

REGIONAL DIFFERENCES IN LABOR EXPORT IN THE PHILIPPINES

INTRODUCTION

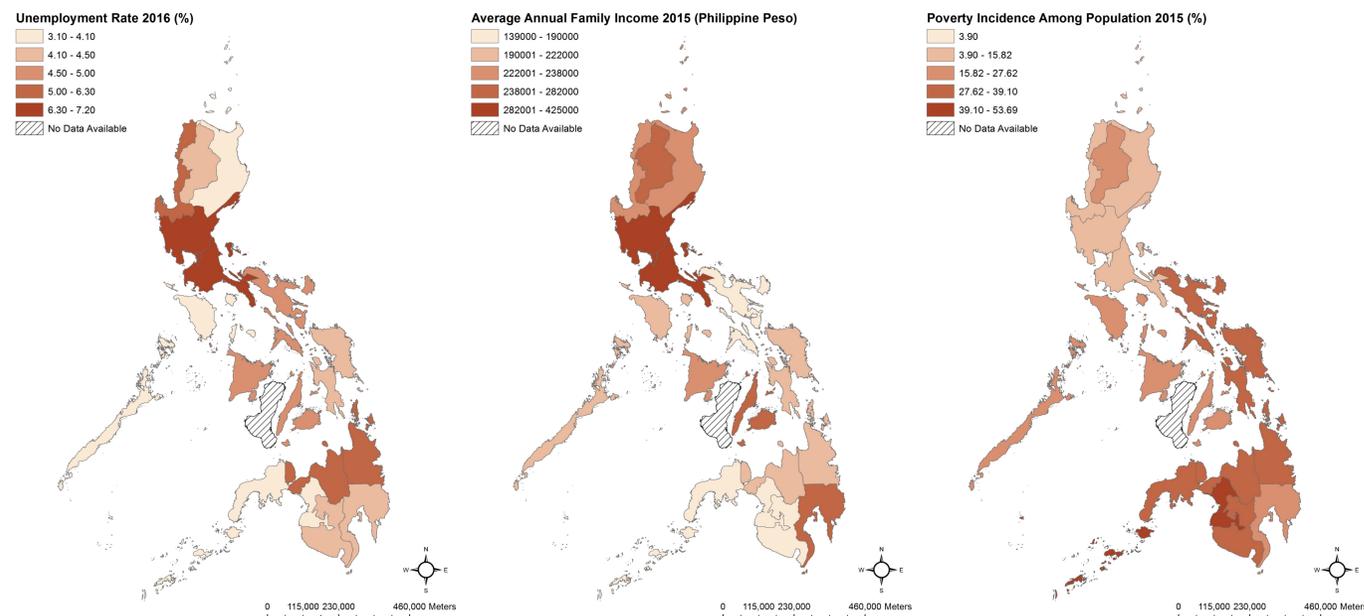
As a country that has been impacted by a background of colonization first by Spain and later by the United States, there is a historical legacy of Filipinos moving to these countries for work. To this day, the Philippines is a major labor exporter, sending workers of varying skill levels to regions across the world for employment opportunities. The Philippine Statistics Authority reported that there were 2,447,000 Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW) in 2015. Robyn Magalit Rodriguez asserts that “the Philippines has crafted a strategy of labor brokerage by which it mobilizes and deploys labor for export to profit from migrants’ remittances. Remittances from migrants’ overseas employment has strengthened the government’s foreign exchange reserves...” The World Bank reports that personal remittances comprise approximately 10% of the Philippines’ gross domestic product. Remittances from overseas workers have a significant role in the economy of the Philippines, allowing for citizens within the country (such as family members of workers abroad) to consume domestic goods and services. Rather than placing efforts on developing industries within the country to create jobs that can sustain livelihoods, it appears that the Philippine government encourages their citizens to find work abroad.

Regional differences exist with regards to the distribution of workers being sent abroad. The first part of this project seeks to understand which regions of the Philippines are sending more workers abroad (especially in relation to regional populations). The second part of this project aims to explore the domestic factors buttressing this culture of migration in pursuit of foreign work opportunities. Regional data is examined to elucidate the local factors that may be prompting or allowing for more citizens from certain regions to work abroad.

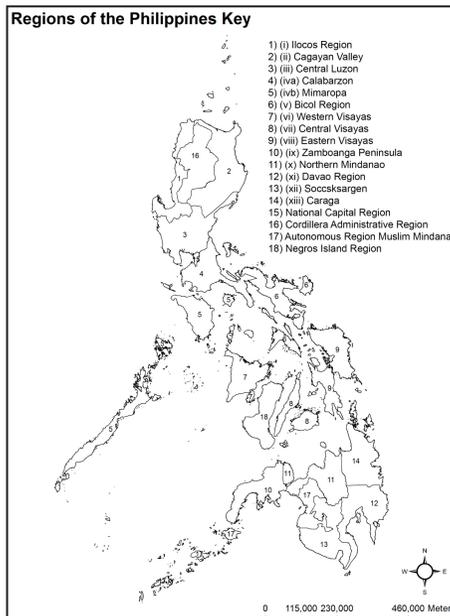
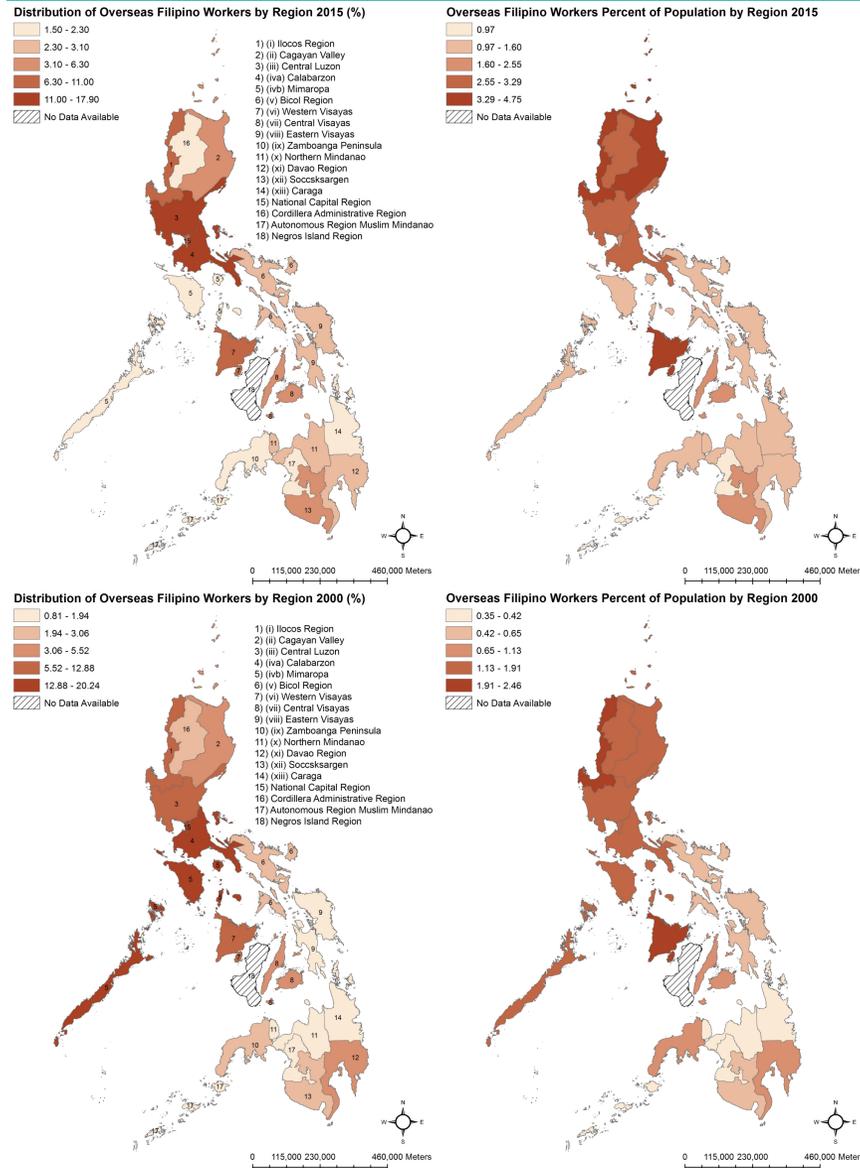
METHODS

Spatial information for the Philippines at the province administrative level was obtained from GADM. As the other data used for this project was at the regional level, geoprocessing was carried out to group the provinces into regions. The Philippines has 81 provinces that are organized into 18 regions. The dissolve tool in ArcGIS was used to create regional boundaries from the province data. Data on population, Overseas Filipino Workers, poverty incidence, unemployment rate, and family income were obtained from the Philippine Statistics Authority. Some statistics were calculated such as percent change in population from 2000 to 2015 and the percentage of each regional population comprised of Overseas Filipino Workers. All of this data was organized into a table that was paired to the region data layer using an attribute join. Symbology was adjusted to visually indicate the quantitative variations of the various attributes.

SOCIOECONOMIC ANALYSIS



OFW REGIONAL LABOR ANALYSIS



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

- Examining the distribution of OFW by region in both 2015 and 2000, the northern part of the Philippines sends more workers abroad than does the southern part. A sizeable percentage of OFW come from the regions surrounding the National Capital Region – namely Central Luzon and Calabarzon. The northern regions also have a higher percentage of their population that are working abroad.
- Interestingly, the unemployment rates are the highest in the regions around the National Capital Region. Those regions also have the highest average annual family income and the lowest poverty incidence. Poverty incidence is highest in the central and southern parts; these regions send fewer workers abroad.
- An image emerges where workers need to come from a baseline of socioeconomic circumstances to be able to work abroad. People who are very poor are excluded from opportunities abroad.
- As seen in Figure 1, between 2000 and 2015, the Philippines has experienced a 31.99% change in population (growth) while there is a 150.20% change in number of OFW (growth). This confirms the notion of a poor domestic economy; there are not enough jobs that provide a living wage. Rather than developing industries and jobs domestically, there is a pressure to export more labor.
- Looking at Figure 2, it is clear that laborers and unskilled workers are the largest occupation group of OFW, and their remittance per worker is less than that of other workers. There is a lack of opportunities for work and mobility. The Philippines needs to establish effective policies and programs that create domestic opportunities for its citizens, rather than encouraging a system of labor brokerage and export.
- One limitation is that some of the data from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) came in rounded values. Additionally, there are slight differences in how the PSA classified their data between 2000 and 2015; for instance, in the 2015 data, region iv is partitioned into two regions while in 2000 it is one region. These factors could lead to inaccuracies in the analysis presented here.

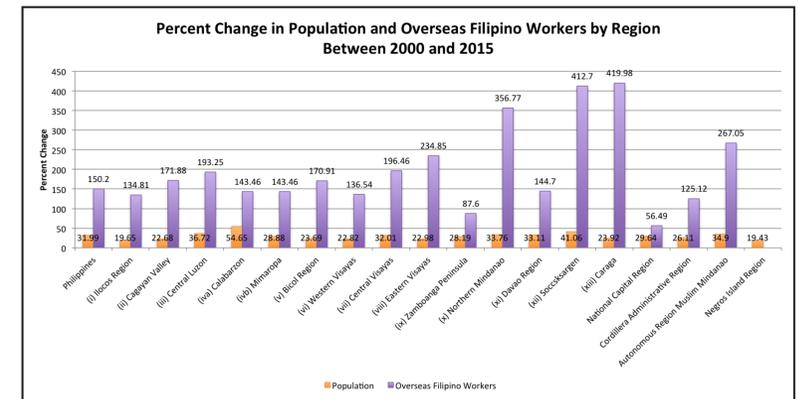


Figure 1. Percent Change in Population and Overseas Filipino Workers by Region Between 2000 and 2015

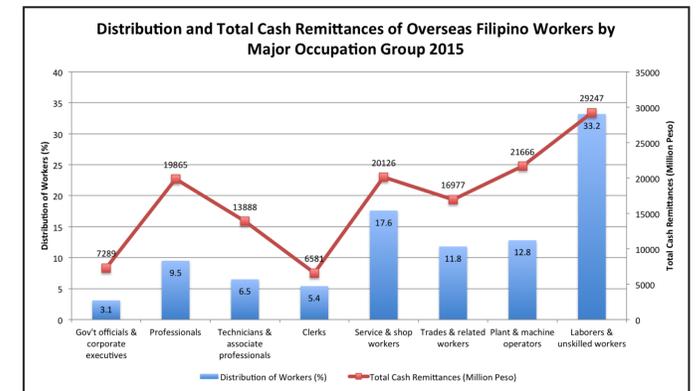


Figure 2. Distribution and Total Cash Remittances of Overseas Filipino Workers by Major Occupation Group

REFERENCES AND SOURCES

Cartographer/Class: Danielle Kong, Tufts University GIS101: Introduction to GIS

Date: May 9, 2017

Data Sources: GADM, Philippine Statistics Authority, World Bank

Projection/Coordinate System: GCS_WGS_1984

References:

- Asis, M.M. (2006). The Philippines’ Culture of Migration. Migration Policy Institute. Retrieved from <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/philippines-culture-migration>
- Rodriguez, R.M. (2010). Migrant for export: How the Philippine state brokers labor to the world. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.