

COMPLETION REPORT

Forms of Social Support for Filipino Workers in Japan: Implication to Migrant Labor Policy and Practices

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The rapid economic development of Japan between the 1970s and 1980s attracted millions of migrant workers from third world countries. On the other hand, the dwindling and aging Japanese population necessitates migrant labor. These are the reasons why the Japan Social Security services for workers had to be restructured.

This study examined the labor policies and practices of Social Security services available to Filipinos in Japan. It analyzed how this can enhance the living and work conditions of Filipino workers in Japan, at the same time benefit Japan as a migrant labor receiving country.

Descriptive research methods of survey, interview and document analysis were employed. Results were verified and data compared through triangulation.

This study found that there are Social Security services that are low in access and should be given more attention through awareness campaign, online dissemination and orientation in Filipino language. This includes (a) Social Welfare: Housing assistance, Support to the balance between work and family life, In-house child-care facilities, Short-time work options, Minimum living expense, Flexible working styles; (b) Employment security: Employment Counseling, and Career development promotion subsidy; (c) Employees Insurance: Pharmaceutical and Medical devices; and (d) Policies on radioactive materials, poison and contaminants in food.

Social Security system enhances the living and work conditions of Filipino workers and enables them to save and invest the money that otherwise would be spent for health and other necessities. Providing effective Social Security to migrant workers also benefits Japan as a migrant worker receiving country. Japan's strong Social Security system that can be availed by registered migrant workers, including Filipinos, is a model to other Asian countries that receive migrant workers because it responds to the needs of workers, enhance their living and work conditions at the same time, contribute to the socio-economic development of Japan by filling in the need for laborers in different industries.

Since not all Filipinos in Japan are aware of how they can avail of the Social Security services, it is recommended that information dissemination be done electronically, through the community or their workplace, in both English and Filipino. The Japan-Philippines 2017 Agreement can be expanded to include Social Security and protection of low-skilled workers such as domestic workers and Filipino residents who are not working because of family duties and age. Japan government can allow conversion of the visa of TITP trainees to Residence Status of Specified Skilled Workers and as such, will have Social Security benefits which is a way of motivating them to work with efficiency and excellence. A program can be initiated by the Philippine Overseas Labor Office (POLO) to legalize the status of the productive workers who are undocumented or irregular Filipinos in Japan so as to add to the labor sector of Japan and secure the employment of Filipinos who are already in Japan. Finally, monitoring of the availment of Social Security can be undertaken by the two governments to make sure that the services are implemented by the designated government agencies.

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