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Labor Migration of Asia and the Pacific: Philippine Experience

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Every day, over 4 thousand Filipinos leave the Philippines to find better opportunities abroad. Often, they become successful and are able to help their families in the Philippines. However, the social implications are enormous as families are left without either parent or both. These features were produced to serve as a study to figure out why so many Filipinos decide to work abroad rather than stay with their families. The study features a family of ten siblings and their struggle to help each other financially and materially. Their parents, both of whom were former overseas workers, are now unable to finance their children's studies.

Today, there is an estimated 8 to 11 million Filipinos working abroad, either with or without documentation. The biggest number of them is in the Middle East where there are about 1.5 to 2 million Filipinos and in the United States where more than 6 million Filipinos are working. The government of President Aquino cannot ignore its economic impact. As of last year alone, more than 20 billion dollars have been remitted by OFWs (Overseas Filipino Workers) to their families in the Philippines. Their annual remittance has immensely contributed to the country's economic stability. But the crimes involving families of OFWs are rising, especially in cases where husbands of domestic helpers abroad rape their own daughters. Also, as the tension in the Middle East and the world wide economic crisis unfold, the economic impact of OFWs returning to the Philippines where there are so little opportunities cannot be ignored. Fortunately, President Aquino has said that he will work for better opportunities in the Philippines so that Filipinos will not opt to leave their families to work abroad. However, reality dictates that it will take years of hard work before this comes to realization.