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THE MIGRATION-TRAFFICKING NEXUS:

**An investigation into the survival strategies of the
Philippines' poorest migrants**

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ABSTRACT

The Philippines' social and economic complexities limit the life choices of its people and migration has become the only perceived method to achieve upward social and economic mobility. Filipinos are being 'groomed' to migrate as a 'culture of migration' has become ingrained in the national psyche, creating a desperation to migrate which makes the poorest Filipinos prime targets for human traffickers.

The aim of this research project was to investigate the driving factors behind the culture of migration of the Philippines and the implications for trafficking. Underpinned by a qualitative methodology, fieldwork was conducted over five months in Manila and Samar Island in the Philippines.

The findings of this study show that poverty and inequality form the context which forces Filipinos to leave their hometown and the factors which make them vulnerable to trafficking are correlated with endemic corruption and the resulting lack of law enforcement. Additionally the findings revealed that recruitment practices which exploit migrants, including the betrayal of neighbours and kin, have become common practices leading to people being trafficked in poor villages. When trafficking survivors are repatriated they often find the same constraints persist. Hence they are left with no choice but to migrate again and risk being re-trafficked. This thesis concludes that the vulnerabilities inherent in poverty are exacerbated by a complex culture of migration which makes poor Filipinos desperate to accept any offer to migrate and, thus, exposes them to human traffickers.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ATIP	Anti-Trafficking in Persons
CATW	Coalition against Trafficking in Women
CFO	Commission on Filipinos Overseas
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
DOJ	Department of Justice
DOLE	Department of Labour and Employment
DSWD	Department of Social Welfare and Development
FMO	Forced Migration Online
FRA	European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights
IACAT	Inter-Agency Council against Trafficking
IDMC	Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
NBI	National Bureau of Investigation
NSCB	National Statistical Coordination Board
NSO	National Statistics Office
OFW	Overseas Filipino Worker
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
OWWA	Overseas Workers Welfare Administration
PNP	Philippine National Police
POEA	Philippines Overseas Employment Administration
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UN.GIFT	UN Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNCHR	United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	UN International Children's Emergency Fund
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime