



Interaction and Sharing through Study Tours

By Christina A. Lopez

The third quarter of the year has been a busy time for DAWN. It played host to study tours of three groups from different universities in Japan – Hiroushima University, Bunkyo Gakuin University, and Kwansei Gakuin University.

On August 20, Prof. Koki Seki of the Hiroushima University, along with six students and one volunteer from the Philippines arrived at DAWN to learn about its work. The group was provided with an orientation by Research and Advocacy officer Liza Garcia. Prof. Seki translated the talk in Japanese.

After the orientation, the group proceeded to visit the sewing and weaving projects of DAWN. Sikhay Coordinator Mary Joy Barcelona explained to the group

about the project. The visit was followed by a group discussion of the students with the women and children members of DAWN. After all the participants in the discussion group introduced themselves, the Japanese students were encouraged to ask questions or to clarify issues which were not clear to them. Some of the women members of DAWN also shared their experiences working in Japan. Dolly Alnas shared that she worked in Hiroushima, while Rosalie Akase said she has been there for a visit. The JFC who have been to Japan as part of the annual theater tour also shared their experiences in presenting their musical play in various prefectures of Japan. Some also shared their experiences when they met their fathers in Japan.

On September 1, Prof. Mitsuko Horiuchi, a member of DAWN's Advisory

Council, along with Ms. Sanae Nakajima, came with 16 students from the Bunkyo Gakuin University, located in Tokyo. The group just came from Olongapo where they had activities with PREDA.

The group was provided with an orientation about the work and programs of DAWN with its members. They were also given a tour of the sewing, weaving and wellness projects of DAWN. The highlight of their visit was of course meeting the women and children members of DAWN. To further their understanding of international cooperation, the Japanese students had a discussion with the women members of DAWN. The students were able to ask questions to the women about their experiences and what they have done after their return from Japan. The women were also given the chance to ask questions to the Japanese students.

Aside from the discussion, the students also interacted with the JFC members of DAWN. They played different games at the lobby. The children also introduced the Japanese to the Filipino game called “tumbang preso.”

Some students of Kwansei Gakuin University of Osaka also visited DAWN on September 14 to learn about DAWN and its work. After the orientation, which was given by DAWN-Japan Coordinator Chiho Ogaya, they were joined by four AISEC volunteers for a lecture on Philippine migration, especially to Japan.



DAWN members and staff with visitors from Hiroushima University

Improving the Quality of Life of Returned Women Migrants and their Children

The 1980s to the present have seen the massive migration of Filipino women to other parts of the world, seeking jobs. Many were able to land jobs in Japan. However, most of the jobs available to these women were as entertainers in different Japanese establishments. In the course of their work, the women experienced various forms of human rights abuse, exploitation, and labor rights violation, as has been documented by many studies (DAWN, 2003; IOM, 2001; Ballescas, 1998). The migration of these women to Japan has also resulted in the formation of relationships with Japanese men that have resulted in the birth of Japanese-Filipino children (JFC). Many of these relationships though did not last long. The women who eventually returned to the Philippines found themselves unable to cope with life, had difficulty reintegrating with their families and their communities. The plight of these women in Japan is similar to the situations of many other Filipino women migrants who tried their luck abroad. Many were unable to save while still working abroad. Upon return to the Philippines, they find themselves unemployed due to lack of skills or education. It is not just the women who suffer but also their children who are affected by their circumstances and situations.

For the past 17 years, DAWN has been providing a holistic range of programs to address the needs of women migrant returnees and their families. These programs include psycho-social and economic interventions. To further continue its work

with returned women migrants and their children, DAWN went into partnership with the Asia Community Trust (ACT) for a project which aims to improve the lives of women and children through a process that will help them develop as individuals, thus becoming productive and at the same time responsible. The project includes the provision of capacity building trainings and seminars, providing assistance for the continued education of the children, and assistance in the area of health and medical care.

The project is providing educational assistance to twenty children of former migrants. A monthly allowance is given to the children to cover their various schooling expenses that include the purchase of uniforms, books, projects, transportation, and other educational needs. It is available to elementary, high school and college students who are members of DAWN. A leadership seminar and children's rights camp are also scheduled for the children.

Women are also being given skills training in sewing and weaving. To date, six women have been provided with skills training in sewing and another two in weaving (see *Sikhay Corner*, p. 6). In the coming months, some more women are set to train in sewing and weaving. They will also be provided with entrepreneurial seminars to help them recognize their potentials as entrepreneurs.



DAWN members and staff with Prof. Horiuchi and students from the Bunkyo Gakuin University

DAWN-MPC Report

By Analisa Carimpong

The DAWN Multi-Purpose Cooperative or DAWN-MPC continually seeks strategies on how to improve the operation of the Cooperative and the participation of its members. It is also into direct selling of different products such as Hanabishi, Promac, Avon, Natasha, Boardwalk, MSE, Sundance, Ever Bilena and other items such as cell phones and other gadgets and even furnitures.

Such an activity provides every member with the opportunity to earn additional income. This is true especially for those who are competent in sales. Many members are so eager to earn additional income and are so engrossed in placing orders, until we all realized an increasing collectibles and that we have to make sure that the amounts due are collected regularly. An assessment of the loans and purchase orders and sharing of best practices and negative experiences was done last August 18, 2012. Challenges and possible solutions were identified, and everyone agreed that each one will be doing her part for the success of the Cooperative. It was agreed that the DAWN-MPC Policies will be strictly implemented. A month later, the collection and operation of the DAWN-MPC has improved. The DAWN-MPC will always be a work in progress. We are hopeful that everything will be alright with God's help.

The DAWN-MPC organizes various activities for its members. Last July 27, 2012, Prof. Zandro Estella and his students conducted a Stress Management Seminar at the DAWN office/lobby. The seminar attended by twelve members, helped a lot in dealing with their problems. Techniques in handling stress were discussed. The knowledge acquired is useful not only in the Cooperative, but also in the day to day lives/experiences.

In the morning of August 18, an Aerobercise was held at the Rizal Park with some members and their children in attendance. Such an activity helps the members and their children become physically and mentally fit, especially before important activities and meetings.

More activities, seminars and workshops will be organized for the DAWN-MPC members to develop camaraderie and bonding.



Exercises to reduce stress

People, Places, Events



DAWN Executive Director Carmelita Nuqui during her guesting at Net 25's television program "Aprub" on July 24, with host Elaine Fuentes



Mrs. Theresa Lopez, wife of Philippine Ambassador to Japan Manolo Lopez, came over to DAWN on August 21 to hand over their donation



Mel Nuqui with OWWA Administrator Carmelita Dimzon, Senator Loren Legarda and POEA Administrator Hans Cacdac after approval on Second Reading of the Ratification of ILO C 189



DAWN KUIS bazaar at Hyogo prefecture



Mel Nuqui and Mary Joy Barcelona participated in the 1st National Consultation Meeting of the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights on Trafficking in Persons on September 11



Calligraphy lesson for Japanese-Filipino children

(Continued from p. 8, WHAT WE...)

said Miwa, a student at the University of Hokkaido.

“I thought most women have experienced similar difficulties but they hadn’t. I also felt that the problem DAWN tackled with was of course gender issue but to solve this problem, we had to deal with other problems like poverty, political system, and so on. And since I am still a university student, the most important thing for me is to make small actions step by step. So after going back to Japan, I’m going to organize workshops to educate young male generations such as students in my university about these issues. Also I’m thinking to visit the Filipino community in my city, Sapporo, to know how they feel about the problems that those women and children have,” continued Miwa.

For Mika, it was a different reaction she had.

“When I started to learn about OFW and JFC through activities in DAWN, I was confused in some way. Where is the goal of DAWN? Is it for the children to meet their fathers, fathers’ support for their children, or that mothers and children provide for themselves? It depends on the situation. But one thing I felt is that a community like DAWN is precious for people who have the same problem. They can share their experiences and help each other in many ways. And even only by chatting in the cozy DAWN office, one is made to feel comfortable. DAWN is such welcoming community that they accept all women and JFC if the problems they have are what DAWN can deal with. It’s amazing!”

“I’m happy to have time with mothers and children in DAWN. I wish to thank DAWN and I want to see you in Japan,” said Mika. “I’ll keep in touch with you,” she continued.

Sofia University student Saori Takagi has this to say: “Through visiting DAWN and other NGOs, what was most impressive for me is the mental strength of Filipino women. I encountered many women who have different problems. And when we discussed with DAWN’s members, they told us their painful experiences during their stay in Japan. I was really confused to

hear that because it is not easy to solve the problems. But I also realized that they are living vigorously as women and mothers by participating in DAWN programs and activities, such as the alternative livelihood program, discussions and theater. The women staff of DAWN are also really powerful. I think DAWN is a warm place full of many smiles because there are staff who help the mothers solve their problems. So I made a decision! I will continue doing what I can do for such women as long as they continue fighting courageously. I want to be like them. The exposure to the different NGOs in the Philippines made me take a new look at myself as a Japanese woman. When I return to Japan, I want to share what I felt during my internship in the Philippines with many Japanese.”

“Everything here was new for us. And every time we talk to the women, we were so moved by their stories. We are really proud to say that we spent precious time with DAWN although it was only for two weeks,” quipped Miwa. “As Mika and Saori said, it is time for us to share what we have learned from DAWN.”

And we promise we will be back to Manila in the near future because now we have a home to come back to in Manila, which is DAWN! Thank you for everything!



Discussion with women members of DAWN

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SIKHAY CORNER

By Mary Joy E. Barcelona

DAWN considers education as one way of empowering its women members. Its approach is holistic, in the sense that we develop not only the technical skills of the women in sewing and weaving, but along with such trainings we also conduct values clarification, team building, and peer counseling. We also provide entrepreneurial seminar, as well as management seminars that include planning, purchasing, recording, making daily reports, quality control, evaluation, and feed backing. As much as possible, we try to impart to them how we market our products, although in terms of marketing Sikhay products, it is still a big challenge at present.

We provide this kind of introduction to our trainees for them to appreciate the project and the process that goes in the production of items. These would be useful to them if and when they decide to put-up their own businesses.

Starting July, we provided orientation and skills training to the following women migrant returnees: Luz Cecilia Ozawa, Gilda Mosatalla, Flordeliza Burgos, Rita Gliponeo, Arcela Ticong, Celia Tribunal, Louie Villamor, Eunor Samuray, Zita Pelarca, and Eden Santos.

During the orientation, all of us initially shared our experiences as former migrants. After sharing our experiences working outside the country, almost everyone agreed that we want to learn and gain new skills. Listening to the varied stories of the women is in itself a learning experience. The sharing session also gave us the chance to get to know each other and become friends.

Luz, whom we fondly call Che, used to be part of the Sikhay project. After six years of staying in the province to take care of her daughter and some nieces, decided to go back to DAWN. Her daughter, Hiromi, is now in 1st year college

at the Assumption College in Pampanga taking up Education major in Religion and Values Education. According to her, she finally decided to work on her own and not rely on assistance from some relatives. She wants to fulfill her dream of providing a good education for her only child.

Che is happy doing new Sikhay items and sharing her skills in sewing with other trainees. "Coming back after six years, I consider it an opportunity to improve our lives. I am working in order to send my only child to college. Being part of Sikhay and the DAWN Multi-Purpose Cooperative will help me sustain our daily needs," said Che.

"It is difficult to live far from my daughter, who is studying in Pampanga, but we do manage to communicate through the cellphone and internet. If things turn out well, I am planning to bring my daughter to Manila so that we can be together," continued Che.

Rita, Celia and Arcela are also mothers of JFCs. They want to learn the skills in sewing and weaving so that they can put up their own project at home in the future.

Zita shared that aside from the skills training, she is thankful that she also receives transportation and food allowance, which is a big help to her.

"It was interesting and exciting for me to be able to operate the high speed machine. I am planning to buy my own machine. I also learned other things, such as using the tape measure and threading the edging and sewing machines. They seem so simple and yet they are actually complicated. The training made me realize the importance of following step by step procedures in sewing in order to produce quality items," quipped Zita.

Zita went to Dubai in 1999 to work in a ceramics factory but was instead



Sewing trainees

asked to tutor the three children of her employer and do housework at the same time.

Eunor shared that as a young child, her grandmother exposed her to sewing. They would sew simple pillow cases from sacks of cornstarch. Today, after a long sojourn working outside the country which lasted for almost 19 years, she wants to stay home and look after her young adult children. She is interested to put up a home-based project.

“If I have an income generating project, I don’t want to go back abroad because my children need me,” said Eunor. “The training I get from Sikhay will provide me not only with the skills in operating the edging and high speed sewing machines. I also learned about the different parts of a sewing machine, the kinds of needles, the do’s and don’ts in machine operation, and the importance of right measurement in sewing. I am excited to finish my first sewing project, which is an apron. After my training, I am planning to start my own business which is related to sewing,”



Training in weaving

continued Eunor.

From 1994 to 2010, Eunor went back and forth to Singapore and Brunei as a domestic worker. In 2010, she went to Qatar to work as a cook.

Some more women are expected to undergo skills training at Sikhay in the next months. Part of the skills training of the women is supported by the Asia Community Trust (ACT) of Japan.



The women share their team-building output



SINAG (akebono or yoake in Japanese) means dawn or daybreak.

It is the quarterly publication of the Development Action for Women Network (DAWN), a non-government organization devoted to issues concerning migrant women and their Japanese-Filipino children.

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What We Learned from DAWN

By Mika Kanagawa, Saori Takagi, Mizuki Kamo, and Mika Abe

This September, we came to Manila to learn about the situation of women empowerment in the Philippines through the University of Philippines' AIESEC, which is an international network that provides internships to students. We tried to accomplish our project by visiting NGOs that supported women from various perspectives. UP's AIESEC arranged our visits to *Women and Gender Institute (WAGI)*, *Grace To Be Born*, and *Lila Pilipina*. In WAGI and Lila Pilipina, we were educated about comfort women issue, and in Grace To Be Born, we learned about the problems of young women, like sexual abuse. Even though we learned the basic idea of women empowerment in Philippines, we felt like we haven't learned enough yet. So we tried to find other NGOs that we could visit on a daily basis. And thankfully, we found DAWN and visited them for the first time on September 5th.

All the staff, members and JFC were really kind and they offered us a two-week program to know problems and situations of women and their JFC. Of course we said yes! For the first day, we were provided with a background explanation about



DAWN. We also watched documentary videos about a former client of DAWN and the JFC's journey to meet their fathers. After that we observed "Sikhay," DAWN's alternative livelihood program. On the second day, we visited the members' house to see how they live. On the following days, we got an opportunity to visit the Japan Embassy to interview them about Japan's responses on the issues that DAWN's members had raised. We also got opportunities to discuss with women about their experiences in Japan. Ms. Chiho Ogaya, DAWN-Japan Coordinator, gave a presentation about migration issues in Philippines for us and the students of Kwasei Gakuin University. We also had some activities like origami and calligraphy workshops with JFC on Saturdays. We also got to watch the play "Misty," created and performed by the women members of DAWN.

After we worked through every activity in DAWN, all of us felt different things. "I learned that it's impossible to recognize those women as 'a group' because each of the women have totally different difficulties they experienced,"

(Continued on page 5)

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