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On Women's Month, nothing is more fitting and timely than to celebrate with a stronger advocacy against trafficking.

DAWN, together with other NGOs such as the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women-Asia Pacific (CATW-AP), Batis Center for Women, Center for Migrant Advocacy (CMA), CBCP-Episcopal Commission for Migrants and Itinerant People (CBCP-ECMI), Kanlungan Center Foundation Inc., Scalabrini Migration Center (SMC), Third World Movement Against the Exploitation of Women, Women Lead, and the Philippine Migrants Rights Watch (PMRW) have come together to unanimously support Japan's new immigration policy which is seen as a step towards the right direction, particularly, in addressing the trafficking problem confronting Filipino women entertainers in Japan.

Despite protest actions from some fellow NGOs, private agencies and entertainers themselves, the response of these advocates of the new Japan policy was even more

NGOs unite in support of Japan policy

Anti-trafficking drive intensifies



NGO staff and women working for the promotion and protection of women's rights.

intensified through its in-depth and strong unity statement which speaks well enough of their common stand on the issue and which has been shared in several consultations, meetings and media interviews during the first quarter of this year. (See complete text of the statement on page 2.)

House Committee hearings

The Special Committee on Overseas Workers Affairs of the House of Representatives led by its Chair, Congressman Edcel Lagman, had two consultations with government officials, NGO representatives, private agencies and entertainers last January 26 and February 2.

DAWN's Executive Director Carmelita Nuqui explained during the meeting how

the two governments failed to address this old issue which has aggravately violated the rights of women entertainers to decent and gainful employment in Japan.

Private agencies, on the other hand, stressed their need for ample time to comply with the new requirements under the new policy. The other party was quick to note though, that granting a moratorium or extension is just tantamount to prolonging the plight of thousands of Filipino women entertainers in Japan.

Entertainers, including the returnees, were also given the chance to share their personal experiences during the meeting like their engagement in club practices like dohan, flying booking, sitting down with

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Editorial

Uphold the dignity and integrity of the Filipino artist and stop the trafficking of women to Japan!

The debate about the new immigration policy of Japan has generated impassioned debate from all sectors. Fears of massive economic dislocation have alarmed women and their families who have come to depend on the income from this type of work. The Philippine government anticipates the potential loss of a lucrative market for Filipino entertainers which have been around for almost 30 years.

We are NGOs working with and alongside women entertainers who have worked in Japan and who have seen the realities of "entertainment work" in Japan up close. Informed by years of research and advocacy on the issue both in the Philippines and Japan, we propose to take a more critical view of the issue towards a more holistic and objective perspective. We are aware that the short-term impact of the policy changes in Japan will negatively affect women and their families. Strategically, however, these policy changes will strengthen the professionalization of the entertainment industry and weed out the undesirable and exploitative aspects of the business.

Historically, this is not the first time that the issue of trafficking has been raised. As early as the 1980s, NGOs in the Philippines and Japan have been reporting increasing cases of trafficking of Filipinas, Thais and East European and Latin American women in Japan. For some years now, many studies have documented the sexual exploitation and illegal labor practices in entertainment establishments where Filipino entertainers are deployed. This is an opportune time to reexamine the entertainment deployment policy to Japan given that Japan itself, after a thorough and thoughtful study, has admitted the prevalence of human trafficking within the context of the entertainment industry.

What are the issues involved and how should we view the initiative of Japan to address the issue of trafficking?

A UNITY STATEMENT

Three decades of migration to Japan: a critical review

Filipino entertainers – musicians, singers and band members were renowned in Asia in the 50s and 60s for their talent and musicality. With the economic boom in Japan, entertainment became more and more oriented towards pleasing the Japanese *sarariman* who worked very hard for the economic success of their companies. In the 70s, corporate incentives for Japanese workers and professionals included trips abroad that became "sex tours" which created a huge scandal in many countries like Korea, Taiwan, the Philippines and Thailand. The public outcry resulted in the decline of the sex tours. Soon after, however, the policy of importing Filipinas in massive numbers for the Japanese male-oriented entertainment market was introduced with the Philippine government itself systematizing and institutionalizing the deployment of Filipinas to Japan.

In 1981, Japan modified its requirement for the issuance of entertainers' visa (minimum 2 year work experience) and allowed the entry of Filipino entertainers without the minimum work experience as long as the Philippine government certified them. Thus was born the Blue Card, which later on evolved into the Yellow and White Cards, the Artist Record Book, and finally, the Artist Accreditation Card. This arrangement between the Philippines and Japan governments went on for several years despite an increase in the number of Filipino women migrant workers from Japan coming home in physical and mental distress as a result of the labor and sexual abuse and exploitation they experienced in Japan.

In 1991, the mysterious death of Maricris Sioson, a 20-year old Filipina entertainer in Japan, drew attention to the plight of Filipina entertainers and the risks involved and problems inherent in Japan's entertainment industry. The advocacy campaigns mounted by migrant and women's NGOs prompted the

Philippine government to enforce regulations (setting of minimum age requirement for the deployment of entertainers to 23) despite protest from the overseas entertainment industry. Similar cases of mysterious deaths and disappearances involving Filipina entertainers in Japan occurred after the case of Maricris Sioson and growing concern for the welfare and protection of Filipina entertainers in Japan prompted the Philippine government to institutionalize the Artist Record Book (ARB) system in 1994 with the objective of providing preparation for Japan-bound entertainers to enhance their protection from abuse and exploitation (DOLE Department Order No. 3).

These policy developments resulted in a significant decrease in the number of Filipina entertainers deployed to Japan but reports of abuse and exploitation of Filipino women continued.

In 1996, the Philippine government lowered the minimum age requirement for the deployment of entertainers to 21 years old as well as mandated the overseas entertainment industry to establish welfare programs and operationalize welfare and monitoring centers to strengthen on-site protection for Filipina entertainers in Japan (DOLE Department Order No. 21). This did not stop the labor and sexual abuse and exploitation experienced by Filipina entertainers from happening which comes mainly from the institutionalized abuse and exploitation that has become part and parcel of the adult entertainment industry in Japan.

From a decade of decreased deployment of Filipina entertainers in the 1990s, the number of deployed entertainers to Japan began to show a significant increase in the year 2001. This increase occurred alongside the adoption of measures by the Philippine government which effectively deregulated the overseas entertainment sector through DOLE Department Order No. 10 and the lowering of the minimum age requirement to 18. Under a deregulated policy environment, the deployment of entertainers flourished

with Philippine government data registering a record number of Filipina entertainers deployed to Japan in 2003. In recent years, charges of corruption also hounded Philippine government officials and the (formal and informal) overseas entertainment industry involved in the testing, certification and deployment of Filipina entertainers.

Amidst all these policy changes and developments in the deployment of Filipina entertainers, the protection and promotion of the rights and welfare of our entertainers has lagged behind thereby resulting in the continued labor and sexual exploitation of our women in Japan.

Issues and concerns on the deployment of overseas performing artists: a pattern of abuse and sexual exploitation

While we understand that many of our women who go to Japan as entertainers do so mainly to work and earn for their families back home, the type of work that they are compelled to do makes them extremely vulnerable to sexual abuse and harassment, prostitution and labor exploitation.

While some entertainers do end up performing in decent

entertainment establishments, most end up doing G.R.O. or hostessing work in clubs, bars, café and other night spots in Japan despite their intensive skills training as singers or dancers in the Philippines. This observation had been articulated by Philippine and Japanese NGOs and even by POEA and DOLE officials and later, though belatedly by Japanese officials. Entertainers are often valued not so much because of their singing or dancing skills for which they were trained for, but on how many customers they can manage to lure into the club every night. Sitting with customers, serving them drinks, wearing sexy clothes, and sometimes performing sexy or nude dances become part of the "work" that is imposed by club owners.

While Philippine and Japanese laws prohibit the practice of DOHAN (dating customers outside the club or bar) most entertainers are forced to agree to this practice on pain of not continuing their contract to work and not receiving their salaries. This practice often exposes our women to sexual assault and rape and eventually to prostitution. Women are also forced to comply with the quota system for dohan and even for the drinks served to their customers or

they would face stiff penalties from their employers.

Other illegal practices such as flying booking (transfer from one club to another), and cleaning the club were also made part of the entertainers' job though they were not actually specified in their work contracts. It is customary to take away the passports of entertainers to prevent them from running away. Contrary to the specification in their contracts, entertainers normally receive just ¼ of their legally mandated salary which they can only get after six months of working. Withholding their salaries is also one way of taking control of these women who then must rely on commissions and tips from customers just so they can send money to their families every month.

Given the nature of their job and the environment and culture of the entertainment world, Filipina entertainers face the risks of sexual harassment and verbal and physical abuse both by their employers or club owners and their customers almost on a daily basis. They also face the risk of being 'victimized' by the Yakuza who control most of the entertainment and sex industry establishments in Japan. Indeed as the ILO Report (2004) noted, "women are vulnerable to trafficking" (To page 4)

Japan has started to enforce last March 15 its new immigration policy which imposes strict requirements for entertainers. Since the news on the new policy came about, different views and reactions emerged from sectors concerned – the government, private groups, civil society, and Filipino entertainers themselves, both in the Philippines and in Japan.

We were disappointed with how our Philippine government failed to understand the long-term benefit of this policy to our Filipino women and to our country. Requesting for an extension or moratorium is just prolonging the sad plight of our Filipino women in Japan.

The government recognized the possible economic loss but not the protection it may give to our

Reiterating our support to Japan's policy

women's dignity and human rights.


Again, may we reiterate that the move from the Japanese government is not drastic. The Philippine government just came in too late to protect its own people.

Nevertheless, Japan remained firm with its decision. We in DAWN just hope that they will likewise be firm in monitoring the work places of the "would be qualified" entertainers or their efforts to curb human trafficking will all turn out futile.

The Philippine government has no other recourse now but to respect and to comply with this new policy. While it can't provide adequate and gainful local employment, it must at least initiate measures that will help our Filipino women cope with these changes in the international labor market.

We don't want our women to be lured again to empty promises and false hopes. Thus, we likewise appeal to both governments to be always on guard against cheating, falsification of documents and corruption that may arise from the imposition of this new policy.

Despite the attacks hurled against DAWN and other women's groups for supporting a policy "that will make many women lose their jobs in Japan," we in DAWN are consistent and firm with our stand because we have seen how our women's lives were broken and their dreams shattered. We remain supportive of the new immigration policy.

We in DAWN believe that our advocacy battle does not end here. More odds will come our way, but whatever it takes, we are ready for the challenge. 

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because the hostessing side of the entertainment industry is so open to exploitation. There are an enormous variety of practices in clubs and only limited monitoring". Their passports were also confiscated upon their arrival in Japan and were strictly monitored by their employers which made it more difficult for them to seek help.

In addition, the Philippine government, who is supposed to protect them from labor contract violations, initiated the reduction of the entertainer's salaries from Y200,000 monthly income with free food and accommodation, to Y100,000 excluding allowances. This is a clear case of diminution of benefits which have negatively affected Filipina entertainers.

Accounting for the social consequences of the deployment of Filipina entertainers

Among the least considered impacts of the deployment of OPAs are the social consequences which are incomparable to the monetary benefits of the experience. These social consequences are critical to the understanding of the real impact of this type of overseas employment.

In the data provided by the Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO), there are 74,436 marriages between Filipino and Japanese nationals from 1989 to 2003. In 2003 alone, there have been 4,000 recorded marriages. A large percentage of these Filipino nationals were women and these relationships usually began in the bars and clubs. Mainly due to cultural and personal differences, many of these marriages end up in divorce and abandonment. This situation then gives rise to problems of child custody, financial support and visas, among others. Reports of domestic violence and discrimination have also been noted.

In the cases handled by NGOs like DAWN and Batis, many women entertainers go home pregnant or would suddenly lose touch with their Japanese partners who neither recognize nor financially support their Japanese-Filipino children (JFC). With around 80,000 women entertainers

working in Japan every year, there are countless Japanese-Filipino children who also suffer the consequences of migration. Though no official census has been taken of the actual numbers of Filipino Japanese children both in the Philippines and in Japan, the estimates are in the range of 100,000 and above. Based on the records of DAWN, Batis and Maligaya House alone, there are over 2,000 Japanese-Filipino children (which is a small fraction of the total number of mostly unrecorded cases) who are in need of paternal support and recognition.

In a previous dialogue with officials from the Japan Embassy, they admitted that they have no special program for such cases of abandoned women and Japanese-Filipino children because they are already personal matters that are beyond their control.

On the part of the Philippine government, there are no effective reintegration programs yet for women returnees from Japan and their children. Thus, it is no longer surprising why many of these women still opt to return to Japan despite their painful experiences there. It's a risk they have to take for them to support and survive their children, their moral standards notwithstanding.

The trafficking issue: why now?

The issue of trafficking has been around for many years but it is only in the last decade, that the issue received high visibility and action on the part of the international community. As a result of persistent NGO advocacy from women's groups and migrant groups, the trafficking of women and children especially for sexual exploitation all over the world is now universally condemned and criminalized. The Philippines itself has actively promoted an anti-trafficking of women and girls resolution in the UN (Commission on the Status of Women, Human Rights Committee, and the General Assembly) as a policy agenda since 1994. It also actively supported the adoption of the UN Optional Protocol on Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children. In 2003, the Philippines passed the historic anti-trafficking law in the Philippines after years of advocacy by women's groups. It has since been hailed as one of the most comprehensive and progressive laws by other countries.

As a country that has one of the biggest entertainment/sex industries in the world employing women mostly from the Philippines, Thailand,

Colombia and other East European countries, Japan has been criticized as turning a blind eye to numerous cases of trafficking of women over the years.

Several researches conducted by NGOs and scholars and DAWN (1997, 2003), CATW (2001), Ballescás (1991), de Dios (2001) and more recently Human Rights Watch (2002), IOM (2001) and International Labor Organization (2004) have attested to the persistent problem of trafficking of women in Japan often associated with the entertainment industry despite the available legal channels for entry (entertainer's visa). For many years, Japanese women's groups and migrant rights groups in Japan have been reporting these cases and have actively provided services for trafficked victims through shelters and other services. By the 1980s, Philippine NGOs began setting up programs and assistance programs for returnee entertainers who experienced abuse in Japan.

Trafficking of women and children in Japan has almost always been associated with the entertainment/sex industries which is heavily controlled by syndicates like the Yakuza. The studies show a pattern of sexual and labor exploitation without recourse to legal remedies from the Japanese government which previously had no legal standards on trafficking cases. Various methods and degrees of coercion and control are employed to compel women even with legal papers, to give in to the sexual advances of customers even in legally operating bars and entertainment establishments. In the worst of cases, women are virtually imprisoned, enslaved and subjected to the most horrendous violations (case files of BATIS, DAWN and CATW).

From mid-1995 to the present, important initiatives have been taken by the international community against trafficking. The European passed their own policy measures against Trafficking. The US, Thailand and the Philippines passed their anti-trafficking laws. South Asia passed the SAARC Convention, while the ASEAN has finalized its declaration against trafficking. Over the last ten years when many countries and regions have taken action on trafficking, Japan found itself being criticized for not doing enough to address trafficking in its own territory.

It is in this light that Japan has taken serious steps to systematically

address the issue of trafficking. In the last two years, Japan has conferred with NGOs and other government agencies including those in the Philippines on their plan to institute stronger measures against trafficking. An Inter-agency Coordination Mechanism on trafficking in Persons was created in April 2004 in Japan. Subsequently, in September 2004, official missions were dispatched to the Philippines, Thailand and Colombia to consult and inform the governments of the action plan to be implemented by Japan.

Though these actions came a bit too late, we affirm that these are steps in the right direction.

In the Philippines, several consultative dialogues on the problems and issues of OPAs have been taking place between government, NGOs and civil society since 2001, reiterating cases of abuse and trafficking. Some of these discussions in fact have yielded very important recommendations that would have complemented Japan's initiatives. However, it seems that the Philippine government itself had not seriously taken steps to prepare for a contingency plan in the event of possible policy changes from Japan.

Moving forward: some recommendations

In light of the inevitable implementation of the new immigration policy of Japan which is intended to curb trafficking of persons, we recommend the following concrete measures:

For the Philippine government:

1) Strengthen the professionalization of the entertainment industry. As should be the case, Filipino talent and artistry should once again be elevated to its rightful place as a legitimate, decent and respected industry as it was in the 60s and 70s. Since the new immigration policy upholds the professional standards for artists, entertainment promoters should have no reason to fear as qualified artists are welcome to continue working in Japan. In this regard, the age requirement for Filipino artists deployed abroad should at least be 21 years of age.

Genuine and professional artists must be given the opportunity to perform with dignity and pride and not made to engage in demeaning and degrading work to earn a living.

2) The Philippine government must prepare and implement a concrete
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customers, and payment of salary at the end of the contract, among others.

The discussion seemed like an endless debate. As already expected, conflicting views were shared with the opposing parties remaining firm on their respective positions.

Dialogue with governments, media

How does Japan's new immigration policy hope to address the plight of potential trafficking victims like the Filipino women entertainers?



Committee Hearing at the House of Representatives.

This was further discussed in a forum organized by DAWN and its fellow advocates from the civil society last February 3 at the Balay Kalinaw in UP Diliman. Andrea Anolin of Batis Center for Women provided a historical background on the migration of Filipino entertainers to Japan while Nuqui of DAWN elaborated the issues and concerns of women entertainers. Aurora Javate de Dios of CATW-AP, Ellene Sana of CMA and Florence May Bans-Cortina of Kanlungan also shared some inputs about the issues presented and have reiterated their support to the new policy.

Returnees including DAWN's Mary Joy Barcelona also shared their traumatic experiences as entertainers and how they have

struggled to move on after that.


Most of the questions during the forum were addressed to Masaru Watanabe, Minister of Japan Embassy's General Affairs, who was there with Labour Attache Tomoaki Noguchi to present Japan government's policy against trafficking. In his presentation, Watanabe assured advocates that the new policy also includes giving rightful protection to trafficking victims on-site.

Media mileage

Apart from its partnership with fellow advocates, DAWN has also tapped various media outfits to further elaborate the issues confronting Filipino women entertainers in Japan in relation to its strong support to the Japan policy.

Nuqui and Barcelona graced several interviews for television, radio, print and even the Internet. Publications like the Philippine Daily Inquirer, Cyberdyaryo website, ANC News Channel of Studio 23 and GMA 7's 24 Oras were among those who featured stories about entertainers in Japan and the new immigration policy and have invited DAWN to share its views on the issue.

For the women

DAWN's celebration of Women's Month was marked by a more intensified campaign against trafficking, now with Japan's new immigration policy being enforced. In the coming months, it will keep a close watch of the foreseen pains and gains of this new policy and will take necessary measures to protect and promote women migrants' rights, as always. 



Japan Embassy's Minister of General Affairs Masaru Watanabe explains Japan's Action Plan to combat trafficking in persons.

Prayers of Commitment

Staff Lord, thank you for the fruitful nine years we had in DAWN. That despite our personal weaknesses and sometimes different views, we were

able to fulfill our important tasks as DAWN staff.

And as we celebrate our 9th year, we pray for your guidance that we may never lose patience, never abandon hope, and never stop caring and serving these people who are the foremost reasons why we are all here as an organization.

And most of all, may we always remain true to our commitment of service to our women and children members despite all odds.

All these we pray to you, our Lord and Savior. Amen.

Volunteers

Lord, thank you for this opportunity to serve and be instrumental in making a change in the lives of other people. In our dealings with the women and Japanese-Filipino children of DAWN, we learned more about them, their thoughts and feelings, their strengths and weaknesses. In the process, we also learned more about ourselves and how we can better be of service to them.

Thus, on behalf of all the volunteers, here and in Japan, I commit our full support to DAWN and the noble cause it pursues.



DAWN volunteer
Agnes Mineko Hara

May you always be there, Lord, to guide us in this important journey.

In Jesus name, we pray.

Amen.

DAWN celebrates



DAWN's Advisory Council member, Bishop Julio Xavier Labayen, delivers his homily during the Thanksgiving Mass.

DAWN celebrated its fruitful nine years as one family in a simple yet meaningful

shared their prayers of commitment as part of the DAWN family.

Retchel Bitas represented the women while Michi Sato spoke on behalf of the Japanese-Filipino children. Agnes Mineko Hara shared the volunteers' commitment while Nancy Bondoc, DAWN's Administrative Officer, represented the staff.



DAWN's Executive Director Carmelita Nuqui gives the welcome remarks.



DAWN women sway their hips to a modern tune.

In line with the anniversary theme, "Looking back and moving forward for the year ahead," their prayers reflected the importance of

ceremony last February 5 at the fifth floor lobby of the Don Santiago Building.

Bishop Julio Xavier Labayen officiated the Thanksgiving Mass during which the staff, members and volunteers



The DAWN family does the fellowship song.

its 9th anniversary

everyone's commitment and sincere effort to fulfill the endeavors pursued by the organization.

Later in the afternoon, the members made the celebration even more



JFC render a special song number.



The DAWN staff, Board and volunteers

memorable with their special renditions of the latest dance hits. The younger children were a delight to watch as they moved to the beat of "Chocolate" while the older JFC swayed their bodies to the upbeat tune of "Choopeta."



The DAWN staff and Sikhay women



exciting bingo game led by JFC member Fujiko Kitaura.

Jennifer Verano and Joynichi Kawaguchi, two of DAWN's promising JFC members, hosted the program.

Children gamely dance to the beat.

Prayers of Commitment Women

Heavenly Father, we, the women members of DAWN thank you for all the blessings that you've given us for the past nine years and even for the trials that made us strong and brave. We also ask for your forgiveness for all our shortcomings, for failing at times to obey your will.

And as DAWN celebrates its 9th year, we pray for your guidance that we may fulfill our tasks as advocates of women migrants' rights as well as our responsibilities as mothers to our children as women members of this organization.

Give us strength and guidance always in all our endeavors, Lord.

All these we ask through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

JFC

Almighty God, thank you for always being there through good and bad times.

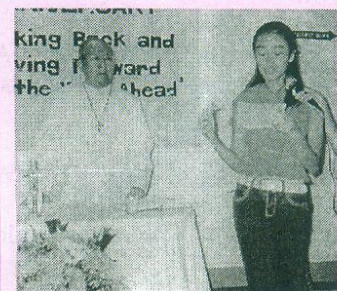
As children supported by DAWN, we pray for empowerment and hope that the staff and volunteers will continue their support and services to help us Japanese-Filipino children and our mothers.

Teach us, Lord, to remain good children and to always be the source of inspiration and strength to our mothers.

And also, may we always be obedient and helpful to the staff, volunteers and fellow members through our own simple and humble ways.

May this be the chance for us to strengthen the ties of all JFC and to achieve cooperation / in the fulfillment of our objectives / pursued by DAWN for our welfare.

These we ask through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.



DAWN member Michi Sato

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and realistic contingency plan to retrain and provide decent and gainful local employment for women who will be dislocated by the new immigration policy of Japan. Overseas work everywhere even by OPAs is not suppose to be a permanent solution to our unemployment problem. This strategy is simply unsustainable.

3) Implement the Anti-Trafficking Law of the Philippines 2003 (RA 9208). The firm resolve of Japan to address trafficking will not only complement but strengthen the prosecution of trafficking cases involving Filipina entertainers to Japan. Immediately prosecute recruiters and other perpetrators of trafficking of Filipinas to Japan.

4) Address the issue of Japanese-Filipino children, as a consequence of the massive deployment of Filipina entertainers to Japan.

For the Japanese Government:

1) In the implementation of their new immigration policy, Japan must provide protection, resources and services to trafficked women who must be given an option to stay or return to the Philippines. Filipina entertainers who find themselves in Japan in the course of the implementation of the new immigration policies must be humanely treated and protected.

2) Japan must strictly monitor the operations of their entertainment establishments with a view to eliminating the illegal, abusive and exploitative practices that have been documented by various studies.

3) Ensure that Filipino artists are employed in decent and dignified entertainment establishments.

4) Japan needs to address the demand side of trafficking, particularly the male demand for sexual services that creates the conditions for trafficking.

5) Japan should immediately ratify the UN Optional Protocol on Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children.

6) Japan must take measures to prevent the use of fake marriages arrangements as a means to enter Japan.

7) Japan must address the issue of Japanese-Filipino children.

The issues of trafficking and sexual exploitation that are attendant to the mass marketing of Filipina as "entertainers" have long been a festering issue. While the monetary rewards cannot be denied, we must not lose sight of the other consequences of this type of migration. It is time to take stock of the impacts and consequences of the deployment of entertainers to Japan holistically and realistically--the denigration of the integrity of genuine Filipino artists, the sexual exploitation and abuse of our women, a culture of dependency and generations of abandoned Japanese-Filipino children.

Let us take this opportunity to once again affirm the dignity of our women and the integrity of the Filipino artist!

Development Action for Women Network (DAWN)
 BATIS Center for Women
 BATIS-AWARE
 Center for Migrant Advocacy (CMA)
 Coalition Against Trafficking in Women Asia Pacific (CATW-AP)
 CBCP-Episcopal Commission for Migrants and
 Itinerant People (CBCP-ECMI)
 Kanlungan Center Foundation, Inc.
 Philippine Migrants Rights Watch (PMRW)
 Scalabrini Migration Center (SMC)
 Third World Movement Against the Exploitation of Women
 WomenLead

January 26, 2005

We thank our four volunteer-trainees who chose DAWN among other organizations to enhance their knowledge and skills in social work. Get to know more of them in this brief profile.

Sr. Milagros Goyena, SDS

Sr. Mila, as she is fondly called, belongs to the Sisters of the Divine Savior where she has engaged in various projects including pastoral work in their parish.

Upon the invitation of DAWN's Executive Director Carmelita Nuqui, Sr. Mila joined DAWN as volunteer in February of this year while also serving as assistant to Bishop Julio Xavier Labayen, who incidentally, is one of DAWN's Advisory Council members.

Since then, Sr. Mila has already participated in a number of workshops and counseling sessions with DAWN women and staff. She has also been doing social investigation of DAWN cases as part of understanding the situation of clients for a more appropriate and effective intervention.

In the coming months, Sr. Mila looks forward to participating in other DAWN activities, particularly, in the areas of spiritual formation and development of the members and even of the staff and other volunteers.



Nobuo Ashigaki

Nobuo hails from Yokohama, Japan. At his age of 55, he has shown his sincere determination to finish his social work studies at the Japan Lutheran College.

He joined DAWN for a one month training (February 13-March 12) under the supervision of DAWN's Social Services

Coordinator Marilyn Bo. He previously volunteered at a day care service center for the elderly in Japan.

Despite the language barrier, Nobuo managed to deal with the women and Japanese Filipino children (JFC) members of DAWN. He also had the chance to personally visit other NGO networks of DAWN.

In such a short time, he has provided assistance in some DAWN cases and at the same time, learned more about the situation of Filipino women and their JFC. In fact, he has already expressed his interest to support DAWN even after his training by joining DAWN-Japan upon his return to his home country.

Nobuo's training in DAWN was coordinated by the Asian Social Institute (ASI).

Both Niña and Gretchel are third year college students of the City College of Manila (CCM) taking up Social Work course. They are both interested in helping other

people which makes social work an even more challenging course.

During their four-month-training in DAWN under Social Services Coordinator Marilyn Bo, Niña and Gretchel did actual case work which includes, interviews with clients, home visits, facilitating workshops, and case analysis. They also assisted the staff in some of the major activities during their training.



**Gretchel
Academia**



Niña Borja

Women reflect on life, roles and values

with reports from Marilyn B. Bo, Social Services Coordinator

In celebration of Women's month and in commemoration of Christ's suffering, eleven women members of DAWN attended a spiritual retreat last March 21 and 22 at the Claretian Sisters Retreat House in Quezon City.

DAWN's Advisory Council member Bishop Julio Xavier Labayen was the resource person of the activity with Sr. Milagros Goyena, SDS as facilitator while DAWN's Social Services Coordinator Marilyn Bo acted as documentor.

The Holy Week retreat focused on value formation and gave the chance for the women to open up themselves during the activity.

During his talk, Bishop Labayen shared to them his experience in Tokyo with DAWN's Executive Director Carmelita Nuqui. He said he had the chance to visit a club and talked to Filipino women entertainers working there.

He cited the letter of Pope John Paul II for all the women in 1995. It was highlighted there the importance of women in the society and that they should have equal rights with men.

One of the participants also mentioned the importance of

acceptance and having guidance from God in doing their roles as women.

Bishop Labayen also talked about the importance of looking back

creative activity. They made their own figure or symbol of their history without using any object except their hands.



Bishop Julio Xavier Labayen talks about one's responsibility to his or her own life.

or *pagbabalik-tanaw*. He pointed out that this serves as their guide towards their destiny and they themselves are responsible for their own history.

Apart from inspiring lectures from Bishop Labayen, the women also engaged in a




DAWN women do an energizing activity before the serious stuff.

Bishop Labayen noted that the symbols they presented reflect their spirit / consciousness. Sr. Mila reminded the women that each one's history is unique and God is always with them and their families in facing their own life history. The activity itself also helped the participants share their inner thoughts and feelings.

The first day activity ended with a Holy Mass. After dinner, the women also had

individual conference / confession with Bishop Labayen.

On the second day, the women had the chance to meet the Claretian Sisters and attended the Morning Mass with them. 

Self-awareness workshop for DAWN women

with reports from Sr. Milagros M. Goyena, SDS

Three new members of DAWN participated in a self-awareness workshop facilitated by DAWN's Social Services Coordinator Marilyn Bo and Sr. Milagros Goyena, SDS last February 26 at the fifth floor lobby of the Don Santiago Building.

Teodora Flores, Jinuela Nakaya, and Patricia Solidor openly shared their feelings and experiences in the "Tree of Life" exercise. On a sheet of paper, they were asked to fill up and color an illustration of a tree with each part representing a part of their life: *roots* - their family and influences that shaped their lives; *trunk* - their marriage life / single parenthood; *branches* - their children; *leaves* - their present situation, strength and weaknesses; and *fruits* - their hopes and dreams for the future.

In their sharing, it was known that their lives are influenced by three


main factors: their children, family, and failed relationship. Their children are the most significant persons in their lives and their sources of joy and happiness. At the same time, they are also worried about the kind of future that awaits their children.

Their family, specifically, their parents and siblings, make up their dreams and achievements and considered as persons they can lean on. Failed relationships with their partners and siblings also have important influence in their lives.

The women felt relieved upon sharing all their experiences, especially the hardships they are presently going through. They felt unburdened and gained the feeling of not being alone, that they have somebody whom they can turn to in times of difficulties.

The facilitators reminded them that there is always hope for a brighter future and that they should learn how to forget the past, to embrace the challenge of today and to keep moving on for a promising future.

"Let the past be a reason to start a new life, for God wants us all to be happy. There are times that we are not faithful to Him but God's faithfulness never ends. Our life is the best gift from God. He never abandons us. Just continue calling Him, for he knows the right time to answer our prayers," Sr. Mila shared this uplifting message to the women.

In closing, the group was invited to pray together The Lord's Prayer as a sign of God's loving presence in their midst. 

Newsbriefs

Alternative Livelihood

Livelihood trainees visit Sikhay projects

Around 20 carpentry and woodcraft trainees from Batangas came



KHFI trainees visit Sikhay's weaving project at the DAWN Center.

to DAWN to personally see the Sikhay projects last January 20.

DAWN's Research and Advocacy Officer Jannis Montañez first gave them a brief orientation about DAWN's programs and services before they visited the sewing project at Room 516 of the Don Santiago Building and the weaving and tie-dye projects at the DAWN Center.

Participants said that after the said visit, they were enlightened about the Sikhay project and how it is helping the women members of DAWN and their Japanese-Filipino children. Thus, they were even more inspired to do good in their own skills training which was the main purpose of the visit.

The visit was organized by the Kabalikat sa Hanapbuhay Foundation, Inc. (KHFI), a non-stock, non-profit, private voluntary organization that assists communities to become active players in the industrialized and commercialized areas of Batangas and Laguna.

Sikhay joins SALT Foundation bazaar

Sikhay's batik and handwoven products were among the items lauded by Japanese guests who came to SALT Payatas Foundation's bazaar last March 9 at Manila Shimbun in Makati City. Sikhay coordinator Mary Joy Barcelona and Administrative Assistant Susan Adachi represented DAWN in the activity which was also participated in by other NGOs.

Apart from selling products, DAWN also sees this as an opportunity to create awareness among Japanese people on the programs and services of the organization and the creative skills of women who used to work as entertainers in Japan. In fact, two Japanese volunteers from other NGO participants became interested to know more about DAWN and even personally dropped by the office to meet the other DAWN staff, women and Japanese-Filipino children members. ☺

Social Services

More women and JFC join DAWN family

Social Services Coordinator Marilyn Bo facilitated two orientations to new DAWN members last January 29 and March 19 at the DAWN office. The organization's programs and services were explained through discussions and video showing of the DAWN video, "Where Do I Belong?."

After knowing more about the livelihood program offered for women members through the orientation, one member, Teodora Flores, became interested and eventually joined Sikhay skills training last March.



Orientation to new members last March 19.

A total of 18 women and 19 JFC already joined the DAWN family in the first quarter of this year. To date, DAWN has handled the cases of 264 women and 321 JFC. ☺

Research and Advocacy

Foreign delegates learn more about DAWN

Two groups of foreign delegates came to DAWN last January and learned more about the organization's programs and services and the issues it advocates.

DAWN's Research and Advocacy Officer Jannis Montañez gave an orientation to seven Dutch guests last January 11. The visit was part of the exchange program between the Diocese of Gronigen, the Netherlands and the Diocese of Ilagan. The group also visited Sikhay's sewing project and were impressed by the products made by the women members who are all returnees from Japan.

This was the same reaction of the other group of foreign guests who came to DAWN last January 14. This time, the group was composed of delegates from different countries and were participants to a migration conference held at Richmonde Hotel. With the theme, "Contemporary Migrations in Asia and Europe," the said Conference was jointly organized by the Scalabrini Migration Center (SMC), the Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute and the Department of Geography, University of Nijmegen.

They lauded DAWN's livelihood program that does not only promote women's craftsmanship and ingenuity but also advocates women empowerment, particularly, for former entertainers in Japan.



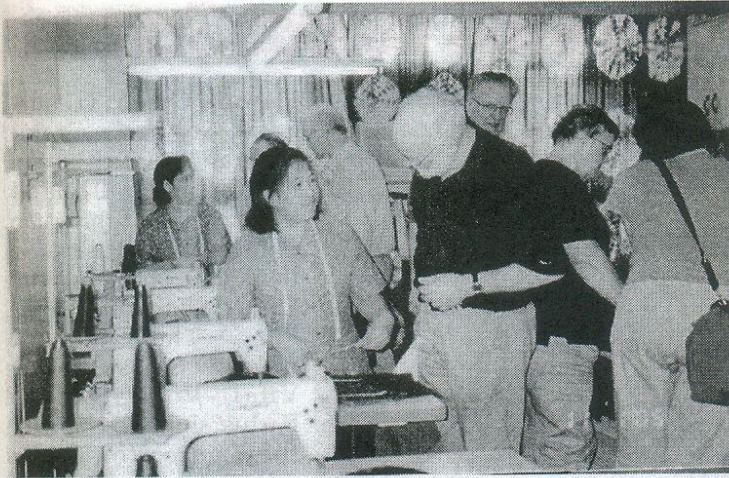
SINAG ("akebono" or "yoake" in Japanese) means dawn or daybreak. It is the quarterly publication of the Development Action for Women Network (DAWN), a non-government, development organization devoted to issues concerning migrant women and their Japanese-Filipino children.

EDITORIAL TEAM

Prof. Corazon R. Arboleda
Carmelita G. Nuqui
Jannis T. Montañez

Contributors

Marilyn B. Bo
Nancy F. Bondoc
Mary Joy E. Barcelona



Dutch guests visit Sikhay's sewing project as part of their orientation about DAWN's programs and services.

Apart from DAWN, the group also visited other NGOs and government offices to learn more about the programs and services relevant to migration issues and concerns.

UN Special Rapporteur Huda visits Manila

DAWN staff led by Executive Director Carmelita Nuqui joined other advocates in welcoming the newly-appointed UN Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons especially of women and children, Sigma Huda, in a special dinner organized in her honor by the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women - Asia Pacific (CATW-AP) last January 20 in La Vista Village in Quezon City.

Huda stayed in Manila from January 18-20 during which she was able to meet and discuss with NGOs and government offices the trafficking issues confronting Filipino women and children.

Huda herself has also fought against trafficking and sexual

exploitation, particularly of women and girls from her home country Bangladesh to India. In recognition of her work against trafficking, she was appointed to the National Council for Women in Development in Bangladesh, the highest national body for the development of

women. She was also instrumental in finalizing the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation



DAWN staff with UN Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons Sigma Huda.

(SAARC) Convention Against Trafficking. Huda is also a Board Member of CATW-AP of which DAWN is a member.

"Pains and Gains" in Japanese

Soon, more Japanese people will understand the issues faced by Filipino women entertainers in Japan with the publication of DAWN's book, "Pains and Gains: A Study of Overseas Performing Artists in Japan - from Pre-departure to Reintegration" in Japanese.

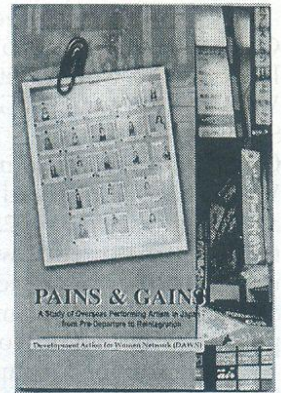
Through the selfless support and hard work of DAWN-Japan, *Pains and Gains* was translated to Japanese, particularly, by their coordinator

Chiho Ogaya together with volunteers Yuuki Nozaki and Masami Helen Ochi. Assistance and editing, on the other hand, were provided by Azusa Kawamura and Tomomi Kamita. DAWN-Japan also took charge of the financial resources for the project.

DAWN also acknowledges the support of Ms. Emiko Fujioka of Shaplaneer for recommending the book to Akashi-shoten for publication.

Fujioka-san is a former staff of Japan NGO Center for International Cooperation (JANIC).

Pains and Gains will be out for distribution to DAWN networks in Japan in the second quarter of this year.



SUBSCRIPTION

Development Action for Women Network
(DAWN)

Rm. 514 Don Santiago Bldg.
1344 Taft Avenue, Ermita
1000 Manila, Philippines
Tel. No. (632) 526-9098
Fax No. (632) 526-9101
E-mail: dawnphil@i-next.net
Website: www.dawnphil.org

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DAWN's Executive Director Carmelita Nuqui was one of the women leaders who were invited to attend the Vital Voices Women's Global Leadership Summit last March 5-10 in New York City. Nuqui was also invited to join the Vital Voices Global Advisory Council – a prestigious group of 25 women leaders from around the world who are recognized for their pioneering work to advance the economic, social and political progress of women.

A public forum, with the theme: "Women's Rights are Human Rights: Beijing at Ten: Celebrating Progress, Addressing Continuing Challenges, and Reaffirming the Commitment to the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women," was held last March 6 at the Skirball Center for the Performing Arts in New York University. Delegates from Rwanda, Ukraine, South Africa, Morocco, Iraq and Peru participated in the roundtable discussion. Keynote address was delivered by former First Lady of the United States and now Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton.

Nuqui participated as panelist in a discussion on human trafficking held last March 8 at the Church Center for the United Nations along with Judith Wirth, Chair of NaNe, an NGO combating violence against women in Hungary; Marina Pisklakova Parker, Founder of the Association No to Violence (ANNA) in Russia; and Oksana Horbunova, Project Coordinator of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and a former leader of La Strada, a foremost Ukrainian anti-trafficking NGO.

Particularly, these women leaders examined their respective

DAWN joins Vital Voices Summit



From left: Marina Pisklakova Parker of Russia, DAWN's Executive Director Carmelita Nuqui and IOM's Oksana Horbunova.

governments' progress towards combating trafficking according to the ten anti-trafficking Actions adopted by most governments in 1995 and 2000 as part of the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action.

Best practices and challenges to anti-trafficking efforts around the world were also discussed, focusing on the aspects of: corruption, political will, societal attitude towards victims, collaboration and cooperation with law enforcement and government, and other issues.

Also part of the Summit was a strategy session and various discussions and working group sessions on women-related issues.


Other women leaders who attended the Summit were from countries like Nigeria, Yemen,

Kuwait, Oman, Trinidad and Tobago, Brazil, China, Tajikistan, Northern Ireland, Venezuela, Afghanistan, Guatemala, Haiti, Sri Lanka, Belarus, and the United States of America.

The Summit, which was hosted by Vital Voices Global Partnership together with the Center for Global Affairs, was aimed at coming up with a report on the status of women ten years after the Beijing Conference, highlighting

the progress that has been made and the challenges women currently face.

The Vital Voices Global Partnership grew out of the United States government's successful Vital Voices Democracy Initiative, which was established after the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing to promote the advancement of women as a United States foreign policy goal. It envisions a world of peace, justice and economic opportunity for all, where the voice of every woman is heard and respected.

The newly established Center for Global Affairs, on the other hand, located in the historic Woolworth Building, comes as a direct response to the phenomenal growth of international affairs programs at NYU's School of Continuing and Professional Studies. 

Development Action for Women Network (DAWN)

Room 514 Don Santiago Bldg.

1344 Taft Avenue, Ermita

1000 Manila, PHILIPPINES

Tel. No. (632) 526-9098 Fax (632) 526-9101

E-mail: dawnphil@i-next.net

Website: www.dawnphil.org

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