



GABRIELA Washington, D.C.

Janet Basilan, Vice Chairperson of GABRIELA U.S.A.



GABRIELA USA

- ❖ **GABRIELA** stands for **G**eneral **A**ssembly **B**inding women for **R**eforms, **I**ntegrity, **E**ducation, **L**eadership, and **A**ction.
- ❖ **GABRIELA-USA** is the first overseas chapter of the Philippine-based organization, extending the Filipino women's mass movement to the United States.
- ❖ GABRIELA Washington, D.C.
- ❖ Our organization formed in 2013 as a vehicle to empower Filipina women in our communities whose human rights and welfare are being attacked and neglected.
- ❖ Founders of GAB-DC united to rise up, take action, and advance the National Democratic movement as a path to genuine liberation, equality, and justice for all marginalized Filipinos in the motherland and abroad.



The Case of Filipino Trafficked Teachers Struggling for Justice



Gabriela Washington, DC

Shine the Light Human Trafficking Conference

National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd

May 15, 2018



TODAY'S OBJECTIVES

- ❖ To share the experience from a survivor's side.
- ❖ To identify the root causes of forced migration and human trafficking
- ❖ To spread the word about what is going on in the Philippines and the problems that Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW) face here in the U.S. and abroad
- ❖ What can people do ?



A Survivor's Experience

- ❖ What brought me here?
- ❖ What did I think about the United States before arriving ? - The American "Dream"
- ❖ What actually happened to me along with the 300 Filipino Teachers



HUMAN TRAFFICKING

- ❖ Human trafficking is **not** just sex slavery even though sex trafficking gets the most attention in mainstream media outlets.
- ❖ There are several kinds of trafficking, and one of the biggest kinds in the Philippines is labor trafficking.
- ❖ Human trafficking is a market based economy that exists on principles of **supply and demand**. It **thrives** due to conditions which allow for **high profits** to be generated at **low risk**.

The Case of the Filipino Teachers

Since 2003, the Philippine-based labor recruitment agency, Renaissance Staffing Support Center (formerly known as Great Provider Service Exporters, Inc. and World Goal Corporation) represented by its president, Isidro Rodriguez and its U.S. partner Green Life Care International, LLC have been trafficking teachers to the U.S. The agency promised applicants:

- High salaried jobs with benefits in public schools in North Carolina and Washington, D.C.
- Housing and transportation
- Applicants were required to attend various expensive seminars and pay excessive fees to successfully secure H1B visas.
- Teachers paid between \$18,000 to over \$20,000 for the entire process. Some have exceeded in over \$40k due to high-interest loans
- In many cases, their passports were held until they submitted the entire fee amount and were not returned until their departure for the U.S



HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Underpaid teachers hear about jobs in the United States from “approved” recruitment agencies

Several years later, leave the Philippines in debt to banks and to the recruitment agency

Trapped in bad conditions, debt, no documentation

Save money to relocate, sell assets, borrow money from loan sharks

Arrive in the United States and picked up by sketchy people, brought to an “in-between” home





HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Fee Type	Amount
Seminar	\$85.00
WES Credential Evaluation	\$300.00
USCIS Credential Evaluation	\$6,500.00
Placement Fee	\$4,500.00
Re-filing Fee	\$2,500.00
Housing Rental	\$1,600.00
Pick Up Fee	\$200.00
Green Card Processing Fee	\$2,500.00
Embassy Schedule Fee for Interview	\$30.00
Miscellaneous (Mailing, Int'l calls, etc.)	\$100.00
Airfare	\$1,000.00
TOTAL	\$19,315.00

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

- ❖ Psychological effects
- ❖ Slave-like conditions/ Involuntary Servitude
- ❖ Threats & intimidation from trafficker
- ❖ Debt bondage
- ❖ Risks of being deported; undocumented
- ❖ Family Separation
- ❖ Discrimination



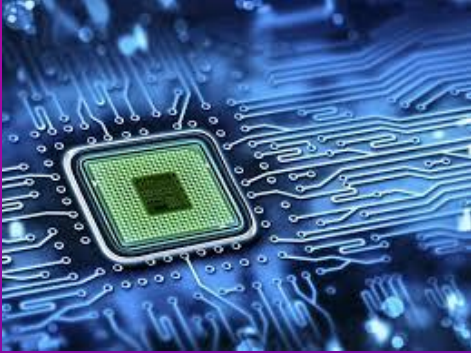
ROAD MAP

Presentation Overview

- ❖ Overview of the Philippines
- ❖ Migrant Workers, OFWs, and Forced Migration
- ❖ Labor Export Policy and Human Trafficking
- ❖ Discussion and Q&A



OVERVIEW OF THE PHILIPPINES



- ❖ Aside from those above, one of our biggest exports is people
- ❖ The Philippines provides a constant source of cheap educated labor to other countries, especially the US



OVERVIEW OF THE PHILIPPINES



- ❖ Joblessness despite economic growth
- ❖ 6.6% unemployment rate as of Q1 of 2017
- ❖ Why is this? What are our biggest exports?

MIGRATION FACTORS

- ❖ Overseas Filipino Workers are hailed as the Modern Day Heroes
- ❖ Why do people leave their country? What are the root causes of migration?
- ❖ Why is this such a big problem in the Philippines?

✈️ MIGRATION FACTORS

- ❖ Root causes of forced migration in the Philippines
- ❖ “Three basic problems”

Feudalism



Imperialism



Bureaucrat Capitalism



✈️ LABOR EXPORT POLICY

- ❖ As of 2015, more than 6,000* Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW) leave the country daily to seek jobs abroad
- ❖ More than 11 million Filipinos live abroad and 4 million in the US alone



Annual Report of OFW Deployment, POEA

Year	Number of OFWs deployed	Average per day
2010	1,470,826	4,018
2011	1,687,831	4,624
2012	1,802,031	4,937
2013	1,836,345	5,031
2014	1,844,710	5,054
2015	-----	6,092 (DOLE)



TEACHER'S RESPONSE





Fight for Our RIGHTS!

- ❖ GABRIELA USA Campaign to Support Filipina Migrant Women
- ❖ Know Your Rights
- ❖ Linking to resources and services
- ❖ Providing peer support
- ❖ Empowering one another

“Teach Them A Lesson” Campaign



2014: Filed a case with DOJ in PH: Joint effort with Migrante International & GABRIELA. Filed case with National Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking (IACAT) at the Department of Justice (DOJ)

- ❖ November 2013 Arrested for illegal recruitment and syndicated estafa
- ❖ Released from jail in Manila; case dismissed in courts (arrangement of deals with others in promising jobs in the U.S.)
- ❖ Isidro R. on country's watch list, NBI in the Phils, inter-pol

2014: Migrante International formation of “Guro” to mobilize teachers in the Philippines. Constant pressure through petitions and meetings with the DOJ in PH to arrest and prosecute recruiter

2015: Isidro spotted in Spain! July 2015 – Launch of “Teach them a Lesson” campaign – educated broader public on issue of forced migration and labor trafficking

Justice Delayed is Justice Denied

- ❖ March 17, 2014 GABRIELA USA Launched a National Day of Action – Rally in Front of the Philippine Embassy & October 14, 2014 GABRIELA USA All Leaders Training in Washington D.C. Rally and Lobbying on Capitol Hill
- ❖ Pending filing of a case in the U.S.(teachers acquired partner law firm in the D.C.) Until now Isidro Rodoriguez is still operating in Spain – justice denied
- ❖ Other cases of human trafficking in the U.S.
 - Recent discovery of J-1 Interns Trafficked to Cambridge via Exchange Visitor Program
 - 2010-11 Grand Isle Shipyard Workers in Louisiana: 500 trafficked Filipino migrant workers were brought to New Orleans, Louisiana to work for a major oil exploration corporation - Grand Isle Shipyard



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ❖ Human Trafficking cannot be resolved by getting a T-Visa for victims but by joining a movement to end Modern Day Slavery, and addressing the root causes of poverty in their home country that force them to migrate abroad.
- ❖ What can the people do ?

CALL TO ACTION

What can you do today?

- ❖ Support survivor-led groups & join your local human trafficking coalition - Join a movement to end slavery
- ❖ Support legislation/policies benefiting victims and not criminalizing them
- ❖ Support legislation for services for victims/survivors of human trafficking
- ❖ Educate foreign embassies in the U.S. on human trafficking laws and relief/support for victims
- ❖ Governments must be accountable for the problems plaguing the country and must offer sustainable solutions to solve the root problems.

Thank you for listening!



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