

**The labour migration cycle:
from the perspective of
Filipinos with disabilities**

**Easy-to-Read
Version**



DISABILITY MIGRATION NETWORK

Easy-to-Read - The labour migration cycle: from the perspective of Filipinos with disabilities

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NOTE

There are some words in this document that might be hard to read or understand.

Hard words in this document are in a **blue bold** print.

You can click on these **blue bold** words, and it will take you to a definition of these words, which are on page 16 and page 17.

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WHAT IS THIS REPORT



Labour migration can bring better job opportunities and new experiences, but persons with disabilities are often left out and excluded.



Persons with disabilities are often treated as a problem instead of as individuals with goals and dreams.

Persons with disabilities face **discrimination**, are excluded by **immigration** policies and have fewer chances to migrate.

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Types of disability in migration:



1. **Prospective migrant workers with disabilities:** Persons with disabilities who want to migrate.
2. **Migrant workers with disabilities:** Persons who migrate while already having a disability.
3. **Migrant workers with acquired disabilities:** Persons who become disabled during their migration journey.



This study looks at the experiences of persons with disabilities in **labour migration** and shows the challenges they face.

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CHALLENGES FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES



Discrimination and exclusion:

- Persons with disabilities are often seen as a burden, which stops them from getting migration opportunities.
- Unfair rules and attitudes make it harder for them to travel or fully join society.



Lack of data and representation:

- There is not enough information about persons with disabilities in **labour migration**.
- This makes it hard to create fair **immigration** policies or include them in decisions about migration.

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Problems with policies:

- Disabilities are often wrongly linked to poor health, which causes unfair **medical exam** results for persons with disabilities.
- Some countries block **non-citizens** with disabilities from getting certain rights.



Challenges in the Philippines:

- For many Filipinos, migration is a way to escape **poverty**, but persons with disabilities face extra barriers.
- Unfair rules and unhelpful travel services stop them from getting the same chances to migrate.

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HOW WE DID THIS REPORT



Researchers spoke with 4 persons with disabilities from March to April 2023.

Participants were Filipinos aged 18 or older.



Interviews lasted about 2 hours to allow participants to share their stories.

Sign language interpreters were provided when needed.



The study looked at migration in three stages:

- Before migration.
- During migration.
- After migration.

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WHAT ARE THE FINDINGS IN THIS REPORT

Carlos



Carlos was excluded from overseas opportunities because he used a wheelchair, with **recruiters** saying they do not hire people like him.

Carlos experienced issues while traveling, including airline policies requiring him to have a helper and poor airport accommodations, leaving him trapped for days.

Carlos' father, who hid his disability as a migrant worker, faced repeated job loss due to his health.

Sean



As a deaf worker, Sean faced low wages and **discrimination**, which pushed him to seek better opportunities abroad.

During his **immigration** interview, Sean was not given sign language support, making the process stressful.

Sean's employer in Qatar provided the support he needed, creating an inclusive environment where he did not face **discrimination**.

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Jhon



After getting severe **COVID-19**, Jhon's employer left him in a poor living environment and sacked him despite his ongoing health problems.

Jhon faced delays and lack of help from government agencies when trying to return to the Philippines, causing him stress and frustration.

Jhon could not work abroad again because a **medical exam** labelled him "unfit for work" due to his health, unfairly excluding him from job opportunities.

Luise



After a car accident, Luise received rehabilitation and found an inclusive job in Qatar, which helped her get back to work.

During a holiday in 2011, airport staff questioned her ability to work just because she used a wheelchair, showing bias against persons with disabilities.

WHAT WE THINK



Discrimination and limited opportunities:

- Persons with disabilities are often excluded from **labour migration** due to societal biases and policies that treat them as incapable or burdensome.
- **Discrimination** happens during recruitment, travel, and in workplaces, limiting chances to migrate or to succeed abroad.



Barriers in migration services:

- Support systems like recruitment agencies and government services often fail to provide proper assistance, such as sign language interpreters or accessible information.
- **Medical exam** for migration blurs the line between health and disability, unfairly excluding persons with disabilities from opportunities.

Challenges in living abroad and returning home:

- In some countries, supportive systems help persons with disabilities integrate into work and society.
- However, upon returning to their home country, they often face stigma, **discrimination**, and inadequate support, showing the lack of inclusive systems at home.



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Need for better support and policies:

- Participants shared the need for accessible services, family support, and fair policies to help persons with disabilities throughout **labour migration**.
- Programs should focus on providing information, removing barriers, and ensuring equal opportunities for persons with disabilities at every stage of **labour migration**.



Addressing the **medicalisation** of disability:

- Migration systems should avoid treating disability as a disqualifying factor. Instead, they should encourage transparency and provide accommodations without fear of exclusion.



Become A Member

Enabling inclusive practices:

- Policies should promote equal rights for persons with disabilities, ensure accessible workplaces, and involve **organisations of persons with disabilities (OPDs)** to guide inclusive practices in both **home countries** and **destination countries**.

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WHAT SHOULD BE DONE NOW



Persons with disabilities face many barriers like physical challenges, social stigma, lack of support, and poor communication in **labour migration** systems.

These barriers make it harder for them to find and succeed in opportunities abroad.



The need for inclusive policies:

- Governments, recruitment agencies, and **organisations of persons with disabilities (OPDs)** must work together to make **labour migration** systems accessible.
- Disability-responsive practices should support persons with disabilities before, during, and after migration.



Providing better information and support:

- Reliable information and support networks are important for persons with disabilities.
- Programs can help them live independently, connect with resources, and use migration systems.

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Improving recruitment processes:

- Recruitment agencies should encourage persons with disabilities to apply and provide accommodations like sign language interpreters and accessible materials.
- Disability inclusion training for **recruiters** can help create fair opportunities.



Changing perceptions of disability:

- Disability should not be linked to poor health or inability. Policies must ensure a **medical exam** support, not block, migration for persons with disabilities.
- Persons with disabilities should feel safe to share their needs without fear of **discrimination**.



Empowering persons with disabilities:

- Programs should inspire persons with disabilities to pursue opportunities abroad.
- Families and **organisations of persons with disabilities (OPDs)** should learn about their rights to work, fair wages, and services.

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The importance of data and research:

- More research is needed to understand the challenges persons with disabilities face in **labour migration**.
- Collecting data about **prospective migrant workers with disabilities**, **migrant workers with disabilities** and **migrant workers with acquired disabilities** will help create better policies and support systems.

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THE END

Thank you for reading.

This report was made by the Disability Migration Network (DMN). For questions about making easy-to-read resources, please contact our team at disabilitymigrationnetwork@gmail.com.

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GLOSSARY

COVID-19	A virus that spread all around the world. A lot of people got sick. People could not meet each other, work at the office, travel or go to school.
Destination countries	These are the countries where people move to live and work. They are the places migrants choose to go to for better opportunities or to start a new life.
Discrimination	Discrimination means treating someone unfairly or differently because of things like their race, gender, disability, or other characteristics.
Home countries	The countries where people are originally from or were born.
Immigration	Moving to another country to live there, either for a short time or permanently.
Labour migration	When people move to another place or country to find work.
Medical exam	A check-up by a doctor to see if someone is healthy. Nearly always mandatory for migrant workers.
Medicalisation	When everyday problems or situations are treated like medical issues.
Migrant workers with acquired disabilities	Workers who became disabled after starting their job in another country.
Migrant workers with disabilities	Workers with disabilities who work in another country.

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Non-citizen	A person living in a country where they are not a legal citizen.
Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs)	Are a group formed by persons with disabilities to advocate for their rights, provide support, and promote inclusion in society
Poverty	When people or communities lack the money needed to meet needs like food, shelter, and clothing.
Prospective migrant workers with disabilities	Persons with disabilities planning or hoping to work in another country.
Recruiters	People or companies that help others find jobs, often in another country.

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