



Philanthropy by temporary migrant workers: helping their peers and supporting their homeland

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This mixed methods study examines the philanthropy of Filipino temporary migrant workers in Israel who are ineligible for permanent residency status. More specifically, the study compares their philanthropy in the host country to philanthropy back to their homeland. Based on the findings of this study, which involved traditional and digital ethnography and survey research conducted between 2013 and 2019, the authors recommend an enhanced understanding of diaspora philanthropy and acknowledge the significance of philanthropy by temporary migrant workers. This study is relevant to nonprofit and philanthropy practitioners working with migrant populations and those engaged in community-led development, community philanthropy, or diaspora philanthropy.

Key research question: How do temporary migrant workers engage in philanthropy in their host country compared with their homeland?

[#DiasporaPhilanthropy](#) [#CommunalPhilanthropy](#) [#MutualAid](#) [#MigrantWorkers](#)

Background

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Context



- **In Israel, temporary migrant workers are ineligible for permanent residency status.** In 2019, the Israeli government recorded approximately 25,000 Filipino, temporary migrant workers engaged in the caregiving industry. Most work around the clock, six days a week, and the majority are women (85%).
- **Communal philanthropy compared with ethnic philanthropy.** In this study, communal philanthropy refers to giving by temporary migrant workers for the benefit of temporary migrant workers in the host country, whereas ethnic philanthropy refers to giving by permanent immigrants for the benefit of other immigrants in the host country.
- **Expanding the definition of diaspora philanthropy.** Existing definitions of diaspora philanthropy do not account for communal giving by temporary migrant workers inside their host countries. The authors offer a revised definition to address this gap.
- **This research included traditional and digital ethnography, from 2013-2019, and an online survey conducted in 2019.** The authors observed the Filipino community both online and offline, connecting through Facebook (digital ethnography) and by attending Sunday gatherings and special events (traditional ethnography). In addition, 678 Filipino migrant workers in Israel completed an online survey.

ERNOP Research Note

Academic articles on philanthropy through a practitioner lens

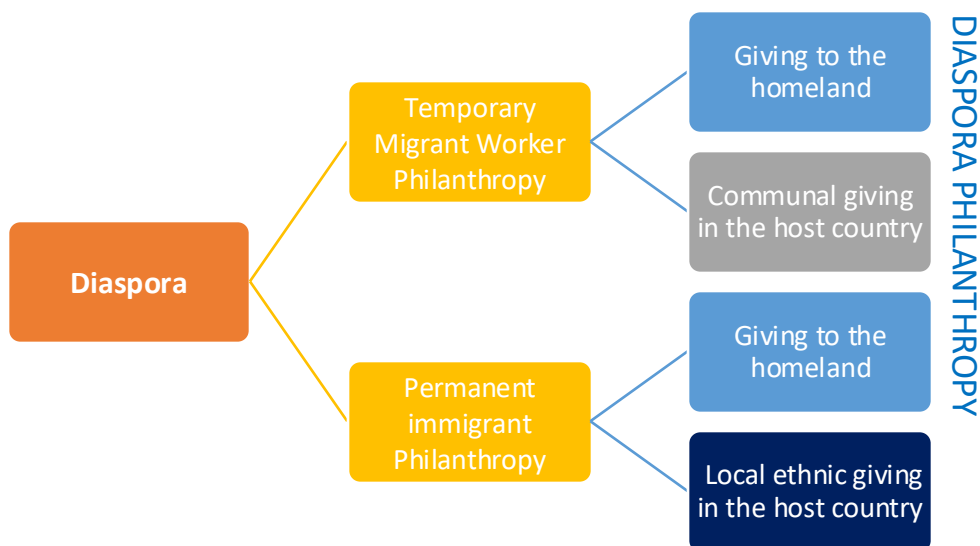
Take aways & Learnings



- **Temporary migrant workers engage in both philanthropy to their homeland and within their host country.** 84% of Filipino temporary migrant workers reported engaging in philanthropy in the previous year. 71% engaged in communal philanthropy (in their host country) and 67% engaged in transnational philanthropy (to their homeland).
- **Temporary migrant workers engage in philanthropy differently in their host country compared with philanthropy sent back to their homeland.** Communal philanthropy is largely focused on short-term, immediate needs (e.g., paying bills, supporting festivals) while transnational philanthropy is largely focused on long-term, collective needs (e.g., building schools). While communal philanthropy helps temporary migrants maintain a sense of home in their host country, transnational philanthropy fulfils expectations, thus assuring their futures in the homeland.
- **Including communal philanthropy by temporary migrant workers in the definition of diaspora philanthropy.** As detailed in Figure 1, the findings of this study suggest a need to distinguish between communal giving by temporary migrant workers in their host country and ethnic giving to the local community by permanent immigrants in their host country, with the former offering another component of diaspora philanthropy while the latter is not considered diaspora philanthropy.

Figure 1.

An enhanced understanding of diaspora philanthropy.



ERNOP Research Notes provide easy-to-read, practice-oriented summaries of academic articles on philanthropy and are written by practitioner experts. This ERNOP Research Note 33/2024 is published in December 2024 and has been written by Dana R.H. Doan, Ph.D., from the Lilly Family School of Philanthropy. More information can be found at www.ernop.eu.