

**[OWWA MEMORANDUM OF INSTRUCTIONS NO.
007, S. 1997, April 12, 1997]**

**GENERAL GUIDELINES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SOCIAL
COUNSELING FOR WOMEN**

Pursuant to the declared policy of Republic Act 8042 otherwise known as the Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Act of 1995 for gender sensitive programs the following guidelines in the implementation of Social Counseling for Women Program are prescribed:

I

General Policy

The Social Counseling for Women Program endeavors to create mechanisms to assist women in coping with the adverse effects of international labor migration to enable them to develop their fullest potentials and thereby become productive members of the society.

II

Coverage

All women overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) and women relatives or dependents of OFWs whether at the jobsites or at the local front preferably those who suffered physical and sexual abuse from employers and other circumstances shall be provided counseling services by OWWA officers or volunteers appropriately trained for the purpose.

III

Implementing Units

All Regional Units (ROUs) and Filipino Workers Development Centers (FWDCs) through their Community Development Officers (CDOs) and Overseas Welfare Officers (WelOfs) respectively, will be in charge with the primary responsibility of delivering counseling services to women OFWs and women relatives or dependents of OFWs.

Volunteer counselors can be tapped to assist the CDOs and WelOfs provided they have attended and completed the required training on social counseling as determined by the Plans and Programs Office (PPO). All counseling services delivered shall be provided to counselees without any remuneration or payment to the counselors.

Proper coordination will, however, have to be made with the Regional Operations Coordinating Center (ROCC) for ROUs and the Overseas Operations Coordinating Center (OCCC) for FWDCs to ensure facilitation of program implementation and appropriate administrative and logistical support for the program.

Concerned units and offices of the Internal Management and Service Office will be providing the financial, administrative, and logistical requirements of the program.

IV

Implementation Scheme

A. The basic unit for implementation of the program is the formation of the social counseling circles (SCCs) which will be organized by CDOs, WelOfs, as well as volunteer counselors in their respective areas.

B. The SCCs will be composed of women OFWs and women dependents or relatives of OFWs organized by the CDOs, by WelOfs, or by volunteer counselors, who seek their counseling services.

C. Counseling services may be conducted at least once a week. Site of counseling activities may be done at the ROU or FWDC concerned or as may be determined by the counselor with prior approval of the CDOs or the WelOfs.

D. Confidentiality of each counseling sessions should be ensured by the counselor to maintain the trust of the members of the SCCs.

E. Each volunteer counselor shall be assigned a specific area of assignment by the CDO or WelOf who has jurisdiction over his/her specific region. The volunteer counselors on the other hand, will be grouped into teams as a support group by the CDO or WelOf depending on their area of origin.

F. The CDO or WelOf should conduct monitoring activities of SCCs at least once a month to determine the progress of each SCC within his/her area of jurisdiction. Monthly meetings with each volunteer counselor will likewise be done to discuss the various problems of the members of the SCC and to draw plans of actions as may be necessary. The frequency of the meeting may be changed depending on the level of development of each volunteer counselor.

G. Assembly meetings of all volunteer counselors with the officers of the ROU or FWDC to be organized by the CDO or WelOf will be conducted every six (6) months or as often as necessary to provide a venue for consultation and discussion of the needs and requirements of the counselors as well as in determining their plans of action.

H. Volunteer counselors shall have to be accredited by the ROU or FWDC concerned. Such volunteer counselors shall have at least attended a training on social counseling organized by the PPO or by the CDO or WelOf in his/her area. They shall likewise manifest sincere dedication and zeal in providing counseling services to OFWs and their dependents and acquire a deep sense of volunteerism to perform his/her assigned duties and tasks. Specific guidelines on this matter shall be drawn by the CDO and WelOf concerned as may be dictated by the particular