers from the participants- what are these challenges?

That they sometimes have to cut short their contracts or also given the fact that their contracts have expired.

Possible answers are the following:

- War in Lebanon that FDW needs to be repatriated
- Terminal diseases and can no longer continue to work

- Abused and treated badly by the employer
  - Pregnancy
  - Home sick
  - Done with the contract and doesn't want to continue anymore.
9. Ask participants which of the following answers above are economic, personal/family, community and government responsibilities. Divide the group into 5 categories. Those who would want to join a group to solve a given issue may choose a group to work with. Ask them to give possible solutions to the problems.
    - For Economic Group: What are possible ways to ensure that investments are strong? Have you heard of any groups offering an economic safety net for FDWs? Share it with the groups.
    - For Personal Group: What conditions are necessary to ensure that your re-entry is not hurtful to you? What do you need? How would you like members of the family to receive you?
    - For Community Group: Think of possible plans and methods that contribute to the sustainability of your community in the reintegration of the FDW.
    - For Government Group: What should the government do to ensure that there is safety net for FDW welfare on their return? Please share any initiatives for the protection of FDWs on their return.
  10. Give 30- 60 minutes for the discussion.
  11. Ask them to report the group discussions. Assign a reporter or you may encourage a group creative presentation.
  12. Give them some time to give each other's feedback in the plenary.
  13. Write down key words from the responses by the groups in the second column
  14. When the group is finished the facilitator may now be ready to introduce possible resource persons or a panelist style forum on Migrant Savings, Counseling, Community Initiative Practices, Government representatives etc.
  15. Give hand outs on some significant practises of reintegration initiated by different organisations and institutions.
  16. Ask the group if they would want to maintain contact with each other to make their ambitions and goals come true.

## *Conclusion*

Re-entry or even reintegration of FDWs requires an expanded environment support. It is true that governments should implement all human rights standards for FDWs by exercising possible mechanisms and built-in safety nets to ensure protection of FDWs. Families and communities alike are also significant partners for the successful and pleasant return of FDWs to their home countries.

## *References*

1. Planning Your Re-entry, Filipino Migrant Workers Orientation Course, Unland Kabayan Migrant Service Foundation Inc, First edition, November 2001.
2. Homebound, Asian Migrant Center, Video Documentary (black soup film).