




Return Migration: Challenges and Opportunities



Unlad Kabayan Experience, Philippines

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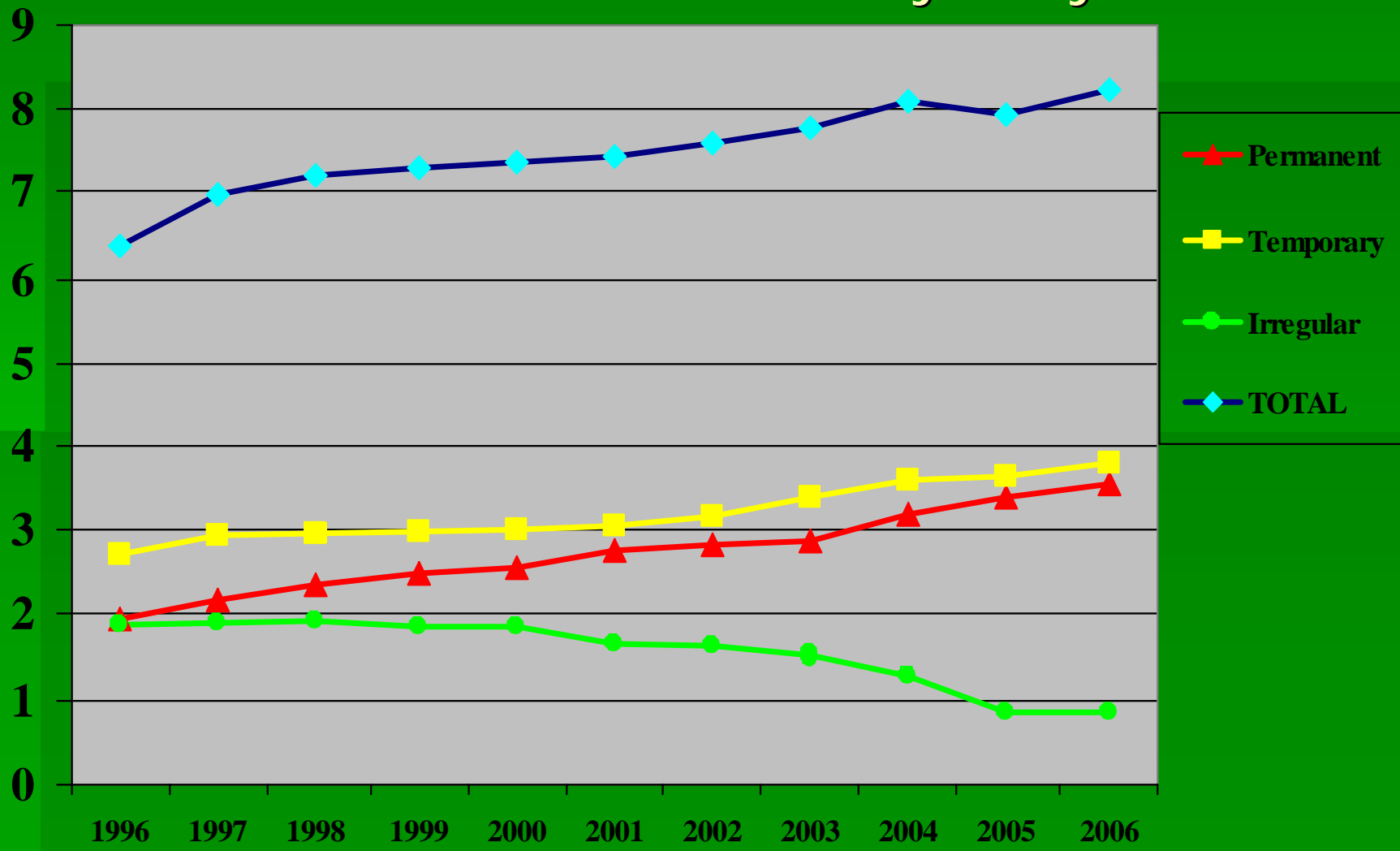
- Unlad Kabayan was established as NGO in 1996
- Unlad means “develop” and *Kabayan* is what we call our fellow Filipinos
- It is a response to the need of migrant workers to plan and organize their eventual return to the home country
- It developed the MSAI strategy or Migrant Savings and Alternative Investments.

 More than 8 M OFWs (Overseas Filipino Workers) are deployed in 203 destination countries

- There are only 83 RP consulates and embassies
- There are gaps and weaknesses in existing laws that are supposed to protect the rights of migrant Filipino workers

More than 8 million Filipinos in 203 countries.

About 121 OFWs leave the country every hour.



www.unladkabayan.org

Sources: CFO, DFA, POEA, 4th State of Popn Report, other sources

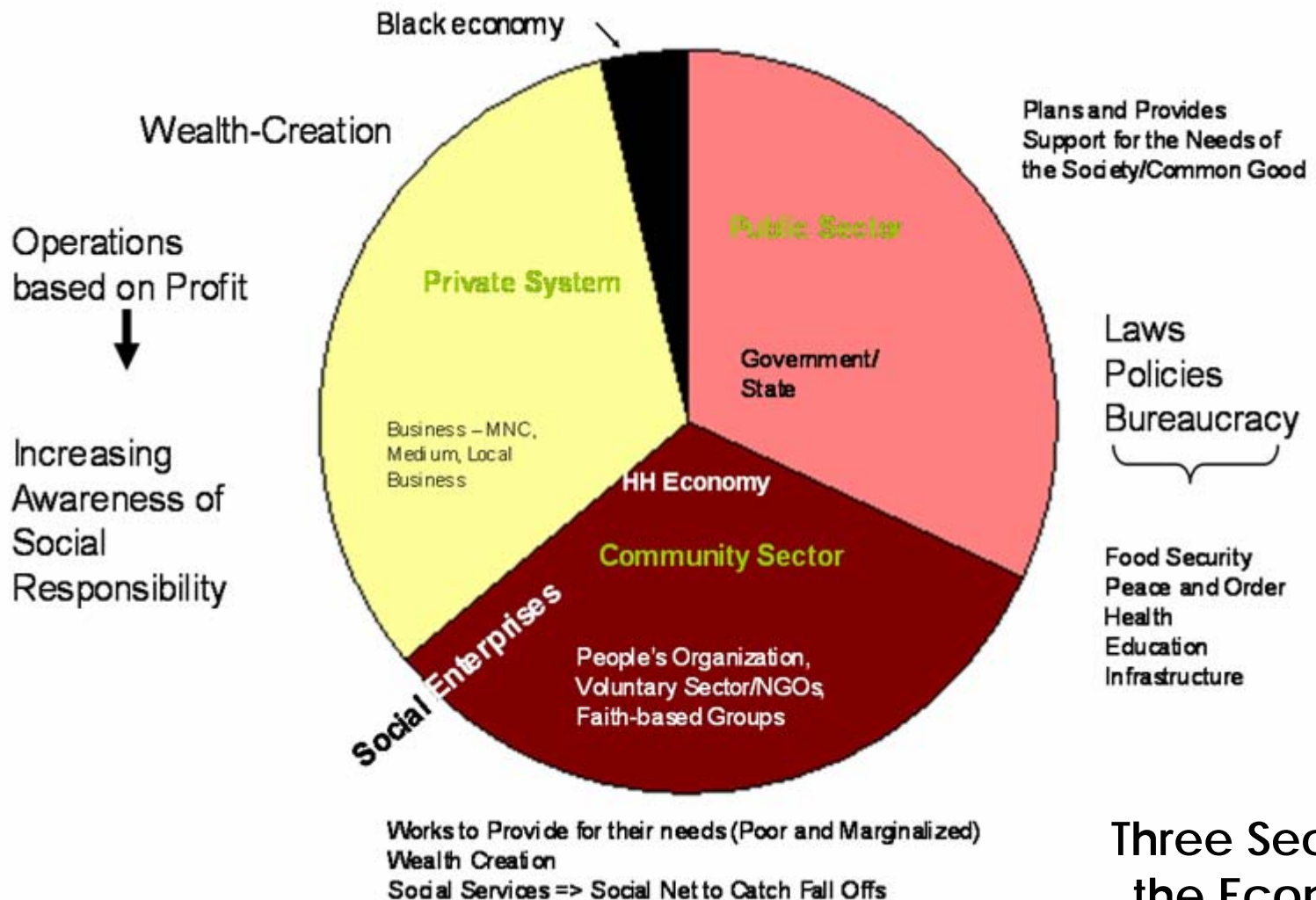
Compelling reasons for coming home:

- Global Economic Crisis - OFWs are losing their jobs;
- Their jobs are mostly temporary/contractual;
- To reunite with families and avoid the social costs of overseas migration;
- To avoid work related hazards, abuses and exploitation;
- To avoid forced repatriation or deportation due to risky situations in wars and conflict;

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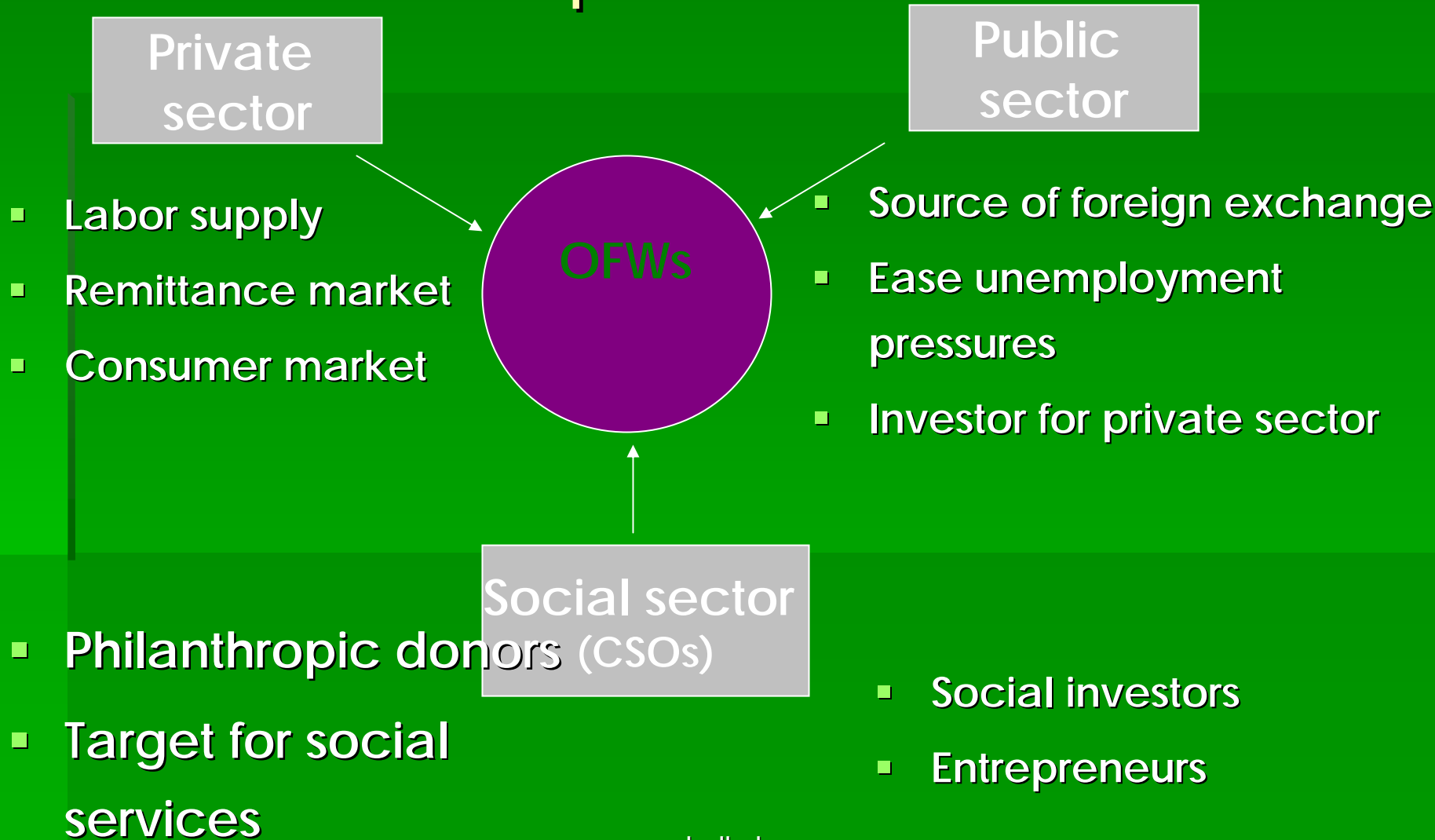
- Vision: A people who can build their own livelihood and a sustainable economy for society
- Mission: Promote social entrepreneurship and social enterprises by mobilizing migrant workers, the marginalized in the community and their resources to build a sustainable local economy

Understanding Migration



Three Sectors of the Economy

Migration and Development Perspectives



Migrant Savings and Alternative Investment for Community Development and Reintegration (MSAI-CDR)

- Prepares migrant workers for a planned and dignified return at the most opportune time;
- Reunites families at the earliest possible time;
- Reduces their vulnerability to abuse and psychosocial dislocation;
- Recognizes their potential and capacity to create jobs and wealth at home;
- Provides them a “choice” to leave or remain at home.

Core Programs and Services



- Savings and investment mobilization on-site and at home;
- Business incubation;
- Community entrepreneurship through the SEEDS-BAC (Social Entrepreneurship and Enterprise Development Services-Business Assistance Center)
- Technical skills training and technology transfer;
- Credit services;
- Advocacy and partnership-building



Matin-ao Rice Center, Surigao del Norte



- Owned by 55 OFWs in Taiwan and Korea
- PhP4M investments (\$89,000)
- Employs 23 regular workers
- Supports 139 farmer households



FAMDev Farm, Bukidnon



10-hectare bio-resource
integrated farm;

Owned by 60 domestic workers
and other OFWs in Hong Kong

PhP4M investments

Employs 65 farm workers



Other Community enterprise projects



Coco coir processing plant (San Isidro, Davao Oriental)

Virgin coconut oil processing (Linamon, Lanao del Norte)

Food processing (Davao City)

Core Benefits of MSAI-CDR



- Financial value creation: OFWs, families, communities;
- Jobs and income: women, youth, elderly;
- New skills & knowledge;
- Higher purchasing power;
- Better access to education & health services



- **Private cash flows** → empowerment of migrant workers and their families
- **Remittances** → MSAI contributes to poverty reduction
- **Structural development policy**

HOW VIABLE IS MSAI?



Ernst & Young
2007 Social
Entrepreneur
of the Year
award



DBP
partnership

- Micro-finance
- Business assistance center
- Remittance package

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Elsa Belarmino,
migrant
returnee and
now MRC
manager,
invited as
speaker at
NRCO's
event

Challenges and Recommendations

- The value of savings and long-term investment is not in the immediate consciousness of OFWs and their families;
- Preferential treatment to migrants investors (lower tax incentives, more windows for capital);
- Must ensure access to technology and local resources
- Infrastructure support (roads that will lead to businesses in the rural areas)

- Having a strong local economy will ensure that the gains of migration will be fully maximized. Going abroad to work becomes merely an option and not an act of desperation. While at the same time, to return home also becomes a viable and a good option for the OFWs.

“If you received the same wage at home, would you still work in Hong Kong?”

The response was an overwhelming
“NO.”

Source: Baseline study of foreign domestic workers in Hong Kong, Asian Migrant Centre, 1994

**MAG-IMPOK!
MAMUHUNAN!
ITATAG ANG KABUHAYAN
SA SARILING BAYAN!**

**Save! Invest!
Build your livelihood
In your home country!**

THANK YOU