



Administrative Order _____ **6**
Series of 2008

**Subject : Amendment to the Omnibus Guidelines on the
Implementation of the International Social Welfare
Services for Filipino Nationals (ISWSFN) Project**

I. Rationale:

Republic Act No. 8042 also known as the "Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipino Act of 1995" stipulates that a Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Resource Center shall be established in countries where there are large concentration of Filipino migrant worker. Further, in countries categorized as highly problematic by the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) and the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) and where there is a concentration of Filipino migrant workers, the government is required to provide a lawyer and a social worker for the center.

Hence, a Memorandum of Agreement between the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and the DOLE on the implementation of an Overseas Comprehensive Social Service Package (OCSSP) was signed on February 12, 2002.

The International Social Welfare Services for Filipino National (ISWSFN) project was developed by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) to institutionalize a system of providing a social service to overseas Filipinos, be they documented or undocumented migrants or temporary residents in a foreign country.

The deployment of social workers overseas is categorized into four schemes: (1) deployment of social workers as Technical and Administrative Assistant to the Labor Attaché (TALABATT) under the Overseas Comprehensive Social Services Package for OFWs in partnership with Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE); (2) deployment of social workers on internship to the International Social Service (ISS) in Japan and Hongkong; (3) deployment of Social Welfare Attaché to Malaysia through the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) and to provide psychosocial interventions and other welfare services to migrant Filipinos particularly the illegal entrants and undocumented OFWs; and (4) social worker as part of Humanitarian Missions, although no deployment was made for this number four scheme.

For calendar 2002 – 2006, the Department deployed social workers as Technical and Administrative Assistant to the Labor Attaché in Jeddah, Riyadh, Kuwait, Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Taiwan, Hongkong, Lebanon and Singapore. Also on February 24, 2004 the Department entered into a Memorandum of Agreement with the International Social Service in Japan and Hongkong for internship of DSWD social workers.

For year 2007, the Department decided not to renew the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) through the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) and with the ISS-Hongkong since both parties have reached an impasse on the Terms of Reference for the joint undertaking. However, the Department will continue to extend support to DOLE and ISS-Hongkong in addressing the needs of Filipino nationals particularly the repatriated children/women who are abandoned and/or victims-survivors of trafficking. Referrals coming from the two (2) offices shall be acted upon by the Department and appropriate interventions such as psychosocial services like counseling, and other support services shall be provided to the deportees and victims-survivors of trafficking.

The Department is now in the process of institutionalizing the deployment of Social Welfare Attachés (SWA) in selected diplomatic posts by virtue of Executive Order No. 287, series of 2003 "Directing the Deployment/Posting of Social Welfare Attachés in Selected Diplomatic Posts". This move was inspired by the Department's experience with the Philippine Embassy in Malaysia where it has deployed Social Welfare Attachés since August 26, 2002.

The presence of a SWA in Malaysia resulted in coordinated and converged delivery of psychosocial services for OFWs and other Filipino nationals abroad, especially for cases of trafficking and deportation who are victims of exploitation, physical, psychological, and sexual abuse. The SWA contributed in facilitating the safe return of 46,667 deportees and victims of trafficking to the Philippines from year 2002 to 2007.

Considering the magnitude of OFWs in Malaysia and in other countries needing social services, posting of a SWA was deemed imperative in Malaysia and Middle East countries. The DFA and DOLE recommended possible posting of Social Welfare Attachés in Middle East countries to continue addressing the needs of distressed Filipino nationals.

Hence, the amendment and consolidation of its various policies and guidelines are deemed necessary after five years of implementation experience in international social welfare services. Administrative Order (AO) No. 57, series of 2003, the "Guidelines on the Implementation of Social Welfare Services for Filipinos (ISWSF)", was approved at the time when the Department started deploying social workers to foreign posts in 2002 in recognition of the needs of migrant Filipinos abroad particularly the illegal entrants and undocumented overseas Filipino workers. After three years of implementation, the Department amended some of the provisions of AO 57 and issued the Administrative Order 05, series of 2006, the "Omnibus Guidelines on the Implementation of International Social Welfare Services for Filipino Nationals (ISWSFN) Project".

Legal Bases:

- **Republic Act 8042 – Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipino Act of 1995**

Section 19 – In countries where there are large concentrations of Filipino Migrant Workers, there shall be established a migrant workers and Other Overseas Filipino Resource Center.

- **Executive Order No. 15 Series of 1998**

The DSWD should provide assistance to LGUs, NGOs, and other GA in effectively implementing programs, projects and services that will alleviate poverty and empower disadvantaged individuals, families and communities for an improved quality of life.

- **Labor Code of the Philippines – 1999 Edition**

Article 21 item a – To provide all Filipino workers within their jurisdiction assistance on all matters arising out of employment.

- **Executive Order 287 Series of 2003 - “Directing the Deployment/Posting of Social Welfare Attachés in Selected Diplomatic Posts”**

Direct the deployment of social workers as Social Service Attachés in selected diplomatic posts with large concentration of Overseas Filipino Workers.

II. Target Beneficiaries:

Migrant Filipinos and other Overseas Filipino Nationals who are in crisis situation, and in need of special protection e.g. victims of trafficking, deportees, repatriates who were abused and exploited.

III. Objectives:

In coordination with the DFA, DOLE and other member agencies of the “one-country team” and International NGOs, the ISWSFN Project hopes to achieve the following:

General:

Institutionalize a system of providing social welfare services to Filipinos in a foreign country to promote their best interest and general welfare pursuant to RA 8042 and the mandate of the Department to provide protection to vulnerable and disadvantaged individuals and sectors.

Specific:

1. Implement comprehensive and appropriate social welfare services to overseas Filipinos and their families.
2. Establish a network among welfare agencies and service providers of overseas Filipino workers.
3. Strengthen partnership and coordinative work with government agencies i.e. DFA and DOLE, OWWA in addressing the issues of migrant workers
4. Provide technical assistance along social welfare to NGOs and other GOs concerned with the welfare of OFW whenever indicated.

IV. Description of the Project:

The International Social Welfare Services for the Filipino Nationals shall be undertaken through the deployment of DSWD social workers under the corresponding schemes:

- a. Deployment of Social Service Attachés in the Philippine Embassies particularly in Malaysia and Middle East countries through the DFA
- b. Internship of the Social Workers with the International Social Service Japan (ISSJ)

The Social Service Attachés will work as a member of the Philippine Team at the Consular Office to strengthen the one-country approach in Foreign Service. The Attaché will perform the functions as stipulated in the Memorandum of Agreement between the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) and Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD).

The Social Work Intern with ISSJ shall be under the joint supervision of the Department and ISSJ. He/She shall perform the functions as stipulated in the Memorandum of Agreement.

V. Core Social Welfare Services:

Whenever indicated, based on the assessment of the concerned social worker, the following can be accessed by the migrant workers or any overseas Filipino in Japan, Malaysia and Middle East countries:

1. **Social Integration Services** – refers to efforts at helping the new migrant workers and other overseas Filipinos for settlement and integration into the culture of the host country. This also involves the conduct of socio-cultural activities and networking to strengthen camaraderie with other Filipinos. This activity shall be jointly undertaken with the DFA and other member agencies

of the “one-country team”, concerned NGOs and other Filipino associations in the host country.

2. **Counseling Services** – refers to the provision of individual, group or family counseling services to those in crisis to enable them to cope with homesickness and other related problems. Intensive therapeutic counseling to cases of abuse/ maltreatment particularly of women and children shall likewise be provided whenever indicated and in coordination with specialists.
3. **Critical Incident Stress Debriefing** – refers to the conduct of individual or group sessions to relieve stress to those who have experienced traumatic events.
4. **Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situation** – refers to the provision of limited financial and material assistance to meet a crisis situation.
5. **Referral** – refers to facilitating access to services of other concerned GOs, NGOs to meet the needs of OFWs, either in the host country or in the Philippines.
6. **Repatriation Assistance** – refers to assistance provided to an OFW or other Filipino national to facilitate his/her safe return to the Philippines.
7. **Child Placement** (for ISS Japan only) – refers to the provision of foster care or other alternative family care to abused, neglected and/or abandoned children of Filipino nationals in preparation for their return to their biological families in the Philippines or to a more permanent placement like adoption.

VI. General Policies:

1. The welfare of the migrant workers and other overseas Filipinos is the primordial consideration in the deployment of DSWD social workers to foreign countries.
2. The deployment of any DSWD Social Workers to a foreign country will be for a maximum period of two years subject to evaluation after the first year and to availability of funds.
3. The DSWD-Regional Director/ Bureau Director may endorse any number of qualified nominees from their region/bureau; however, only one per bureau/region will be selected by the Selection Committee so as not to disrupt delivery of social welfare and development services at their level. DSWD-Regional Directors/ Bureau Directors shall ensure that functions and responsibilities by said employees are attended to by other staff of the Bureaus/Services/Field Offices
4. The Selection Committee at any given time will select only one Bureau Director / Regional Director and one Assistant Bureau Director/ Assistant Regional Director for Social Welfare Attaché posts.

5. Only applications from social workers from the Bureaus, Services and Field Offices of the Department will be accepted.

VII. Implementing Details:

A. Recruitment and Selection Process:

a.1. Announcement

Recruitment shall start at least three (3) months prior to the final selection of a Social Welfare Attaché/social worker. The schedule of the recruitment and selection shall be announced at DSWD Central Office and Regional Offices to ensure a wider range of selection of applicants.

a.2. Submission of Application

All interested and qualified social workers shall submit their application within the set deadline to the Human Resource Management and Development Services (HRMDS) for the first level of screening.

HRMDS shall also ensure that the applicants have complied with the physical / medical examination by the current HMO physician of DSWD or any government physician.

The Human Resource Management and Development Service (HRMDS) shall review and assess the documents submitted by the applicants and prepare the shortlist of applicants based on the basic qualification requirements.

The HRMDS submits to the Selection Committee the matrix of applicants who passed the 1st level screening.

B. Selection Committee:

A selection Committee shall be created for the selection of qualified applicants for overseas posting. The selection for the social welfare attaché shall differ from the social work intern for International Social Service considering the level of position and nature of work for the post.

1. Composition:

A. Social Welfare Attaché

The selection committee for the Social Welfare Attaché is the EXECOM headed by the Secretary with members representing the Undersecretaries and Assistant Secretaries. The EXECOM shall screen and select applicants in accordance to the criteria and qualification requirements set for the post.

Secretariat services will be provided by the Office of the Secretary who shall be responsible in notifying the schedule and results of interview of the applicants and documenting the selection proceedings.

B. Social Work Intern

Chairperson

- Assistant Secretary for Policy and Programs Group

Members

The Director or his/her representative who should not be lower than SWO V of the bureau/service:

- Social Technology Bureau (STB)
- Program Management s Bureau (PMB)
- Social Welfare and Institutional Development Bureau (SWIDB)
- Human Resource Management and Development Service (HRMDS)

Secretariat services will be provided by the Human Resource Management and Development Service throughout the duration of the recruitment and selection process.

2. Functions

The Selection Committee for the Social Work -Intern shall:

- a. Screen and select qualified applicants in accordance to the criteria and qualifications (refer to item #3) set for the positions.
- b. Develop a criteria, an interview and written questionnaire to be used for the selection process. The written examination shall be administered by the HRMDS.

- c. Interview applicants and deliberate on the results of the interview and written examination to come up with a shortlist of the top two applicants.
- d. Endorse names of the top two applicants, based on the results of the deliberation of the committee, to the Undersecretary for Policy and Programs Group for endorsement and final approval of the Secretary.
- e. Act on petitions/appeals within five (5) days after receipt of the petitions/ appeals.

3. Criteria/Qualification Requirements:

3.1. Rank/Position

- a. Social Welfare Attaché – SWO V and above
- b. Social Work Intern to International NGOs – SWO II to SWO IV

3.2. Minimum Qualification Requirements:

- Registered Social Worker
- Must have a permanent appointment,
- With Very Satisfactory (VS) performance for the last two (2) rating periods;
- Must be thirty (30) years old and above;
- Must be mentally and physically fit (Certification may come from any current HMO physician of DSWD or any government physician);
- Must served the DSWD for at least five (5) years;
- has no pending administrative or criminal cases;
- Must have rendered the required service obligation from previous local or foreign scholarship grants;
- Has no pending scholarship (local or abroad); and
- Has not availed of similar posting for the last 5 years.

3.3. Additional qualifications at posts:

Social Welfare Attache:

- At least five (5) years of relevant experience in program planning, organizing, monitoring and management of programs, plans and activities including direct service delivery of welfare and psychosocial concerns affecting overseas Filipinos;
- With at least thirty-two (32) hours of relevant training on gender and development, psychosocial intervention including

counseling, trauma stress and case management, therapy, Critical Incidents Stress De-briefing (CISD), etc.:

- Technically equipped in preparing project documents i.e. project proposal, project report;
- Working knowledge in financial management e.g. budgeting, accounting and auditing.
- Ability to initiate and formalize linkages with other agencies, both government and non-government organizations.
- Good interpersonal skills; ability to establish and maintain effective partnership and relationship with the members of the Philippine team at the Consular Office
- Ability to adapt and work in a cross cultural setting /multi-ethnic environment;
- Good negotiation skills with senior officials such as the diplomat/ambassador and other head agency in foreign post; and .
- Integrity and responsibility
- Good decision-making and leadership skills

Social Work as Intern to International Social Services -Japan

- Extensive and relevant experience in handling and managing cases of children for adoption, foster care and repatriation;
- With at least thirty-two (32) hours of relevant training on child welfare and development program, Inter-country and domestic adoption laws and other related child protection laws, , psychosocial intervention including counseling, case management, Stress Management etc.:
- Technically equipped in preparing project reports like home study and child study report;
- Good interpersonal skills. Ability to establish and maintain harmonious relationship with supervisors and co-workers at post;
- Ability to adapt in a cross cultural setting;

4. Duties and Responsibilities

4.1. Social Welfare Attaché

Under the One Country Team, the Social Service Attaché shall undertake the following in collaboration with other members of the team as needed. The prescribed duties are in accordance with the MOA executed between the Department and DFA.

- Provide psychosocial interventions and comprehensive social welfare services for the protection and recovery of Overseas Filipino Workers and other Filipino nationals in crisis situation.
- Undertake quarterly surveys, prepare official social welfare situationer and must include analysis and recommendations on the overseas Filipinos in the area of assignment including those who are undocumented and their families.
- Establish a network with overseas-based social welfare agencies and/or individuals and groups which maybe mobilized to assist in the provision of appropriate social services.
- Respond to and monitor the problems and complaints/ queries of overseas Filipinos and their families so that appropriate social welfare services can be more effectively provided.
- Establish and maintain a data bank and documentation of overseas Filipinos and other Filipino nationals and their families so that appropriate social welfare services can be provided.
- Submit regular reports to the DSWD Secretary and DFA Secretary on plans and activities undertaken, recommendations, and updates on the situation of the overseas Filipinos particularly those encountering difficulties in the host country. Said report may form part of the Semi-Annual Report to Congress as provided under Section 33 of RA 8042.
- Provide information about DSWD and its attached agencies and services to partner stakeholders.
- Perform other related functions in the delivery of social services, as maybe directed by the Head of Diplomatic Post in the area of assignment.

4.2. Social Work Intern of International NGOs

- Provides counseling and other psychosocial intervention to OFWs and other Filipino nationals who are in difficult circumstances and in crisis.

- Responds and facilitates cases of Filipino children for adoption, foster care and repatriation in coordination with the Inter-Country Adoption Board (ICAB) and Philippine Consular Office.
- Responds to telephone inquiries and provides information and counseling to callers.
- Links clients to Consular offices and other agencies in the community for required services.
- Submits regular reports to the Department highlighting accomplishments, gaps and challenges in implementation;
- Provides information on DSWD programs to partner agencies.
- Performs other related functions as directed by the Head of the Agency in the area of assignment

5. Endorsement to the International NGO/ Department of Foreign Affairs

The Secretary shall endorse the selected Social Welfare Attachés/ social workers and the country/ies of his/her/their posting to ISSJ/ DFA for the latter's approval.

6. Preparations and Notification

- At least two (2) months prior to deployment, selected social workers/s shall be notified through their director for the preparation of necessary requirements.
- Upon receipt of the notification, the concerned Bureau/Service/Field Office Director/ coach and monitor shall execute an endorsement of the selected social worker to the Selection Committee.
- The social worker shall apply for an official passport the cost of which shall be borne by her/himself.

7. Special Order and Accreditation

The DSWD shall execute a Special Order (S.O.) for deployment of the social worker. A travel authority approved by the President shall cover the social worker's travel abroad.

The DFA shall facilitate necessary acceptance and accreditation of the social worker through the host country.

8. Tour of Duty

The deployment of Social Service Attaché to foreign countries will be for a maximum period of two (2) years subject to evaluation after the 1st year as well as availability of funds while Social Work Interns of

National NGOs shall have a term of one (1) year. Only the Social Welfare Attaché shall be entitled to fifteen working days home leave for every completion of one year tour of duty, for update on social welfare and development policies and programs of the Department and for capability building activities.

9. Pre-Departure Orientation Seminar

Upon receipt of confirmation and acceptance by the post, the new Social Service Attaché/ Social Work Intern nominees shall attend and complete the three weeks Pre-departure Orientation Seminar (PDOS) at the DFA-Foreign Service Institute.

Outgoing Social Service Attaché/ Social Work Intern and new nominees shall have an opportunity to share and exchange information, issues and concerns relative to their assignments. Likewise, it shall also be a venue for turn over of duties and responsibilities.

After the tour of duty, the Social Welfare Attaché/ Social Work Intern shall report to the DSWD Central Office immediately upon their arrival in the country to attend the post debriefing session.

10. Grounds for Pre-termination of Contracts

1. Unavailability of funds
2. Threat to life of the concerned social worker
3. There is due and valid complaint from OFW Filipino Communities, co- workers or Supervisor. Valid Complaints shall include but are not limited to the following:
 - a. Disrespect to authority and culture of the host country
 - b. Violation of Professional ethics (e.g. accepting bribes, using client's money etc.)
 - c. Signs or symptoms of psychological and mental imbalance.
 - d. Serious acts compromising the status or image of the embassy / POLO / DSWD (e.g. relationship)

The pre-termination of contract shall be made upon the recommendation of the Head of the Embassy for the Social Welfare Attache and the General Director of ISS-Japan for Intern and approval by the DSWD Secretary.

Pre-termination of contract due to disruptions caused by heightened conflict situations such as war will be decided by the DSWD Secretary and Head of the Embassy/Consular Diplomatic Post and/or the partner agency.

11. Reporting, Monitoring and Evaluation

All DSWD workers deployed to foreign countries are required to submit quarterly accomplishment reports properly noted by the Head of the Embassy / Consular Diplomatic Post. The report (ANNEX A) shall be submitted to the Secretary copy furnished the Undersecretary of the Policy and Programs Group (PPG) at the last day of the quarter.

The report should contain but not limited to the following:

- Situationer of OFWs
- Number of cases served (male / female) and Nature of Cases
- Services provided
- Status of cases
- Networking
- Financial Reports
- Issues/Concerns/ Problems Encountered
- Assessment
- Recommendations at different levels:
 - Embassy
 - DSWD
 - Both DFA and DSWD
 - Both DSWD and ISSJ

Monitoring of the cases handled by the deployed social worker will be the responsibility of the Social Technology Bureau implementing the ISWSFN Project.

The evaluation of the performance of the deployed Social Welfare Attaché/ Social Work Intern shall be based on the approved Performance Contract and will be jointly conducted by the Head of Embassy or Consular Office and the Director of the Bureau implementing ISWSFN.

IX. Institutional Arrangements:

1. Department of Social Welfare and Development

- a. Enter into a memorandum of agreement with the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Social Service Japan for the deployment of DSWD social workers.
- b. Identify and nominate through a broad based selection process, the most qualified personnel to be deployed as social welfare attaché / social worker in embassies or representatives in consulate or in ISSJ.
- c. Provide available training and other related activities to the social welfare attaché / social worker to promote efficiency and effectiveness

in the discharge of functions and duties prior to deployment with the Department of Foreign Affairs or the ISSJ

- d. Exercise technical supervision, including site visitation and monitoring, over the deployed personnel in coordination with the DFA, ISSJ and other relevant agencies.

2. Department of Foreign Affairs

- a. Enter into a memorandum of Agreement with the Department of Social Welfare and Development and facilitate/ issue consular accreditation to the deployed personnel as part of the embassy staff.
- b. Conduct pre-deployment orientation / training program and assist in facilitating requisites for deployment.
- c. Undertake administrative and operational supervision of the Social Service Attaché at Post.
- d. Provide logistical support to the Attaché including adequate office space equipments and facilities at Post.

3. International Non-Government Organization / ISS

- a. Enter into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Department
- b. Provide for allowances and other benefits e.g. accommodation, office space, etc. to the deployed social worker as agreed upon with DSWD.
- b. Exercise administrative and operational supervision to the deployed social worker.
- c. Provide proper orientation to the deployed social worker to the nature of work and culture of the host country.

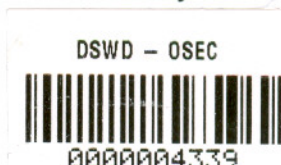
X. Effectivity:

This Order shall take effect immediately and revokes / rescinds all previous orders inconsistent herewith.

Issued in Quezon City, this 2nd day of April 2008.


DR. ESPERANZA I. CABRAL
Secretary

Annex A



Annex A

**INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES FOR
FILIPINOS NATIONALS (ISWSFN)**

Accomplishment Report

(Period Covered)

Name of Social Worker: _____

Country of Assignment: _____

- I. **Situationer** (Description of current situation of (OFWs) to include major issues affecting the OFWs)

II. **Statistical Data:**

<i>Nature of Cases</i>	<i>Number of Cases Served</i>		
	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
1. Labor related			
2. Accused of crime (Specify)			
3. Visa/ Travel Related			
4. Victim of Abuse and Exploitation (specify)			
5. Trafficked Victim			
6. Person Living with HIV/AIDS			
7. Physical/Emotional Abuse			
8. Sexual Abuse/ Attempted Rape and Sexual Harassment			

V. Assessment/ Analysis:

VI. Recommendations:

Prepared by:

Noted by:

(Name & Signature of Social Worker)

(Name & Signature of Head of Mission)