

[OP ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 248, December 04, 2008]

PAYBACK PROGRAM FOR THE EXPATRIATE FILIPINO WORKERS

WHEREAS, in these trying times for the expatriate Filipino worker, the government should not sit idly and do nothing;

WHEREAS, it is now payback time for the government;

WHEREAS, the heroic efforts of the expatriate Filipino workers should not go unreciprocated;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GLORIA M. ARROYO, President of the Philippines, by the powers vested in me by law, do hereby order:

SECTION 1. A program of full reciprocity for the heroic efforts of the expatriate Filipino workers shall be carried out to help those who might return home from their host countries that are now being buffeted by an economic crisis whose depth and scope is still unraveling.

SECTION 2. The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) and the Overseas Workers' Welfare Administration (OWWA) shall take the lead in carrying out the government's payback program for the expatriate Filipino workers.

SECTION 3. The first component of this reciprocity program shall be the setting up of a Filipino Expatriate Livelihood Support Fund in the amount of P250 million to be financed by OWWA and supported by government lending institutions. Displaced expatriate workers can access the Fund to help capitalize startup businesses, finance further studies and training, or serve as seed money for any appropriate economic undertaking.

SECTION 4. DOLE to draft the implementing guidelines immediately.

SECTION 4. The rules and mechanics of accessing this money shall be simple and hassle-free. Returning expatriate workers shall not be subjected to irrational rules and red tape.

SECTION 5. The DOLE and the OWWA shall coordinate with the government's economic and investment agencies to identify start-up businesses that the returning expatriates can engage in.

SECTION 6. The second component of the reciprocity program shall be the full government support in helping the returning expatriate Filipino workers find remunerative jobs.

SECTION 7. Help desks that would match the skills, training and experiences of the returning expatriate Filipino workers with local jobs