



Teatro Akebono 2012 Tour

By Liza Garcia

with reports from Jemina Alnas, Kay Celine Andrade, Yorgei Cerezo and Tsuyoshi Imai

After a one year hiatus, DAWN once again embarked on its annual Teatro Akebono tour to Japan.

It will be recalled that DAWN did not have a theatre tour in 2011 because of the disasters that hit Japan during the first quarter of the year. Instead, DAWN conducted activities with its women and children members in support of the Japanese people. These included the sending of solidarity messages and art works to Japan, as well as helping raise funds especially for the disaster-stricken areas.

Slowly, Japan is getting back on its feet. The effects of the disaster are still visible and felt, but people have bounced back.

Thus, DAWN saw it fit to visit Japan again and stage its presentations in various prefectures, with the help of local partners.

This year, seven Japanese-Filipino children (JFC) came for the tour along with three members of the staff. The seven JFC are Masami Angel Kuraoka, Sora Sato, Jemina Shilyn Alnas, Kay Celine Andrade, Juan Miguel Miranda, Yorgei Cerezo and Tsuyoshi Imai. DAWN Executive Director Carmelita Nuqui, along with Lisa Garcia and Mary Joy Barcelona accompanied the children.



The cast of Misty and Crane Dog

Before the group left for Japan, they had a back-to-back presentation with the women at the St. Scholastica's College on May 11. Some friends and family members of the JFC participants watched the play. Mr. Ronnie Protacio of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) watched and made a few helpful suggestions on how to improve the play. Many of his suggestions were incorporated in the play that was presented in Japan.

The first leg of the journey started in Tokyo. Upon the invitation of the All-Japan Prefectural and Municipal Workers Union (JICHIRO), the group came to Japan for a series of presentations. On May 14, the day after the group arrived in Tokyo, they had their first presentation at the Jichiro Conference Hall in Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo. The presentation was preceded by

a conference where Tita Mel was one of the speakers. She talked on "The Situation of Returned Migrant Women Workers from Japan and their Japanese-Filipino Children and the Interventions of DAWN."

Those who attended the first presentation included members of Jichiro and Empowerment for All (EFA), as well as other Japanese

people. DAWN volunteers Fumiko-san and Kyutoku-san were present, as well as Megumi Nishijima of the Asian Community Center. JFC Tadashi Ise also lent support to the group through his mere presence. Of course, DAWN-Japan volunteers, Chiho Ogaya, Watanabe-san, Akane-san, Tamura-san, Azusa san and DAWN-KUIS members were present, too. Hara-sensei also met with the group and we had dinner together at the Tokyo Green Palace hotel.

The following day, the group trooped to the Giin kaikan for a meeting with Mr. Takayuki Shinozawa of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Rep. Chinami Nishimura, and representatives from the Ministry of Justice.

On May 16, the group left for the Makoto Center, also located in Tokyo. Mr.

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DAWN Supports Ratification of ILO Convention 189

The Development Action for Women Network (DAWN) is one of the NGOs supporting the immediate ratification of ILO Convention 189 on decent work for domestic workers, as well as the passage into law of the Kasambahay bill. As a member of the Philippine Migrants Rights Watch (PMRW), DAWN has given its full support to both measures, which will set standards for the protection of domestic workers.

Adopted on June 16, 2011, ILO Convention 189 lays down the basic rights and principles for the protection of domestic workers. It requires States to take a series of measures with a view to making decent work a reality for domestic workers. Specifically, it requires member States to take measures to respect, promote, and realize the fundamental principles and rights at work of domestic workers. This would include their freedom of association and the recognition of the right to collective bargaining, the elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labor, the effective abolition of child labor, as well as the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

DAWN Executive Director Mel Nuqui was present at the Senate when Senator Loren Legarda delivered her privilege speech on the urgency of ratifying ILO Convention 189. Her presence at the Senate, along with that of other migrants' rights advocates, signified strong support for the instrument's ratification.

"The Philippines' ratification of the Convention will affirm the Philippine government's commitment to protect the

rights of migrant domestic workers," said Nuqui.

It will be recalled that the Philippines chaired the ILO Committee on Domestic Workers which ensured a strong convention and its accompanying recommendation.

The Philippines' ratification of ILO Convention 189 will show that indeed the government is serious in its efforts to protect the rights of its migrant workers, especially the domestic workers. It complete the required two ILO member-states to put the Convention into force. Uruguay is the first country to ratify the said Convention. Article 21 of the Convention provides that it shall come to force 12 months after the date on which the ratification of two members have been registered with the Director-General of the ILO.

Aside from the Convention, the Philippines is set to pass the Magna Carta for Domestic Workers more popularly known as the Kasambahay Bill. The Philippine Senate has passed the said measure in December 2010 while the House of Representatives still has to pass it on Third Reading.

"DAWN likewise supports the passage of the Kasambahay Bill into law. We feel that it is long overdue to give recognition to our own *kasambahays*. They deserve to receive social security protection and other benefits as workers," quipped Nuqui.

The Kasambahay Bill would raise the minimum wage for domestic workers, require a written contract, extend social security, and improve protection from violence and abuse.

"Congress should make every effort to adopt the Kasambahay Bill and ratify ILO Convention 189 when the next session begins this July," continued Nuqui.

In 2011, DAWN expanded its programs to include the provision of assistance to women migrant domestic workers. It started by gathering data and information about Filipino migrant domestic workers. In partnership with CARAM-Asia, DAWN did some research and provided support during the consultations and meetings with ILO for the adoption of a convention for domestic workers.



Migrants rights advocates, including DAWN Executive Director Mel Nuqui, lobbying for the ratification of ILO Convention 189 on decent work for domestic workers

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Philip Sasaki, a long-time friend of DAWN is the Principal of the Makoto Center. Before the afternoon presentation, the children and staff of DAWN had the chance to meet the elderly Japanese who are staying at the center. The JFC performed several dances for them, to the delight of the senior citizens and the staff of the center. In the afternoon, the JFC had their second presentation after which they had an interaction with the school children at the Makoto Center. They played games with the Japanese children. The next presentation was at the Yokohama National University (YNU). Chiho Ogaya, a professor at the YNU and the coordinator of DAWN-Japan, was the one who made the arrangements for the presentation in their university. Presentations were also held in Yaezu, Shizuoka, at the University of Shizuoka, and at the Kozoji Church in Nagoya.

Presentations at the Chubu University and at the Osaka University were held in the classrooms. After presentations, there were interactions with university students. In Osaka, the group was invited by Prof. Oue for dinner after the presentation. Some of his students joined us for dinner, where the group was treated to a sumptuous dinner of traditional Japanese food such as okonomiyake and yakisoba.

“This tour has been a challenging one for us. There were eight presentations,” said Yorgei.

“What was challenging is the fact that we had to adjust to the different sizes and types of stage where we had to perform, as well as the different kinds of audience we had,” said JM.

The group agreed that the presentation in Nagoya was the most challenging. Jemina and Sora were not there and the rest had to make adjustments in the play.

“We had to be flexible. But I think we did well because the audience appreciated the play we performed in Nagoya,” said Tsuyoshi. “I think that the audience understood the message of the play.”

Aside from the presentations, the group took part in other activities. On May 24, they were treated to a tour of the Kaiyukan aquarium located in Minato, Osaka. The Kaiyukan is one of the largest public aquariums in the world that is home to 580 species and 30,000 marine animals from the Pacific Rim. After the tour of the Kaiyukan, the group went on a boat ride instead of taking the subway back to the Nagai Youth hostel, where the group is staying. The boat brought the group to Sakurajima, near the Universal Studios. Although we did not go inside, the children had a fun time taking photographs outside the theme park.

On May 26, the group joined the activity of the Momodami High School. Different cultural presentations were lined up by the students who hail from different countries, such as Japan, China,

the Philippines, Thailand, Russia, USA and Pakistan. The members of Teatro Akebono also presented a dance number. They also joined the workshop organized for the Filipino students in the high school.

On May 25, Tita Yuki, who was then very pregnant, met with the group. She also introduced her husband to us. The following evening, we met with Yuto, one of our DAWN volunteers. He brought with him his friend Akira, who is also a member of AISEC. They have been helping to promote and sell Sikhay products.

It is also worth noting that three of the JFC in the group were able to meet with their fathers. On May 22, Sora and Jemina did not join the presentation at the Kozoji church to meet with their fathers. Tita Mel went with Sora to Chiba where they met with Mr. Sato. Nat-chan accompanied them. Tita Joy meanwhile accompanied Jemina to Kitakami where they met with Jemina’s father.

“I am happy because I met my father in Japan,” said Jemina. “He bought me chocolates and we went to the park. He accompanied me and Tita Joy back to the train station,” she continued. “However, I was not able to tell him everything I wanted to say. I hope he is okay and I wish to see him again.”

On May 26, it was Masami’s turn to meet with her father. Tita Mel and Tita Joy accompanied Masami to Kumamoto City in the island of Kyushu for this event.

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The JFC members of DAWN together with students from the Momodami High School in Osaka

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Meanwhile, the remaining JFC together with Tita Lisa, Anno-sensei, Furuya-sensei and Fujimoto-san went with Tsuyoshi Imai to Takatsuki. Tsuyoshi was born there and he wanted to see his birthplace. From Takatsuki, the group met with Tita Mel, Tita Joy and Masami at the Shin-Osaka station for dinner.

Although the other JFC were unable to meet their fathers, they were happy for those who did. It was the first time for Masami and Sora to meet their fathers. JM, although he did not meet with his father, was able to talk to him by phone.

Overall, the JFC said they enjoyed the trip to Japan. It was an opportunity for them to meet other Japanese people and get to know their culture. They also enjoyed the food. It was also a time to build stronger friendships with fellow JFC.

“I am happy for those who met their fathers. It was the first time for Sora to meet his father, as well as with Masami,” said Yorgei. “At the same time, I was a bit sad because I did not meet my father nor did I have the chance to talk to him by phone. But I know that he will never forget me and that he loves me,” continued Yorgei.

KC also said that she was happy for those who met their fathers. Even if she did not meet hers, she made friends with her fellow JFC. “I gained three brothers – Kuya JM, Kuya Tsuyoshi, and Yorgei,” said KC.

Like KC, Jemina said she made friends with her fellow JFC. She became close to KC and Masami. It was also a learning experience for Jemina. “Japan is a

clean place. People do not just throw their garbage anywhere. We should be like that in the Philippines. They also are disciplined.”

Masami and Jemina said they enjoyed making new friends in Japan. Masami said she liked playing with Sarara and Yukune, the daughters of Nat-chan.

“It was also good to see other JFC in Japan, like Hayato, Shota, Tadashi and Masayuki,” said Jemina.

For the older JFC, there was also a realization of a lot of things. KC said the tour was a time for them to bring out the leaders in them. This sentiment was echoed by both Tsuyoshi and Yorgei. They had to lead and become examples for the younger JFC. They also realized the importance of learning Japanese language so that they do not have to rely on Japanese volunteers to translate for them. Hopefully, they will be encouraged to learn Japanese once they return to the Philippines.

For Sora, he said it is important to enjoy. He said he really enjoyed the trip. And the most memorable time for him in Japan was when he met his father.

Tsuyoshi said he also enjoyed the trip. He was 9 years old the last time he was in Japan. This time around, he was able to appreciate the Japanese culture better. There was so much to do in Japan, aside from the presentation and Tsuyoshi said



With Tita Yuuki Nozaki

each of the activity was different from the other.

DAWN and the JFC are thankful to all those who helped make the trip a success – Jichiro, DAWN-Japan, NCCA, and the volunteers. We are grateful to Mr. Sato, Hara-sensei and all our networks in Japan. We also wish to thank the Filipino women in Nagoya who made us feel welcome. We are especially grateful to Tamura-san who was with the group in Tokyo, Saitama, Shizuoka, Nagoya and Osaka. He did not just help sell the Sikhay products, he was also the narrator of the play. He also helped us carry our bags.

Finally, on May 27, it was time for the group to return to the Philippines. After two weeks of non-stop action, the group boarded a plane bound for the Philippines. The children have to prepare for school opening and the staff has to resume normal work activities back in Manila.



With students from the University of Shizuoka



At the Kaiyukan with Anno-sensei, Jemina, Yorgei and KC

People, Places, Events



Mr. Katsuhiko Sato and Prof. Mitsuko Horiuchi with DAWN Executive Director Mel Nuqui at the Conference organized by Jichiro in Tokyo on May 14



The cast of Crane Dog, together with DAWN staff, Prof. Horiuchi, and Mr. Sato with Mr. Takayuki Shinozawa of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan on May 15



Jichiro International Secretary Katsuhiko Sato and members visited DAWN on April 30. Photo shows Ms. Nuqui, Rosalie Akase and Analisa Yambao explaining about Sikhay to Mr. Sato.



JFC Ai Risa Akase took her oath as a Certified Public Accountant on June 20 at the PICC

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The Journey of Sikhay & Its Members

By Mary Joy E. Barcelona

When Sikhay started, our sewing machines were just borrowed from one DAWN Board member and one member. If there was a need to do edging or button holing, we had to go to the Paco market. Eventually, DAWN was able to buy its own button holer and edging machines through the support of Cordaid and the Japan Embassy. We also bought some high speed sewing machines. Initially, it was a problem for us because the women were used to regular sewing machines and were quite hesitant to train in DSWD for the use of high speed sewing machines.

It has been 16 years since Sikhay, DAWN's alternative livelihood program, was established. All these years, we take pride in being able to help women empower themselves. We have trained hundreds of women in different skills: sewing, machine operations, pattern making, cutting, quilting, bag making; handloom weaving, both basic and advanced using silk, cotton, wool and polyester; tie dyeing; slippers making, fan making; basic computer training; cosmetology & hair science training; therapeutic massage; beads making; finishing, quality control, inventory and purchasing.

Our objective of helping women help themselves was made possible through the help of our friends and networks. Through the years they shared their time, expertise and experiences with us. They are the Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PUP) College of Cooperatives, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), DOST-Philippine Textile Research Institute (PTRI), Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), Malanday Elementary School Non formal School, Splash Foundation and Ang Hortaleza Foundation, Manila Manpower Development Center (MMDC), System Technology Institute (STI), St. Scholastica's College Longlife Learning & Wellness Center, and the Kapatiran Kaunlaran Foundation. Individual experts and volunteers also helped us such as

Yoko Shirane for the pattern and design, and Conchita Merin for the slippers making. Many other people helped us in the conduct of the different workshops we had in entrepreneurial training and team building. We also encourage our women members to continue their studies. This may be through the DepEd's Alternative Learning School (ALS) for Elementary & High School, or through open universities, such as the one being offered at the Polytechnic University of the Philippines.

Today, we are able to see the fruits of our labor. All the hard work seems to be paying off. We are inspired by the different stories of our women members, who share with us their realizations, their hopes and dreams.

Anna Yambao is one of the many women who benefitted from the programs and services of DAWN and Sikhay.

Four years ago I was just doing laundry work. Now I am working in Sikhay. I feel proud and happy because it feels different when you go to office every day doing productive and challenging work. Even our neighbors cannot believe that I am working in an office. I learned many things in Sikhay. They taught me skills in sewing, weaving, cosmetology, and massage therapy, as well as in purchasing of materials and monitoring of inventories. I was also given the opportunity to be in-charge of the DAWN Wellness Center and this has challenged me to improve my skills and be responsible in improving the

services of the wellness center. Because of these skills I learned, I am able to earn for my family and my son. I pray that I will always be ready to do my tasks.

I am also a member of the DAWN Multi-Purpose Cooperative, and I currently serve as its Treasurer. Before, I did not know what multi-tasking is. But after joining Sikhay I always feel like doing many things, which I quite enjoy. I am happy that I have learned a lot and am able to apply all these at work and in my daily life.

I am thankful to all the staff of DAWN for all the support and guidance. They are always there whenever we need them. I am also happy that my son Tsuyoshi, who is now 20 years old, was able to finish his university degree. It was because of DAWN that Tsuyoshi's father started giving him support for his studies. I remember he was only 6 years old when he joined DAWN and met his father. Since then, his father has always supported him. Because of DAWN, my son was also able to travel back to Japan, through the Teatro Akebono theater tour last May. Going to Japan just after his college graduation is like a gift to him. My son is now enrolled at the UERM to pursue his dream of becoming a doctor. He received a scholarship from his school. I am proud of my son and he can always be sure that I will always be there to support him.

Anna is one of our sources of inspiration. She is able to manage her time very well and has remained humble and cheerful in everything she does.

Rosalie is another DAWN member who has been with us for many years. We are proud that despite all the challenges of being a single parent, she was able to raise her daughter Ai Risa well.

Single mothers like me should be patient and never give up. Our role is not easy but now I am proud to say that despite the many challenges in my long journey raising my daughter





alone, she is now a certified public accountant. I am thankful to DAWN for all the support and motivation they gave me. DAWN also helped my daughter realize her dream of meeting her father again. I am also grateful her father recognised her and for a short time also provided us with financial support.

I am where I am because DAWN, through its Sikhay program, gave me the opportunity to have a decent source of living. It also gave me the opportunity to hone my skills in sewing and weaving good quality products. One of the tasks I do at Sikhay is to conduct an inventory of finished goods and teach new members the skills I have learned. Even now that my daughter is a Certified Public Accountant (CPA), DAWN is still helping us.

DAWN likewise gave us a chance to become advocates of our own issues and that of our children's. Through DAWN, I went back to Japan, but this time as an advocate and a Sikhay member. This time around, we met people not in the club but people concerned with our situation. We talked to them about our work in Sikhay. It was a different kind of experience that boost my self esteem. I am thankful to DAWN and its staff who never gave up on us. Through the activities they conducted for us, I can say that I have been released from the agony of my past. My wish is for DAWN and Sikhay to go on helping more women like us and more children so that they can also finish their studies. I wish more people around the world will appreciate all the work of DAWN.

Below is the story of Jane, who has made a turn-around in her

life.

There is always another chance in life. Life is full of hopes, just waiting for us to grab it. Faith in God and to our self is the only key to move on in life. I used to enjoy doing and thinking nothing after my husband left us. Then one day, as I was watching television, I learned about DAWN and how it assists women like us and the Japanese-Filipino children.

It has been five years since I became part of Sikhay. I am thankful that through the different skills training and workshops they gave us, I overcame the agony of my past. I was able to provide for the needs of my daughter. I can decide on my own. Being with DAWN, I realized that even without the father of my daughter, life will go on. I can say with pride that I can provide and do everything for my daughter. I can give her a good education and a bright future. DAWN is always with us supporting and guiding us. I hope that they will continue their endeavor and help more women and children. Now, I am no longer the crying lady at the corner who does nothing.

Through DAWN, my daughter was able to meet her father in May 2012, after nine years. When she was six years old, she also met her uncle when she joined the theater tour in Japan in 2009.

Now I am enrolled at the PUP Open University. My ultimate dream is now starting to become a reality. I am a 1st year student taking up BS Entrepreneurial Management. I am happy that I am able to go back to school. If you are detremined and have a dream, then reach for it. Age does



not really matter when it comes to going back to school. One thing I've learned is that faith in God, courage, and confidence will make my dream a reality.

My story is no different from that of the others. I am proud to say that I am one of the certified products of DAWN. They have truly supported me in all my endeavors. This semester, I enrolled in Migration Studies at the Miriam College with DAWN's encouragement. DAWN has always been my source of strength and my inspiration in becoming the best that I can be. I am thankful also to all the women and children who inspire me.

Our DAWN family is like any ordinary family. We love and care for each other. At times we argue, but eventually we sort our differences. We laugh and cry together. We are proud in the achievement of others. Each of us is there to comfort the other and be a shoulder to lean on. By being there for the others, we in our own small ways make a difference in the lives of others. I want to continue what we have started in DAWN and be a better member of our family, the DAWN family.



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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RIACAT & RIAC-FF Meetings

By Christina A. Lopez

On June 15, the Regional Inter-Agency Committee against Trafficking and Violence Against Women and Children (RICAT-VAWC) and the Regional Inter-Agency Committee on the Filipino Family (RIAC-FF) held its first quarter meeting for the year. Those who came for the meeting are mostly psychologists, social workers and other professional direct service providers from OWWA, DSWD, DOJ-IACAT, 16 local government units, PRC, DOH, DepEd, CHED, DOLE, PNP-Women & Children's Desk, ERDA, Women's Crisis Center, NBI-Women & Children's Desk, PIA, DILG, as well as NGO representatives.

The meeting's objective as explained by Mr. Froilan Maglaya, Gender and Development (GAD) focal person of DSWD-NCR, is to further understand the different issues and concerns about women, children and the family. Part of the round table discussion was a report on trafficking incidences, as well as a presentation on the different programs and services that are available to victims/survivors of trafficking.

Guest speakers from IACAT, OWWA and DSWD-CBSU were invited to explain the different programs and services they have for trafficked victims/survivors.

The discussion was followed by an Open Forum where the speakers further explained why human trafficking is on the rise, as well as its different forms and manifestations within the context of family and poverty. The representative from CHED shared that there must be a discussion in schools about migration issues. The DSWD said that the availability of employment opportunities in the Philippines can be a realistic solution which will help lessen

the number of Filipinos wanting to go abroad and hopefully lessen the trafficking incidences.

Mr. Maglaya shared that the DSWD has deployed social workers at international airports to assist human trafficking victims. He further shared that they provide services that include giving of shelter, psychological care, counseling, and access to legal services. He also said that the DSWD will further intensify its Recovery and Reintegration program for Trafficked Persons to ensure that they are given the assistance they need.

The DSWD's Recovery and Reintegration program for Trafficked Persons is a comprehensive package of programs and services which enhances the psychosocial, social and economic needs of the clients. NGOs and other social welfare agencies provide temporary shelter to deportees, repatriates and other displaced persons while processing is underway for their eventual return to their respective places of origin.

In relation to this, six women members of DAWN have been provided with livelihood assistance by the DSWD-NCR under its Recovery and Reintegration program for trafficked persons. After undergoing interview and social preparation, which dealt mainly with basic business management training, the six were each given a check in the amount of P10,000 for them to start a small-scale business and/or other livelihood activity that will generate income to sustain their daily needs. DAWN is helping these six women manage their chosen livelihood activities. It likewise monitors their progress and compliance with the terms of the grant.

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