



## Gender, remittances and Local Rural Development: The Case of Filipino Migration to Italy

Quotes selected from among 132 interviews, 61 correspond to Filipino migrants in the city of Rome; and 71 were carried out with remittance-receiving households in the Philippines.

### Poverty as the main reason for Filipino migration to Italy

“Our life was so difficult, since I was just a simple fisherman. So my wife plucked up the courage to apply to a recruitment agency to go to Italy. We had to send our children to school and we had no means to do so. She had to go because I didn’t know how to do domestic work.”  
(*Husband of female migrant, Batangas*)

“I actually decided myself to go abroad. My parents did not stop me from leaving because they also said that if I were only to stay back in the Philippines nothing would happen to my future. That is why I found the inner strength (*lakas ng loob*) then. I was only 21 years old when I left just right after I graduated from college.” (*Female migrant, Rome*)

### Eldest sons and daughters as new household administrators

“At the time [my parents] migrated, I became the head of the family because I was the eldest of the children left behind. Currently, in my own nuclear family, my husband is the head of [our] household.”  
(*Daughter of migrant parents, Oriental Mindoro*)

“The money that our parents send is primarily for my brother, who is studying in Manila. It covers his rent, food allowance, bills and tuition fees. The rest goes to me and I use it as additional capital for my poultry activity and for our daily household expenses.” (*Daughter of migrant parents, Batangas*)



Interview with migrant’s parents in Mindoro, Philippines  
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### Women are chosen over men to receive and manage regular remittances

“Women are better at handling money than men because women know everything inside the houses- even the smallest thing. For the men, they are only good for major things.” (*Father of male migrant, Tarlac*)

“I receive the remittances and I administer them. My daughter trusts me; even all my other children abroad just send money and they all allow me to decide on where to spend it. They all know anyway where the money will go. If the amount is big, of course, my children give me instructions on where to spend it- either to pay off debts or for the construction of the house.”  
(*Mother of male and female migrants, Batangas*)

## The use of remittances for the improvement of agricultural production and food security

“Families of migrants who put their money in developing their farm can now afford to buy better farming equipment like motor pumps for the water system, hand tractors and threshers. They can also buy fertilizers and pesticides that can eliminate grasses”. (*Mother of female migrant, Oriental Mindoro*)

“Since Ali (eldest sister) started working we stopped working in the rice fields, it was left up to my father and the men...Remittances can help a lot to pay other men who work in the rice fields, men who can help my father prepare the rice and plant the rice fields.” (*Sister of female migrant, Oriental Mindoro*).

“In the past, there were times when we didn’t even have three meals a day; there was not enough food for everybody. Life was really hard, especially when my husband died. When my daughter left to work in Rome, everybody got fed, I mean with good food.” (*Mother of male and female migrants, Batangas*)

## Remittances allow for the education of migrants’ daughters

“The major beneficiaries of my wife’s [remittances] are my three daughters. So I think remittances help women. They are able to study because their mother provided for all the educational expenses. Everything! From all these children of migrant workers, women are the most diligent. The majority of female children complete their studies. Many boys behave differently in schools. For us parents, the education and wellbeing of our daughters is the most important thing.” (*Husband of a female migrant, Batangas*)

“Migration brought about positive effects on me as woman because I am now the one who supervises and manages our farm. Thinking also about my daughters, they wouldn’t be able to support their families if they were here – even if they worked on their own farms. My personal experience would have been transferred to them: poor women with children unable to get an education and live decently.” (*Mother of migrant children, Oriental Mindoro*)



Interview with migrant’s husband in Mindoro, Philippines  
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Both the migrants and the remittance-receiving households interviewed for this study were selected in a manner that ensured the structural representativeness that characterizes qualitative samples.