



Report

**Study
on**

Women Migrants Situation
(Profile of women migrants, causes, problems
& prospects of migration)

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List of Acronyms

BAIRA	Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agencies
BMET	Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training
BOESL	Bangladesh Overseas Employment Services Limited
CEDAW	Convention for Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women
DC	Deputy Commissioner
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GFMD	Global Forum on Migration and Development
GOB	Government of Bangladesh
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
AIDS	Acquired Immune deficiency Syndrome
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
MOEWOE	Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MFI	Micro Finance Institutes
NGO	Non-Government Organization
ODA	Overseas Development Assistance
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RMMRU	Refugees and Migratory Movement Research Unit
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
STD	Sexually Transmitted Diseases
TTC	Technical Training Centre
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
USD	United States Dollar

Executive Summary

This paper assesses the pattern of women migration, causes and social cost thereof. It has analyzed the socio-economic profile of women workers, use of remittance, problems faced in the migration process and at the workplace; vulnerabilities during migration, etc. The study has elaborated some specific issues in relation to women migration from Bangladesh, shortcomings of the present system of overseas employment and need for development in different phases of migration.

It examines situation of returnee migrants and issues on re-integration. It has evaluated current situation and depicts opportunities in the arena for possible interventions by the government and NGOs.

Women workforce constitutes half of the population of the country with a huge potential to contribute towards the economic development of the country. Sometimes women are unable to accrue the economic stability at home; so migration may be a useful means for economic emancipation for their families. Migration is gradually being considered as the development alternative to the family level of women workers particularly the illiterate and un-skilled workforce.

The overall objective of the study is to identify the comprehensive scenario on the migration of women workers from Bangladesh. This study has been conducted to assess the present situation, migration cost, socio-economic profile and the use of remittances. The study has been conducted through collection of data, interviews with relevant bodies, focused group discussion, etc. Analysis include processing and compilation of data and reporting. The aim of the field survey of this study was to prepare a profile of aspirant potential women migrants, returnee women migrants and members of the family of women migrants.

The study has been conducted in some selected upozilas in six districts. It has drawn some suggestions on migration management in a better manner for the aspirant migrant workers regarding dissemination of all necessary information to encourage migration through regular channels and protecting the migrants against exploitation.

International migration has in recent years emerged as one of the most important issues in the development discourses of Bangladesh. Presently about 7.5m Bangladeshi migrants are working all over the world. Yearly migration from Bangladesh is about 0.3 - 0.4m. In 2010, the migration from Bangladesh was 3,90,702. Remittance figure of Bangladesh attained US\$ 11.00b in 2010 from

the migrant workers; it constitutes 13.56% of GDP and 6 times of Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) and 12 times the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) flow to Bangladesh.

The countries like Philippine, Sri Lanka and Indonesia are sending more women workers, thus they ensures earning of more remittance through women migrants. Remittance from the women workers constitutes a considerable amount, which is not identified properly. It is noted that women workers save more from their income and remit more percentage of income. Women prefer investment of remittances in education and health of children and other family members.

In Bangladesh, local wage employment cannot absorb the huge low skilled and less educated women workforce. This large volume of workforce needs to be engaged in employment to ensure their participation in the economic development of the countries as well as to improve their family standard. There were several bans on women migration from Bangladesh on the lower level of jobs in different years which prevailed up to 2001. From 1991 to 2010 a total number of 1,48,460 women migrated to overseas employment in various countries of the world.

Women migration from Bangladesh constituted only 1% up to 2004, but achieved the figure of 6.42% of the total migration in 2010. Percentage of women migration in the international average is about 49%. Their employment opportunity in the overseas labour market is mainly confined to some specific occupations like house keeping, garment & other factory workers and nurses.

Bangladeshi workers are mainly engaged in more than 132 countries of the world but women migration takes place in 51 countries only. Major countries of women migration from Bangladesh are UAE, Lebanon, Jordan, etc. Migration from Bangladesh is not equitably distributed in all the districts. Some districts are prominent is this regard. Dhaka, Manikganj, Faridpur, Comilla, Narsingdi, Narayanganj, Gazipur are the dominating districts from where women migration is taking place significantly.

Migration can indirectly help alleviate poverty by raising the productivity, education and health of the females and their families, all key to reducing inequality and poverty in the home. Women migrate to escape unhappy social situations, including bad marriages, harassment, violence and idle husbands made these women a socially disadvantaged group which saw migration primarily as a quest for independence and a means of realizing self reliance.

There exists a good demand of women workers in some trades like nursing, care giving, cashiering, catering, electronics factory, etc. To avail the opportunity of this skilled migration areas, it is essential to take up a comprehensive program of skill development and enhancement of their communication skills.

The average wages of Bangladeshi women workers ranges from US \$ 100.00 to US \$ 200.00 for house keeping workers. For cleaning workers, this amount varies from US \$ 100.00 to US \$ 150.00. In other professions like garment workers, nurses and some other categories of employment the wages are as good as the male workers.

Skill in using the modern household electrical appliances by the untrained poor and illiterate women create problems in the workplace. They also face physical and sexual harassment in the countries of destination. The workers are not aware about the proper use of the remittance through savings and investment which direct them towards similar economic conditions as previous status before migration or sometimes worse than before.

Success of a migration depends on the positive gains and benefit accrued for the family members particularly to the children of women migrant workers. In the scenario of the migrants' family under this study, it was found that the burden of the women migrant worker has compelled her in migration for better livelihood.

Regarding migration cost, the major respondents fall between a range of Tk. 50,000.00 to 80,000.00. It is also found that about 23% of the migrants managed the migration with Tk. 1000.00 to Tk. 10,000.00 only. These are mostly cases of collection of visa through their close relations staying abroad.

In arranging this money 60% responded that they borrowed the money with a high interest rate, some 12% sold land, 8% mortgaged land and some used other sources like ornament, assistance from relatives, sale of cows, etc. It is observed that 72% of the workers send their money through Bank and 67% of the migrants managed to remit more than 50,000.00 and it crossed Tk. 4,00,000.00 in case of 6.55%. It proves the success in migration for a significant number of migrant workers. Respondents' experience shows the extent of violation and other aspects of financial problems like delayed wage or less payment are at minimum level. The positive sign shown by the outgoing female migrant workers is their interest in regard to opening of bank account before departure, which is found about 60%. Regarding the future plan for improvement of the condition of the family, most of the respondents replied to purchase land (28%) and to live a solvent life (35%). Some were interested to start a business (11%). A few wished to provide better education to the children.

In replying to the question about the problem faced in the process of procuring visa and completion of the processes of migration, replies were received in getting job information, checking paper, obtaining visa and arranging money.

Almost in all cases of good experience in migration, it was observed that the process of migration was done through a relation already staying abroad. It indicates that the chain migration proves its success and ensures the protection and safe stay in the countries of destination. This group of migrants does not contact the brokers or middlemen for procurement of visa; they prefer to utilize the channel of known person. They use to confine this processing within the local area, so that for any inconvenience they can try to realize the money paid for migration cost or get redress to the problems.

Empowerment of the women migrant workers may be possible ensuring social and economic re-integration through i) Liaison with Investment opportunities, ii) Arrangement of loan from banks for SME initiatives, iii) Providing Community Based Training on cooperative basis, iv) Arrangement of re-migration and v) Basic training in employable trades which were found lacking during interview.

Some migrants expressed their very bad experience in migration. Some face physical and sexual harassment, some were confined in the house and not allowed to contact home over telephone. Three migrants said that their economic condition has become much worse than before due to failed migration.

A good number of migrants expressed their concern about the problems they faced due to lack of knowledge on skill in using household electronic appliances. They lack proficiency in the communication skill as they did not have any training on language. Some migrants were beaten, and kept without food for couple of days. Sometimes they were locked in a room.

Countries of destination are increasingly dependent on migrant women in the domestic, health, entertainment and textile sectors. Generally, women work overwhelmingly in the domestic, garment manufacturing, entertainment and nursing spheres, frequently in an irregular migration status. In some receiving countries, particularly in the middle-east the domestic sector is not covered by labour laws and domestic work is not protected by ILO convention.

Main causes for which the migration fails is the lack of analysis on cost and benefit of migration. They do not know the legal channel of migration even. Usually they sale land or borrow money on high interest. They do not have any training on required job which is absolutely necessary. Normally the women migrants prefer to contact middlemen without contacting recruiting agency

directly. It happens due to lack of knowledge in this area and they do not have access to the appropriate information relating to legal channel of migration. Very few aspirant migrants know about the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare & Overseas Employment and the Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training (BMET) which is the only government office to regulate overseas employment and looks after the welfare of the expatriate workers.

All types of cost for medical treatment is supposed to be borne by the employers. But in reality domestic workers seldom get this facility for a need of major diseases. During study it is found that domestic workers suffer from back pain, cold, headache, gastric pains and fever. HIV vulnerability of the migrant workers has not been focused to identify the problems associated with migrant population. As one of the high-risk groups, the overseas migrant population is neither covered by national response nor undertaken by any other appropriate interventions.

The need for skilled manpower both at home & abroad is increasing day by day and in the context of this ever-increasing need, vocational training activities should be expanded. The benefits can be derived through producing skilled labour force is available to face competitiveness in the world market. To create more employability, Language and soft skills of aspirant migrants also need to be improved. With these views, skill development training program of women workers should be strengthen effectively to cater to the needs of the overseas market.

Awareness campaign and other promotional activities in relation to stimulate the conception regarding safe migration need to be launched. Re-integration program may need awareness campaign and information dissemination to engage them in small business, agro-based farming like poultry, cow rearing, fish culture, improved cultivation, small transport vehicle, setting up shops, etc. Micro Finance Institutions (MFIs) have emerged as major actors in savings mobilization and credit disbursement at the grassroots level in Bangladesh. Most effective and needful service to the women migrant workers is counseling on how to invest and utilize the savings from remittance.

Strategies for re-integration may be adopted both in the short and long term for returnee migrants. Sustainable re-integration program for the returnee migrants needs a long-term perspective plan, which is to be implemented in phases in successive projects.

Chapter: One

Context of the study

1.00 Introduction

Human Development Index of the nation mostly depends on the utilisation factor of the human resources through appropriate employment arrangement. Half of the population of the country constitutes women with an equal potential to contribute towards the economic development of the country. It is definitely essential to engage them in the mainstream of development activities to ascertain the progress of the country. It is indispensable to eliminate the disparity between women and men to ensure alleviation of poverty. Economic empowerment at the micro-level is the basic pre-requisite for upholding the status of women and to reduce the discrimination among men and women in achieving the millennium development goal (MDG) and gradual improvement particularly for the women at lower level.

The nexus between livelihood and migration is inter-mingled in nature. Gender inequality is a common obstacle to economic, social and political progress. Sometimes women are unable to accrue the economic stability at home; so migration may be an alternative means for economic emancipation for their families.

Migration is gradually being considered as the development alternative to the family level of women workers particularly the illiterate and un-skilled workforce. There are so many issues to be addressed relating to the women migration involving building awareness, processing migration safely, protection of rights at the destination countries, security against the possible exploitation and vulnerabilities to violation, utilization of remittances, social and economic re-integration, etc. To establish and ascertain the sustainability of women migration, it is necessary for the planners and all other stakeholders to have a pen picture on the profile of women migrants, the social cost and benefits of the women migration and its impact on their livelihood.

2.00 Objectives of the study

a) The Overall Objective

The Overall Objective of the study is to identify the comprehensive scenario on the migration of women workers from Bangladesh. This study has been conducted to assess the present situation and causes of the women migration,

their problems, migration cost, socio-economic profile and the use of remittances.

b) The Specific Objective:

The study is specifically aimed to draw

- 1) The socio-economic profile of women workers;
- 2) Causes of women migration;
- 3) Pattern of remittance sending;
- 4) Use of remittance and its impact on standard of living;
- 5) Problems faced in the migration process;
- 6) Migration cost and the role of intermediaries;
- 7) Work load and working environment;
- 8) Risks and vulnerabilities during migration;
- 9) Problem faced in the destination countries and work place;
- 10) Need of skill training;
- 11) Need of pre-departure orientation and awareness building.

With a view to achieving these goals, this study has been conducted -

- To assess the present situation of female migrants workers in selected upazilas¹ including financial & social cost;
- To recommend input for the development of the female migrants workers;
- To highlight contribution of female migrant workers;

The study has analysed and elaborated the following issues in relation to women migration from Bangladesh:

- Best practices
- Social cost
- Shortcomings of the systems and accountability of Govt. officials;
- Recommendations on improvement and acceleration of female migration at local and national level.

3.00 Methodology of study

The study has been conducted in two different approaches. These are field research and desk analysis. Field research was comprised of collection of data, conduct interviews with relevant bodies, focused group discussion, etc. Analysis

¹ Upozila is the 'Sub-district'. It is the center of local government administration.

included processing and compilation of data and reporting. The field study was aimed to collect data by using pre-designed questionnaires and face to face interviews.

4.00 Target groups for data collection

The aim of the field survey of this study was to prepare a profile of –

- i) Aspirant potential women migrants.
- ii) Returnee women migrants
- iii) Members of the family of women migrants

5.00 Scope of the study

The study has been conducted in some selected upozilas where there is concentration of women migrant workers. These are as follows:

Sl.	District	Upozila
1.	Dhaka	1) Keraniganj
2.	Manikganj	1) Singair and 2) Sador
3.	Narsingdi	1) Shibpur
4.	Jessore	1) Sador and 2) Sharsha
5.	Narail	1) Sador and 2) Kaliya
6.	Narayanganj	1) Rupganj and 2) Sador

The current study has drawn some suggestions on migration management in a better manner for the aspirant migrant workers regarding dissemination of all necessary information to encourage migration through regular channels and protecting the migrants against exploitation. This will enrich the workers providing the migrants with knowledge, information and skills essential for the better performance of the entire migration process including their re-integration in the society with an economic success. This study was confined the one to one interview of women migrant workers and the members of the family. Two focused groups discussion have also been conducted in two different areas with the related and concerned personnel of various stages of migration. Consultation with different stakeholders has also been done in relation to issues on migration of women workers.

6.00 Limitation of study

To asses the real situation of the women migrant workers at their workplace, it would be essential to collect the information from the destination countries. It was necessary to conduct interviews with the employers and some stakeholders related to women migration to analyze the causes and also the perspective

situation of problems prevailing there, which was not covered by the purview of the study. There are some occupations in female migration other than domestic aides like garment workers, nurses, etc. which is not covered in the study.

Chapter: Two

Migration Scenario

1.00 Overview of migration and remittance:

International migration has in recent years emerged as one of the most important issues in the development discourses of Bangladesh and has assumed centre-stage in the economic policy planning. Migration has also become an important livelihood strategy for a section of people of Bangladesh. Presently about 7.5m Bangladeshi migrants are working all over the world. Yearly migration from Bangladesh is about 0.3 - 0.4m. In 2010, the migration from Bangladesh was 3,90,702.

Remittance figure of Bangladesh attained US\$ 11.00b in 2010 from the migrant workers. Remittance increases with the expanding migration process and accelerating movement of people for overseas employment market. Remittances from Bangladeshi migrants recently have constituted a larger share of the country's development budget than foreign aid as it constitutes 13.56% of GDP² and 6 times of Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) and 12 times the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) flow to Bangladesh. Remittance from the women workers is not segregated in the central Bank account but it is clearly understood that remittance will increase significantly if women migration could be enhanced because women save more and remit better percentage of earning than men. Table 2.1 shows the year-wise remittance from 1999 to 2010. Figure of migration and remittance from 1976 to 2010 is shown in Annexure 3.

Table 2.1 : Year-wise remittance statistics to Bangladesh

Year	Remittance (In b \$)	In crore ³ Tk.
1999	1.80	8,882.74
2000	1.95	10,199.12
2001	2.07	11,590.79
2002	2.85	16,484.53
2003	3.18	18,484.53
2004	3.56	21,285.95
2005	4.25	27,304.33
2006	5.48	38,366.56
2007	6.57	45,739.86
2008	9.01	62,210.42
2009	10.72	73,981.00
2010	11.00	76,500.00

² GDP is the Gross Domestic Products of a country.

³ Crore is a local counting slab equal to 10m.

The countries like Philippine, Sri Lanka and Indonesia are sending more women workers, thus they ensures earning of more remittance through women migrants. Remittance from the women workers constitutes a considerable amount, which is not identified properly. It is noted that women workers save more from their income and remit more percentage of income. Women prefer investment of remittances in education and health of children and other family members.

2.00 Women migration

Worldwide, during past twenty five years, the volume of migrant workers, both internal and international has more than doubled, i.e. from 84 million to 175 million in 2000 and it was 190 m in 2005. Presently the number of global migrants is estimated at about 250 million. Feminisation of labour migration in Asia depicts that- since late 1970s, women constitute an increasing proportion of migrant labour force. From 15% in 1976 it grew to 50% in 2000 in Asia & Latin America. In Asia, for some countries the number of women migrant workers exceeded that of male workers, e.g. Philippines, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, etc. Bangladeshi migrants are spread over five continents: Asia, Africa, Europe, Australia and North America.

In Bangladesh, local wage employment cannot absorb the huge low skilled and less educated women workforce. This large volume of workforce needs to be engaged in employment to ensure their participation in the economic development of the countries as well as to improve their family standard. There were several bans on women migration from Bangladesh on the lower level of jobs in different years which prevailed up to 2001. After withdrawal of major bans on all occupations of female migration, it experienced a positive trend. Table -2.2 shows the flow of female migrant workers from 1991 to 2010 with the percentage of total migration. From 1991 to 2010 a total number of 1,48,460 women migrated to overseas employment in various countries of the world.

Table 2.2 : Flow of female migrants with the percentage of total migration from 1991 to 2010.

Year	Migration			Year	Migration		
	Total	Female	%		Total	Female	%
1991	147,131	2189	1.49	2001	188,965	659	0.35
1992	188,124	1907	1.01	2002	225,256	1216	0.54
1993	244,508	1793	0.73	2003	254,190	2353	0.93
1994	186,326	1995	1.07	2004	272,958	11259	4.12
1995	187,543	1612	0.86	2005	252,702	13570	5.37

Year	Migration			Year	Migration		
	Total	Female	%		Total	Female	%
1996	211,714	1994	0.94	2006	381,516	18045	4.73
1997	231,077	1762	0.76	2007	832,609	19094	2.29
1998	267,667	939	0.35	2008	8,75,055	20827	2.38
1999	268,182	366	0.14	2009	4,75,278	22224	4.68
2000	222,686	454	0.20	2010	3,90,702	25102	6.42

Total female migration from 1991 to 2010 : 1,48,460

Women migration from Bangladesh constituted only 1% up to 2004, after 2004, this trend reached about 5% in the subsequent years. But it dropped in percentage again in 2007 and 2008 as the total migration increased sharply in these two years. In Bangladesh, the female migration achieved the figure of 6.42% of the total migration in 2010. Percentage of women migration in the international average is about 49% and this figure in the Philippine and Sri Lanka varies within 70 to 90%. It is interesting to note that the number of women migration is ever increasing from 1998 to 2010 continuously even the overall migration declined due to global economic recession. Although international migration was recorded officially from 1976, female migration expressed notable existence from 1991.

The women migration from Bangladesh is still dominated in some occupations. But their employment opportunity in the overseas labour market is mainly confined to some specific occupations like house keeping, garment & other factory workers and nurses. The house keeping workers usually come from the village and sub-urban areas with poor economic background. Almost 92% of the female workers are migrating as domestic aide. But in the occupation list it is observed that in total 149 occupations are there in women overseas employment. Table 2.3 shows the occupation-wise women migration from Bangladesh from 2004 (Jun-Dec) to 2010.

Table 2.3 : Occupations in Female Migration (From 2004 to 2010)

Sl. No.	Occupation	Number of workers
1.	Accountant	4
2.	Actor	27
3.	Administrative Officer	1
4.	Administrator	1
5.	Agriculture Labour	5
6.	Air Conditioning Engineer	1
7.	Air Conditioning Technician	1
8.	Air Host	18

Sl. No.	Occupation	Number of workers
9.	Architect	13
10.	Artist	3
11.	Assistant Cook	4
12.	Baby Sitter	1998
13.	Barber	8
14.	Beautician	8
15.	Building Painter	2
16.	Butcher	1
17.	Buttonhole Maker	7
18.	Camel women	1
19.	Car Cleaner	1
20.	Care Taker	19
21.	Carpenter	250
22.	Cashier	5
23.	Ceramic Carver	1
24.	Chamber women	4
25.	Checker	32
26.	Chef	2
27.	Civil Engineer	2
28.	Cleaner	14
29.	Cleaning Labour (Female)	7210
30.	Clerk	31
31.	Communication System Engineer	1
32.	Computer Operator	1
33.	Computer Programmer/ Software Developer	1
34.	Construction Worker	4
35.	Consultant	1
36.	Cook	629
37.	Crew	4
38.	Cutter	1
39.	Cutting Master	1
40.	Dental Technician	1
41.	Dentist	5
42.	Director	3
43.	Dish Cleaner	1
44.	Distributor	1
45.	Doctor	53
46.	Double Needle m/c Operator	89
47.	Driver	11
48.	Electrician	1
49.	Electrician / Electrical Technician	6
50.	Electronic Technician	191
51.	Embroidery Labour	19

Sl. No.	Occupation	Number of workers
52.	Engineer	8
53.	Erector	2
54.	Executive Chief	2
55.	Factory Worker	610
56.	Farmer	10
57.	Female Labour	19550
58.	Female Security	1
59.	Female Teacher (Biology)	1
60.	Female Teacher (Physics)	1
61.	Finishing women	5
62.	Fish Cutter	205
63.	Fisher women	1
64.	Fitter	2
65.	Flat lock Machine Operator	1
66.	Flight Attendant	28
67.	Food Server	59
68.	Foreman	3
69.	Gardener	5
70.	Garments Packer (Female)	195
71.	Garments Worker	181
72.	General Labour	2
73.	Generator Operator	1
74.	Guard	4
75.	Gynecologist	7
76.	Hairdresser	35
77.	Helper	130
78.	Hospital Attendant	3
79.	Hospital Cleaning Labour	117
80.	Hospital Management	2
81.	House girl	132
82.	House Keeper	363
83.	House Worker	11996
84.	Janitress	221
85.	Kitchen Worker	2
86.	Labour	37512
87.	Laundry woman	4
88.	Linking Operator (Female)	18
89.	Loading Unloading Labour	9
90.	Machine Operator	7168
91.	Machinist	59
92.	Maker	23
93.	Manager	7
94.	Manicurist	5

Sl. No.	Occupation	Number of workers
95.	Mason	7
96.	Mechanics	130
97.	Medical Science Technician	5
98.	Medical Technician	1
99.	Messenger	12
100.	Mid Wife	110
101.	Nurse	702
102.	Office Assistant	5
103.	Officer	8
104.	Operator	3173
105.	Ophthalmologist	3
106.	Over lock Machine Operator	138
107.	Painter	3
108.	Physician	82
109.	Plumber	1
110.	Porter	100
111.	Practitioners	2
112.	Private Service	149
113.	Production Operator	495
114.	Production Worker	24
115.	Programmer	1
116.	Quality Checker	1
117.	Quality Controller	35
118.	RO Plant Technician	1
119.	Reinforcing	1
120.	Receptionist	7
121.	Rider	1
122.	Room girl	1
123.	Safety Controller	3
124.	Sales woman	19
125.	Sea Guard	22
126.	Sea woman	2
127.	Seat Maker	1
128.	Secretary	5
129.	Security Services	2
130.	Senior Staff Nurse OT (Female)	80
131.	Servant	33957
132.	Sewing Operator (Female)	371
133.	Shepherd	1
134.	Singer	4
135.	Single Needle Operator	228
136.	Sofa Maker	2
137.	Specialist Doctor	8

Sl. No.	Occupation	Number of workers
138.	Staff	1
139.	Steel Fixer	1
140.	Steward	1
141.	Studio Worker	1
142.	Supervisor	13
143.	Swing Line Checker (Female)	5
144.	Swing Line Helper (Female)	34
145.	Tailor	163
146.	Teacher	42
147.	Technician	18
148.	Tiles Fixer	2
149.	Upholsterer	1
150.	Waitress	128
151.	Washer	4
152.	Weaving Tech	1
153.	Window Cleaner	65
154.	Window Cleaning Labour	78
155.	Wood Designer	4
156.	Wood Worker	1
157.	Worker	1973
158.	Workshop Worker	1
159.	X-Ray Technician	5
	Total:	1,31,833

Presently about 48% of the migrating workers are less skilled in professional category. Practically they do not possess any specific skill to perform a particular form of work. In case of women workers, the proportion of less-skilled workforce is more than 90%.

3.00 Country-wise female migration from Bangladesh

Bangladeshi workers are mainly engaged in more than 132 countries of the world but women migration takes place in 51 countries only. Country-wise overseas employment of female workers from 2004 (June-Dec) to 2010 is shown below:

Table 2.4 Country-wise Women migration (from 2004 to 2010)

	COUNTRY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	Total
1.	Afghanistan						3		3
2.	Bahamas	1	1						2
3.	Bahrain	998	552	232	247	173	29	57	2288
4.	Bermuda		1			1			2
5.	Botswana						7		7

	COUNTRY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	Total
6.	Brunei Darussalam	1	3	2	4	5	3	1	19
7.	Canada				2	6	2	3	13
8.	Cyprus	6	3	2	5	18	25	20	79
9.	Czech Republic					1	2		3
10.	Denmark						1		1
11.	Egypt			1		3	20	2	26
12.	Germany							1	1
13.	Greece							1	1
14.	Fiji			1			1		2
15.	Hong Kong	1		3	4	9	17	9	43
16.	Iraq							64	64
17.	Hungary				1				1
18.	India				1	2			3
19.	Iran	1			1				2
20.	Ireland	2	1		2				5
21.	Italy	26	13	22	142	67	47	45	362
22.	Japan			2	1	2			5
23.	Jordan	1044	1471	518	10	199	439	2133	5814
24.	Korea (South)						2	7	9
25.	Kuwait	1324	926	589	60			1	2900
26.	Latvia					1			1
27.	Lebanon		14	744	3200	7947	13062	15116	40083
28.	Libya	8	27	11	250	25	7	185	513
29.	Malaysia		6	2	495	1091	87	16	1697
30.	Maldives	13	1	39	4	4	13	4	78
31.	Mauritius	26	772	457	829	801	1825	2695	7405
32.	Netherlands					1			1
33.	New Zealand				1	3	2	2	8
34.	N. Mariana Islands	2		1			1		4
35.	Norway								0
36.	Oman	73	107	629	1286	276	11	18	2400
37.	Pakistan		1		5	9	8	1	24
38.	Poland				1		7		8
39.	Palau	1	1						2
40.	Qatar	1	6	3	4	3	4	3	24
41.	Saudi Arabia	2178	6300	7295	8871	4125	386	44	29199
42.	Singapore	7	7	6	10	34	89	156	309
43.	South Africa							1	1
44.	Spain			1		1			2
45.	Sudan		6	4	7				17
46.	Syria		24	29	3	69	3		128

	COUNTRY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	Total
47.	Thailand		1				2		3
48.	Tunisia					2	3	1	6
49.	U A E	3199	3782	7354	4867	5896	6095	7111	38304
50.	U K	4	13	22	20	26	18	5	108
51.	Yemen					14	3	1	18
	Total :	8916	14039	17969	20333	20814	22224	27703	131998

Major countries (top 8) of women migration from Bangladesh are as follows:

1. UAE
2. Lebanon
3. Saudi Arabia
4. Jordan
5. Kuwait
6. Oman
7. Bahrain
8. Mauritius

4.00 District-wise migration from Bangladesh

Migration from Bangladesh is not equitably distributed in all the districts. Some districts are prominent in this regard. Dhaka, Manikganj, Faridpur, Comilla, Narsingdi, Narayanganj, Gazipur are the dominating districts from where women migration is taking place significantly. In a good number of cases, women migration occurs as a chain migration. The potential women migrant workers are collecting visas through their relatives those are already staying abroad. Eventually migration from these districts is increasing. On the other hand aspirant migrants from some districts are not even aware about the legal channel of migration. District-wise migration is depicted in Annexure 3.

In analyzing district-wise figure of women migration it is observed that the following districts scores top positions (upper 8) in women migration:

1. Barisal
2. Brahman Baria
3. Comilla
4. Dhaka
5. Faridpur
6. Gazipur
7. Manikganj
8. Narayanganj

5.00 Causes of Migration of women workers

Every year a good number of people lose their homesteads or arable land due to river erosion in Bangladesh. About 20% of the population lives in extreme poverty, which is significant among women. Migration can result from poverty, but it is not always the poorest who migrate, because of the costs and opportunities involved (World Bank, 2005). Poverty may result from migration, both for the migrants in destination locations and the families left behind, often mostly affecting women and children. At the same time, female migration can indirectly help alleviate poverty by raising the productivity, education and health of the females and their families, all key to reducing inequality and poverty in the home.

Individual remittance transfers continue to be an important source of income for many families in developing countries. Migrants are contributing more financial resources to their home countries. Women tend to have stronger networks with their families that are associated with greater remitting behaviors. Women are also more likely to send funds for items needed by households, such as food and clothing.

In terms of female migration, poverty is the main cause for migration of Bangladeshi women. In every respect, ranging from health and education to nutrition and income, women are the poorest of the poor.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the UN International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) (2000) report some gender specific factors uniquely affecting the short-term migration of women. Factors include women's need to escape unhappy social situations, including bad marriages, harassment, violence and idle husbands made these women a socially disadvantaged group which saw migration primarily as a quest for independence and a means of realizing self reliance. There are many underlying push and pull factors that force people away from their homes in search of a better life.

Women migration from Bangladesh is mostly two types, namely: 1) Married and unmarried women migrating in search of employment; 2) Unmarried women migrating with husband. The root causes of migration are as follow:

1. Demand for cheap labour;

2. Better earning facility in the countries of destination;
3. Increased participation of women in the labour force in both countries of origin and employment;
4. Poverty and insecurity of livelihoods in the country;
5. Desire for a better living standard;

6.00 Demand of women migrants

There exists a good demand of women workers in some trades like nursing, care giving, cashiering, catering, electronics factory, etc. To avail the opportunity of this skilled migration areas, it is essential to take up a comprehensive program of skill development and enhancement of their communication skills. Training on skill and language may increase the wage level and enhances their employability. Trained manpower always deserves better demand and acquainted with fewer problems. Its ultimate effect will result in higher level of earning of remittance and ensures better standard of living.

Demand in European Union and USA in the profession of care giver is increasing due to ageing problem in these countries. Bangladesh has a good opportunity in this high demanding employment market with significantly higher wages. To accrue this achievement, the basic need is training in specific trades and in communication skill. European and Nordic countries feel the shortage of appropriate manpower for baby care, old age care and sick persons care. A simple package of training to the mid-level educated women would be able to make them capable for employment in these countries.

7.00 Wages of women migrants

The average wages of Bangladeshi women workers ranges from US \$ 100.00 to US \$ 200.00 for house keeping workers. For cleaning workers, this amount varies from US \$ 100.00 to US \$ 150.00. In other professions like garment workers, nurses and some other categories of employment the wages are as good as the male workers. It also varies from country to country.

8.00 Issues relating to problems of women migration

Skill in using the modern household electrical appliances by the untrained poor and illiterate women create problems in the workplace. Sometimes it results her return back to Bangladesh. The working environment of the house keeping workers sometimes compels them to a confinement of a lonely workplace. They also face physical and sexual harassment in the countries of destination. The workers are not aware about the proper use of the remittance through savings

and investment which direct them towards similar economic conditions as previous status before migration or sometimes worse than before.

Chapter : Three

Collection of Data

1. 00 Criteria of Data Collection

Data has been collected through three set of pre-designed questionnaires. Those were aimed to -

- i) Returnee women migrants
- ii) Aspirant potential women migrants.
- iii) Members of the family of women migrants

The number of respondents in three categories were as follows:

- i) 185
- ii) 159
- iii) 183

In the set of questionnaires various types of information were collected to analyse the following particulars:

1. Personal Information
2. Migration Cost
3. Earnings
4. Family Profile
5. Problems faced at workplace
6. Other benefits
7. Workload
8. Improvement of family from your income
9. Future planning
10. Training
11. Advice to the future migrant
12. Benefits accrued out of migration
13. Improvement for the family due to migration

The set of questionnaires are appended in the annexure 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3.

Replies on the questions were structured to analyse the outcome and comments from the migrant workers and their family members. A sample of replies is depicted below:

Questionnaire no. 1

For returnee migrant workers (Number -185)

1. Personal Information

(i) Age

Years	No. of respondent	Percentage
15 to 20	8	4.32
21 to 25	21	11.35
26 to 30	62	33.51
31 to 35	36	19.46
36 to 40	35	18.92
41 to 50	4	
51 to 60	4	

(ii) Educational qualification

	No. of respondent	Percentage
Illiterate	61	32.97
0 to Class v	79	42.7
Class vi to Class x	28	15.13
SSC	7	3.78
HSC	0	0
Literate	9	4.86

(iii) Period of Migration

Month/Years	No. of respondent	Percentage
1 month to 3 months	15	8.1
4 months to 6 months	12	6.48
7 months to 11 months	6	3.24
1 year to 3 years	79	42.7
4 to 6 years	24	12.97
7 to 10	17	9.18
11 to 15 years	10	5.4

(iv) Marital Status

Status	No. of respondent	Percentage
Married	138	74.59
Unmarried	27	14.98

Divorce	17	9.19
Others	3	1.62

(v) Country of migration

Country	No. of respondent	Percentage
Bahrain	11	5.9
Dubai	43	23.24
India	47	25.4
Jordan	1	
Kuwait	14	7.56
Lebanon	23	12.43
Libya	1	
Malaysia	7	
Marisa's	1	
Oman	3	
Saudi Arabia	21	11.35
Switzerland	1	
Pakistan	1	
Others	11	5

(vi) Media of getting visa

Media	No. of respondent	Percentage
Relations	23	12.43
Brokers	141	76.21
Recruitment Agency	3	1.62
Tourist visa	3	1.62
others	7	3.78

(2) Migration cost

(i) Amount of migration cost

Tk	No. of respondent	Percentage
5,000	35	18.91
6,000 - 10,000	12	6.48
10,000 - 20,000	2	
21,000 - 40,000	16	8.64
41,000 - 60,000	52	28.1
61,000 - 1,00,000	19	10.27
Above 1,20,000	4	1.62

(ii) How migration cost arranged

Tk	No. of respondent	Percentage
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Loan	98	52.97
Land sale	13	7.02
Land mortgaged	6	3.24
Sale of cow	4	1.62
Assistance of relative	4	1.62
Self	27	14.59
Others	21	11.35

(iii) Any problem faced before migration

	No. of respondent	Percentage
Yes	55	29.72
No	105	56.75

(3) Income

(i) Wages

Wages	No. of respondent	Percentage
Tk. 5,000	23	12.43
Tk. 5,001 to Tk. 10,000	55	29.72
Tk. 10,001 to Tk. 15,000	7	3.78
Tk 15,000 to Tk 20000	5	2.7
Up to 20,000		

(ii) Tips

	No. of respondent	Percentage
Yes	55	29.72
No	105	56.75

(iii) Sending remittance

Media	No. of respondent	Percentage
Bank	69	37.29
Hundi	3	
Broker	10	5.4
Others	7	

(iv) Wages second time

Wages	No. of respondent	Percentage
Tk. 5,000	3	1.62
Tk. 5,001 to Tk. 10,000	5	5.4
Tk. 10,001 to Tk. 15,000	1	

Up to 15,000	4	2.16
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(v) To whom the money is transferred

Wages	No. of respondent	Percentage
Father	21	11.35
Mother	18	9.72
Husband	32	16.75
Brother	9	4.86
Sister	10	5.4
Son	7	3.78
Self	13	7.02
Father in law	1	
Others	7	3.78

(vii) Any other income

	No. of respondent	Percentage
Yes	37	20
No	119	64.32

(viii) If yes how much

Wages	No. of respondent	Percentage
Tk. 5,000	7	3.78
Tk. 5,001 to Tk. 10,000	4	2.16
Up to 10,000	9	4.86

(ix) Remitted amount

Amount	No. of respondent	Percentage
Tk. 10,000	5	2.7
Tk. 10,000 to Tk 20,000	7	3.78
Tk. 20,000 to Tk 50,000	23	12.43
Tk 50,000 to Tk 1,00,000	27	14.59
Up to Tk 1,00,000	51	27.56
Not sent	6	3.24
Unknown	2	
Other	3	

(4) Family Profile

(i) Occupation of husband/father

Occupation	No. of respondent	Percentage
Job	6	3.24
Business	31	16.75

Daily Labour	15	8.1
Migration	5	2.7
Rickshaw puller	9	4.86
Farmer	50	27.56
Unemployed	19	10.27
Car Driver	7	3.78
Mason	6	3.24
Painter	3	1.62
Others	7	3.78

(ii) Source of Income

Source	No. of respondent	Percentage
Job	7	3.78
Business	31	16.75
Daily Labour	18	9.72
Migration	21	11.35
Farmer	42	22.7
Unemployed	19	10.27
Car Driver	8	4.32
Others	16	8.78

(iii) Any Children

	No. of respondent	Percentage
Yes	118	63.78
No	64	34.59

(iv) Number of family members

	No. of respondent	Percentage
3	40	21.62
4 to 6	125	67.56
7 to 10	16	8.64
11 to 15	1	

(v) Who did look after the children?

	No. of respondent	Percentage
Father	17	9.28
Mother	38	20.54
Husband	18	9.72
Brother	2	
Sister	6	3.24
Mother in law	4	2.16
Self	8	4.32

Grand Mother	21	11.35
Others	2	

(vi) Any other problem faced?

	No. of respondent	Percentage
Yes	19	10.72
No	87	47

(5) Problem at workplace

(i) Harassment

Type	No. of respondent	Percentage
Oral	47	25.4
Physical	44	23.78
Others	4	2.12

(ii) Less salary

	No. of respondent	Percentage
Yes	72	38.91
No	91	49.18

(iii) Delayed salary

	No. of respondent	Percentage
Yes	67	36.21
No	89	48.1

(iv) Physical torture

	No. of respondent	Percentage
Yes	59	31.49
No	103	55.67

(v) Who used to tortured

	No. of respondent	Percentage
Yes	32	17.29
No	101	55.67

(vi) Any confinement

	No. of respondent	Percentage
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Yes	68	36.75
No	96	51.89

(vii) Sexual harassment

	No. of respondent	Percentage
Yes	17	9.18
No	102	55.13

(viii) Type of harassment

	No. of respondent	Percentage
Physical	7	3.78
Sold	1	
Confined	2	

(ix) No food/Stopping food

	No. of respondent	Percentage
Yes	50	27.02
No	104	56.21

(x) Time of work

	No. of respondent	Percentage
No timing	25	13.51
5 hours	5	2.7
6 to 10 hours	27	14.59
11 to 15 hours	48	29.54
16 to 20 hours	48	29.54
21 to 24 hours	8	4.32

6. Other facilities

(i) Facility for phone

	No. of respondent	Percentage
Yes	84	45.4
No	92	49.72

(ii) Bangladeshi mission known

	No. of respondent	Percentage
Yes	8	4.32
No	152	82.16

(iii) Facility to go outside of

	No. of respondent	Percentage
Yes	69	37.29
No	107	57.43

(iv) Home sickness

	No. of respondent	Percentage
Yes	139	75.13
No	11	5.94

(v) Any problem for language

	No. of respondent	Percentage
Yes	117	63.24
No	55	29.72

(vi) Problem for having no training

	No. of respondent	Percentage
Yes	99	53.51
No	44	23.78

(vii) Problem for no skill in household equipment

	No. of respondent	Percentage
Yes	106	57.29
No	52	28.1

(viii) Facility for medical treatment

	No. of respondent	Percentage
Yes	91	49.18
No	54	29.18

(ix) How did you contact your home?

	No. of respondent	Percentage
Telephone	92	49.72
Letter	28	15.13
Telephone + Letter	6	3.24
Impossible	20	10.81

Others	10	5.4
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(x) Media of sending money

Media	No. of respondent	Percentage
Bank	100	54.05
Broker	33	17.83
Hundi	2	
Not sent	9	4.86
Employer	9	4.86

(xi) Any other problems with food

	No. of respondent	Percentage
Yes	55	29.72
No	85	45.94

(xii) Any problem at Airport?

	No. of respondent	Percentage
Yes	15	8.1
No	144	77.43

7. Workload

(i) What were the works?

Type of work	No. of respondent	Percentage
Washing cloth	76	41.08
Child care	90	48.64
Cooking	61	32.97
Cleaning house	79	42.7
Others	14	7.56

(ii) Any other work

Type of work	No. of respondent	Percentage
Factory work	2	
Relative's house cleaning	1	
Others	3	

8. Improvement of family from your income

	No. of respondent	Percentage
(1) House	17	9.18

(2) Transport		
(3) Land	3	1.62
(4) Shops	3	1.62
(5) Ornaments		
(6) Farm		
(7) Festivals	6	3.24
(8) Household goods	22	11.89
(9) Savings	17	9.18
(10) Others	4	2.16

9. Future planning

(i) Why have you comeback

	No. of respondent	Percentage
Willingly	11	5.94
Visa Expired	8	4.32
Tortured	13	7.02
Sickness	12	6.48
Contract expired	6	3.24
Others	27	14.59

(ii) Development of family

	No. of respondent	Percentage
Yes	37	20
No	26	14.05

(iii) Next plan

a) Re-migration

	No. of respondent	Percentage
Yes	31	16.75
No	21	11.35

b) Settling in country

	No. of respondent	Percentage
Yes	26	14.05
No	15	8.1

c) Training needed

	No. of respondent	Percentage
Yes	15	8.1

No	16	8.6
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d) Small business

	No. of respondent	Percentage
Yes	1	7.56
No	16	8.6

10. Training

(i) Any training before migration?

	No. of respondent	Percentage
Yes	20	10.8
No	69	37.29

There are two other questionnaires under which some relevant information and different situational questions were asked to the migrants and the members of the family. These are as follows:

Questionnaire no. 2 : For the Aspirant potential women migrants. (No : 159)

Questionnaire no. 3 : For the Members of the family of women migrants. (No : 183)

Two focused group discussion have been conducted with two groups of women migrant workers. The one to one method was followed to assess the profile of the migrants.

Interviews with different stakeholders related to the women migration have also been conducted. These include Government organizations, NGOs, Private organization, Recruiting Agency Association, Research Organizations and Civil Society Organization. The study report reflects the experiences, present situation, opinion, suggestion and recommendations from all the respondents.

Chapter: Four

Analysis of Data

1.00 Analysis on the responses from the women migrant workers

Under a set of specific questionnaire, current situation and the impact of migration on the members of the family has been assessed. Success of a migration depends on the positive gains and benefit accrued for the family members particularly to the children of women migrant workers. In collecting information on the resultant effects of the migration it is observed that in most of the cases the dependents achieved better livelihood due to migration of one female member of their family.

In the scenario of the migrants' family under this study, it was found that about 62% of the families are constituted with 4-6 members, 14% with 7-10 members and 24% are with less than 4 members. It clearly indicates the burden of the women migrant worker, which compelled her in migration for better livelihood.

The marital status of the migrant workers shows that 60% of the women migrants are married, 20% are unmarried and rest of the 20% are divorcee or widow. On the basis of this statistics it can be assessed that mostly married women are migrating to ensure their economic emancipation. In analyzing educational status 14% migrants are found as absolutely illiterate, 48% attended schools at classes of 1-5 level, 22% crossed the primary school level and rest are able to read only.

Bangladeshi workers are employed in 132 countries of the world but recruitment of women migrant workers confined to a few countries only. In the study area the major destination was Lebanon, which is about 24% followed by UAE as 21%, KSA 9.3%, Oman, Jordan, Kuwait, Mauritius, Bahrain, Malaysia around 3-5% each, presently Kuwait, Malaysia and KSA have slowed down the recruitment of manpower from Bangladesh. A good number of respondents mentioned that they migrated to work in India. As per official statistics of BMET no migration is recorded to India, but this study shows some woman workers were employed in some states of India. Mostly these workers traveled through irregular channel of migration and the period of stay is very small, sometimes is less than a month.

Regarding the stay of the migrant workers it is found that most of them are staying for 1-3 years. It constitutes 48% followed by 4-6 years as 13% and more than 6 years is about 6%. Around 26% workers migrated during last one year. This statistics

indicated that after withdrawal of bans on female migration, it is experiencing increasing trend and it peaks in number recently.

In observing the head of the family of the women migrant workers, husband is the principal member with 36%, and then father constitutes 33% as head of the family. Other heads are mother, father in law and brother. There were some social and family restrictions in promoting migration for female members of the family. But this figure shows some positive attitude from the heads of family to encourage their work abroad.

The important aspect of woman migration is the cost of migration. Regarding migration cost, the major respondents fall between a range of Tk. 50,000.00 to 80,000.00 which is about 41%, around 12% spent in between Tk. 81,000.00 to 1,00,000.00. Some incurred more than that. Some 16% spent Tk. 11,000.00 - 50,000.00 for migration. It is also found that about 23% of the migrants managed the migration with Tk. 1000.00 to Tk. 10,000.00 only. These are mostly cases of collection of visa through their close relations staying abroad.

In arranging this money 60% responded that they borrowed the money with a high interest rate, some 12% sold land, 8% mortgaged land and some used other sources like ornament, assistance from relatives, sale of cows, etc. 23% of the migrant workers arranged their migration cost from their own savings. Normally it has become difficult to repay the loan if it is taken with very high rate of interest. In recovering the money spent as migration cost, 65% responded in positive answer whereas 35% declined.

Government has fixed the minimum wage for the migrant workers as domestic aide at US\$ 150.00⁴. In the study area the wages of 67% of the migrants fall between Tk. 8,000.00-10,000.00 which can be considered within the range of minimum prescribed wage. In the scenario, about 20% of the migrants get more than Tk. 11,000.00 which goes up to Tk. 20,000.00. Regarding other income such as tips from the employer, only 19% responded positively.

Present system of sending remittance is growing popularly through banking channel. In the survey it is observed that 72% of the workers send their money through Bank. It is very much encouraging that the workers coming from this less-educated section of population are motivated in using Banking channel for

⁴ US \$ 1.00 = BD Tk 71.00

remitting the hard earned money. Rest of the workers used informal media like hundi⁵ or broker⁶ in sending money to the family.

Amount of money remitted by the migrants is the major benefit out of migration. In answering to this query, it is found that about 8% sent Tk. 10,000.00 to 20,000.00 only. 25% of the migrants could send about Tk. 25,000.00 and 67% of the migrants managed to remit more than 50,000.00 and it crossed Tk. 4,00,000.00 in case of 6.55%. It proves the success in migration for a significant number of migrant workers. The frequency of sending money mostly varies from one to three months (47%). It indicates that the women migrant workers meet the day to day necessity of family through their remittance. Another important issue is the opening of Bank account before departure to the country of destination. It is found that about 57% of the migrants opened account prior to migration.

The family background and earning profile of the migrant workers predicts the causes of migration and portrays the comparative status between pre-departure and post-migration situation. In this respect, 28% of the respondent said they were from agriculture based families, 17% are from daily laborer, 15% from small business and rest are from other professions.

Looking after the small children becomes substantial issue for which sometimes the migrant workers need to come back home. It is observed that around 20% kids are living with their father after migration of the mother and for the rest of the cases; children are looked after by the mother of the migrants. It is important to note that women migration greatly depends on the facility available for caring the children.

Regarding the freedom of contact the home over telephone, 50% workers replied that they could contact home within 3-15 days. About 27% contacted in 1-2 months. Rest replied negative in allowing them to contact over telephone.

Major concern over women migration is exposing to violation, physical and sexual harassment and various types of vulnerabilities for exploitations. But the respondents' experience show the extent of violation and other aspects of financial problems like delayed wage or less payment are at minimum level.

2.00 Analysis on the responses from the members of the family of women migrant workers

⁵ Hundi is the informal personal channel of sending remittance, which is illegal and punishable under prevailing law.

⁶ Some migrants are interested to send their remittance through brokers. This is one of the channels for sending money by non-banking media. The amount of commission paid to the bank is relatively higher and the worker needs to appear in a queue in the bank and she has to make time from his workplace, while in non-banking case, no need to bother for all those formalities.

In 2007, Ministry re-fixed the minimum age for the female migrant workers as 25 years. Previously it was 35 years. In the study area, 40% of the aspirant female migrant workers are within 15-25 years of age, 50% constitutes from 26 to 30 years, rest are above 30 years which reaches up to 45 years. Most of the women interested to migrate are married. It accounts for 70%, 24% are unmarried and rest are widow and divorced.

Among the aspirant migrant workers, 40-25% are completely illiterate, 40% attended classes of 1-5 level and 21% were from 6 to 10 years of schooling. Procurement of visa has been done mainly through brokers which were 65.4% and 31% workers have procured visa through their relatives and only 5% through government channel. Ministry has recently taken an initiative in arranging recruitment through the district administration and provided them training in Technical Training Center under BMET.

The main cause of migration of the female workers is the prime concern of the study to reflect the economic profile of the women migrant workers. Most of the workers (44%) approached for migration to improve their family financially. Some 6% replied for better education of children, 38% felt for alleviation of poverty and absolutely for want of money. Others wished to migrate for social and family problems like separation with husband, etc.

Government has fixed the maximum migration cost for women migrants as Tk. 20,000.00. Usually the air ticket is provided by the employer. Migration cost ranges mainly from Tk. 20,000.00 to 80,000.00, which proves the presence of active middlemen to collect more money than actual expenditure. Only a few workers (5%) paid less than Tk. 20,000.00. It needs massive awareness program and information dissemination to use the legal channel and to contact the concerned Recruiting Agents for migration. In collecting the migration cost, loan with high interest covered the top (35%) followed by mortgage of land (9%), assistance from relative (22%), sale of land (7%), etc.

Migration cost is usually paid in installment, which is usually 50% in the first installment. Wages of the worker is about Tk. 8,000.00 to Tk. 10,000.00 i.e the minimum wage fixed by the Government of Bangladesh. But interesting to note that, a good number of outgoing workers do not know about their wage even at the eve of their departure.

The positive sign shown by the outgoing female migrant workers is their interest in regard to opening of bank account before departure, which is found about 60% and commitment to send the money through banking channel is 93%. This may be the

result of various awareness campaigns by the government and some NGOs relating to remittance sending and the facility for sending money is also increased.

Regarding the future plan for improvement of the condition of the family, most of the respondents replied to purchase land (28%) and to live a solvent life (35%). Some were interested to start a business (11%). A few wished to provide better education to the children.

In analyzing the family income of the aspirant migrant workers, the major dependence found in agriculture (30%) and the profession of husband also in most cases found as agriculture (24%), other's professions are service, day labourer, small business, unemployed, driver, etc. Head of the family is also found as father or Husband. Family size of the aspirant migrant workers mostly constitutes 4-6 members (73%) which are the main cause of poverty leading them to migration.

In most of the cases, the female migrant workers have left their children (72%) and mother of the migrants has been set for looking after the children in 33% cases. It is an important issue in considering migration of female workers.

In replying to the question about the problem faced in the process of procuring visa and completion of the processes of migration, the following replies were received:

- (1) Getting job information : 17%
- (2) Training : 15%
- (3) Checking paper : 13%
- (4) Clearance from BMET : 2%
- (5) Medical testing : 5%
- (6) Obtaining Visa : 12%
- (7) Arranging money : 30%
- (8) Decision of Family : 12%
- (9) No problems faced : 53%

3.00 Analysis on the responses from focused group discussions

A focused group discussion has been conducted at the Sheikh Fazilatunnesa Mujib Women Technical Training Center where training on 'house keeping trade' has been being conducted for the last four years prominently.

In most of the cases in the 1st focused group discussion, it was found that they experienced a successful migration. Comparatively they paid less amount of migration cost. Their stay in the country of destination is also longer in period i.e. 3-14 years.

Almost in all cases of good experience in migration, it was observed that the process of migration was done through a relation already staying abroad. It indicates that the chain migration⁷ proves its success and ensures the protection and safe stay in the countries of destination. In this way the migrant workers also arrange visa and employment for some of her relatives.

This group of migrants does not contact the brokers or middlemen for procurement of visa; they prefer to utilize the channel of known person. They use to confine this processing within the local area, so that for any inconvenience they can try to realize the money paid for migration cost or get redress to the problems. The relations used for getting these visas are mostly sister, brother, mother, mother-in-law, husband, etc. This group of migrants stayed for a longer period in the country of destination. Problems faced by these workers are comparatively less and probability of exploitation or harassment both physically and sexually is much lower.

This group also suggests some measures for re-integration in the society after coming back from the workplace. Appropriate strategy for the re-integration program needs training, counseling or financial assistance for re-integration. Empowerment of the women migrant workers may be possible ensuring social and economic re-integration through i) Liaison with Investment opportunities, ii) Arrangement of loan from banks for SME initiatives, iii) Providing Community Based Training on cooperative basis, iv) Arrangement of re-migration and v) Basic training in employable trades.

In another focused group discussion a number of women migrant workers in a village named 'Khasirchar' of 'Singair' Upozila under Manikganj district have been interviewed.

In the FGD it was found that one Shawkat Hassain sent his wife to Lebanon before three years spending a migration cost of Tk. 80,000.00. He is a painter and has two daughters. Her wife used to remit regularly but stopped sending money for the last six months. She is now not interested to come back home. This is an example of breaking of family as a result of migration.

Here some migrants expressed their very bad experience in migration. Some faced physical and sexual harassment, some were confined in the house and not allowed to contact home over telephone. Three migrants said that their economic condition has become much worse than before due to failed migration.

A good number of migrants expressed their concern about the problems they faced due to lack of knowledge on skill in using household electronic appliances. They had no have any proficiency in the communication skill as they did not receive any

⁷ Chain migration is defined as the migration occurred though a relation or friend migrated earlier.

training on language of the destination country. Some migrants were beaten, and kept without food for couple of days. Sometimes they were locked in a room.

Mostly these women sold their land and house and sometimes borrowed money with high interest to meet their migration cost. Usually they paid exorbitantly high cost of migration which was around Tk. 60,000.00 to 1,00,000.00. All these migrants contacted the brokers to arrange visa.

There are also many employers who take care of their domestic workers. They provide separate room with necessary furniture and air conditioner. They also provide adequate and other facilities. The working condition of the domestic workers depends on individual characteristics of the employer. There are employers who follow the employment contract strictly and treat their domestic workers accordingly. There are many cases of employers' abusive and inhumane treatment of domestic workers. The majority of the returnee domestic workers shared similar experiences. Apart from either non-payment or irregular payment of salary, many domestic workers complained during their interviews that the employers deduct money from their salary for every trifle mistake they made. For example, if they use telephone to call their family back home, if any house appliance is broken or damaged at the time of washing or decorating, etc. Even the treatment cost is also deducted from their salary.

The domestic workers are very much confined inside the four-walls of their employer's house. They are not allowed to go out for recreation and socialization. They are even hardly allowed to talk with people outside of employer's family. Some employers permit their domestic workers to go out for some hours in a week if they have relatives. There are some employers who allow the domestic workers to go out once a month of sending money to their families back home, or if they need to visit doctor for treatment.

There is no mechanism in place to redress the sexual abuses and exploitations of the domestic workers. The existing policy of the recruitment of domestic workers never mentions any remedy to protect the domestic workers from such abuses and exploitations. Most of the cases the domestic workers kept confidential the incidents of sexual exploitation in fear of losing their jobs or to avoid stigma and discrimination. The incident of runaway is a huge problem at the workplace and it must need to take into consideration with importance.

The responses from the stakeholders and their opinions have been analyzed in the subsequent chapters.

Women Migration and Development

1.00 Gendered Migration

As almost 50 percent of the global migrant population today being female, the gender distribution among migrants in the international migration is reasonably balanced. Migration increasingly offers women education and career opportunities that may encourage the migration. In Bangladesh some negative cultural practices regarding women migration hinder their prospect in the overseas employment.

In a narrow area and at the lower end of the skills spectrum, women migrants from Bangladesh are engaged in mostly in house-keeping, garments manufacture, factory workers, cleaners, nursing and hospital aides. Women migrants from a good number of sending countries provide domestic services in receiving countries in almost all parts of the globe. Highly skilled women also migrate from Bangladesh. Some are in occupations with professional degrees and work as University teachers, Doctors, Engineers, etc. Growing participation of women in the workforce and reduced social services for child and aged care has led to a dependency by rich countries on the care offered by people from poor countries. Migration as a transforming experience can improve or worsen the position of women in families and society.

In the context of Bangladesh scenario the majority of women are still in the agricultural sector in rural areas. Low level of education also affects women's migration potential. Government has attempted to control female migration in order to protect them from abuse abroad but these have only driven migrants urgently needing an income into more risky and clandestine forms of migration. Recruiting agencies are not sufficiently regulated by governments to ensure the prescribed migration cost and proper redress in case of exploitation or violence.

Countries of destination are increasingly dependent on migrant women in the domestic, health, entertainment and textile sectors. Generally, women work overwhelmingly in the domestic, garment manufacturing, entertainment and nursing spheres, frequently in an irregular migration status. In some receiving countries, particularly in the middle-east the domestic sector is not covered by labour laws and domestic work is not protected by ILO convention⁸; hence the

⁸ Presently domestic work is not covered by the ILO Convention; ILO has prepared the draft convention of domestic aides, which is expected to be launched by 2011.

migrants are subject to long working hours, low pay, and a high degree of control. The government is trying to ensure through compulsory pre-departure briefing and training that all migrants are aware of their rights, and in the case of women, the risks involved in migration. In many countries, it is migration law that predominantly covers migrant workers, not labour laws. In Bangladesh the Emigration Ordinance 1982⁹ controls the overseas employment management but it is not very much gender-responsive. As the status of women's jobs is confined to lower category, it is associated with lower wages and conditions, which are susceptible to the additional gender-specific forms of physical and sexual exploitation.

Analyses tell that remittances received by females can have a positive effect on health, education and mortality of children. In some countries including Bangladesh, women tend to remit a higher percentage of their salaries than men (although overall less than men, because of low salary levels), and prioritize nutrition, health and education for the family over savings and investments for the future. These priorities are reflected in the behaviour of female heads of households receiving the remittances. Remittances have been able to strengthen women's economic status in both countries of origin and destination, and in some cases help them to re-negotiate the gender roles at home. There is growing evidence that female migrants can play a crucial role both in steering and using remittances towards poverty reduction through food security, education and health.

2.00 Impact of Migration on Women

Gradually more women are migrating on their own as principal wage-earners. They tend to take jobs in what are familiar to the female occupations so their experience is gendered as well. Many women who migrate find themselves at risk of gender-based violence and exploitation.

Benefits accrued through migration from Bangladesh have manifold impact on women and the economy as well. Migration from Bangladesh facilitates the following socio-economic benefits of the migrant workers, particularly women migrants:

- It reduces the unemployment problem leading to poverty alleviation.
- Remittances enhance the economic condition of the migrants ensuring the economic development of the country. It is the highest amount of real foreign currency earning for the economy.
- It helps reducing the frustration among the women at young age, social

⁹ Emigration Ordinance is the prime act to regulate and monitor the entire migration process from Bangladesh.

problems, etc.

- It develops the capability of investment for self-employment and entrepreneurship.
- For movement of migrant workers, business related to hotel, traveling, transportation, etc. gets momentum in the country.
- It enhances the financial capability and purchasing power of the migrant workers.
- It enhances transfer of technology through technical knowledge and expertise acquired by the migrant workers working abroad.
- It creates motivation and develops awareness of the migrant workers towards cleanliness, hygienic environment, importance of literacy, discipline, and uplift the standard of living.

Analysis of issues in the women migration discourse

1.00 Phases of migration

Overall migration process is composed of a series of stages. Each phase has its predominant importance in making the migration success. Women are more vulnerable in the work place abroad because she is women and also a migrant. So it is significant to emphasize every phase with gender-responsive attitude and gender sensitive approaches. Migration discourse starts from proper decision making phase and consists of the following steps:

- i. Pre migration of decision making phase
- ii. Migration Process
- iii. Work at destination countries
- iv. Economic and Social Re-integration

2.00 Process of migration

On scrutinizing all the positive and negative aspects, the decision on migration should be finalized. Process of migration is to be followed meticulously it includes collection of requisite papers, emigration clearance, medical test, etc. which is very difficult to complete successfully by an illiterate outgoing women migrant worker. It entices her to contact brokers. Some women migrants face exploitation at the stage of medical test. Sometimes the brokers or the concerned recruiting agency suppress the problem found in the medical test and arrange their visa with a forged medical test report. After arrival in the destination country she is to face a medical test again and after detecting the disease she is repatriated. Sometimes the women migrants are at the mercy of unscrupulous and abusive practices.

Opening of bank account is also an utmost necessity to send the remittance in proper channel which is a pre-requisite for saving the earnings and to utilize the hard-earned money in a productive investment. Awareness among the outgoing women migrants is found very light regarding this affair for opening bank account before departure. It is advised to open two accounts; one is in the name of the family member to send the remittance and another one is in her own name to save some money in addition to the family expenditure. In the study area this tendency to open the bank account is found increasing day by day.

3.00 Shortcomings of the systems and accountability of Government and NGOs.

Main causes for which the migration fails sometimes is the lack of analysis on cost and benefit of migration. They do not know the legal channel of migration even. Usually they sale land or borrow money on high interest. They do not have any training on required job which is absolutely necessary. Normally the women migrants prefer to contact middlemen without contacting recruiting agency directly. It happens due to lack of knowledge in this area and they do not have access to the appropriate information relating to legal channel of migration. Very few aspirant migrants know about the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare & Overseas Employment and the Bureau of Bureau of Manpower employment and Training (BMET) which is the only government office to regulate overseas employment and looks after the welfare of the expatriate workers. BMET is the department to assist the potential migrants to check the related papers like visa, employment contract, passport, etc.

Migrant workers, particularly women migrants are not aware about the rules and regulations for overseas employment which is also a reason for exploitation faced by them. Government and other related NGOs do not fulfill their responsibility to arrange the dissemination of information and massive awareness campaign.

Appropriate orientation is required about the working environment, living condition, food habit and the weather of the country of destination before departure for migration. Presently BMET arranges some pre-departure briefing on these issues in the technical training centers during the training course for house keeping trade and in BMET briefing center for other occupations. Some NGOs also arrange pre-departure briefing to make them aware on this adverse situation. But all these efforts are not sufficient to cover the knowledge and acquaintance required for the women migrant workers to cope with the working condition in the destination country psychologically and with physical comfort.

4.00 Vulnerabilities of women in migration

Migrant workers moving to various destinations both in regular and irregular channels, find themselves in vulnerable positions at several stages of their movement. This is mainly due to lack of information regarding migration and its formalities, cheating by some agencies handling migration and lack of professional skills and knowledge in the context of destination countries. Some women migrant workers leave the country through irregular channel, without valid travel and employment documents, requisite information on the working and living conditions, knowledge about the destination country and without having any idea regarding their protection and rights. This, coupled with the lack of communication

in the language exposes them to higher risks of exploitation and abuses in the destination country. Women migrants are more vulnerable and the nature of their overseas job restricts them to avail services resulting in difficulties to get useful information regarding job security and availing emergency services in the overseas locations.

5.00 Problems of women migration in Bangladesh

Most of the female migrant workers are illiterate or less educated associated them to more vulnerability of exploitation.

a) Female migrants are usually facing the following problems:

1. Lack of a common understanding on a gender sensitive and right based approach to employment. This gap exists among both the aspiring migrant workers as well as all other stakeholders.
2. Access to information for potential migrant workers is inadequate.
3. Concentration of employment opportunities in a few low paid and unskilled conventional jobs limits their opportunity for overseas employment.
4. Lack of skill in using household appliances

b) Multiple forms of discrimination exposes women migrant workers in the following situations:

1. As woman compared to a man
2. As a low skilled worker in an isolated work environment
3. Exploitation and abuse at three stages of migration, viz:
 - a. At recruitment
 - b. While in employment
 - c. On return at home country

c) There are some critical concerns for women migrant workers, which can be summarized below

1. Restrictions on freedom of movement and to get organized for protection of rights
2. Engagement in Isolated 3D works
3. Gender-based violence at workplace
4. Problem in social reintegration and very limited opportunities for investment at home
5. Lack of facilities in market oriented skills development
6. Economic exploitation by recruiting agents and other service providers

7. Non-recognition of women's work as real work and xenophobia against women migrant workers
8. Violations of the right to health, safety and privacy
9. Physical, sexual and psychological harassment
10. Possibility of Trafficking

6.00 Health and HIV issues

Health is an important issue in women migration. In the entire employment contracts, medical treatment is mentioned free for the migrant workers. All types of cost for medical treatment is supposed to be borne by the employers. But in reality domestic workers seldom get this facility for a need of major diseases. During study it is found that most of the domestic workers suffer from back pain, cold, headache, gastric pains and fever.

HIV vulnerability of the migrant workers has not been focused to identify the problems associated with migrant population. As one of the high-risk groups, the overseas migrant population is neither covered by national response nor undertaken by any other appropriate interventions.

Chapter : Seven

Policy measures in women migration in Bangladesh

1.00 Policy and regulation

Bangladesh adopted Overseas Employment Policy in 2006 to organise overseas employment sector and to ensure welfare of Bangladeshi workers abroad. It commits to protect the rights, dignity, and security of all migrant workers in and outside the country. Protection of migrants' rights is also ensured through signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with labour receiving countries. Bangladesh has signed MOU with Qatar, Kuwait, Malaysia, Libya, Oman, South Korea, UAE and Libya. Signing of MOU is under process with Bahrain and Jordan. Government arranges some welfare measures for the migrant workers and their family: This approach also ensures protection of rights of migrants to some extent.

The Recruiting agent is allowed to receive a maximum of Tk. 84,000.00 for male workers including air ticket, non compliance of which make liable for punitive action, cancellation of license and forfeiture of security deposit, etc. This figure is Tk. 20,000.00 only for women migrant workers in house keeping trade. Usually the employer provides air ticket for domestic aides. But in case of major respondents other than Lebanon fare for ticket are paid by the migrant herself.

Government prepared a 9-point strategy paper in 2008 to ensure sustainable safe migration in which safe women migration has been emphasized. The items in the strategy are as follows:

1. Exploration of new markets for overseas employment.
2. Expansion of existing labour markets.
3. Skill development training to promote export of more skilled workers.
4. Special efforts to emphasise export of downtrodden people.
5. Strengthening welfare for the migrant workers.
6. Ensuring more transparency in the recruitment process.
7. Efforts to increase the flow of remittance through proper channel.
8. Special focus on export of female workers.
9. Strengthening of capacity and capabilities of Bangladesh Missions abroad.

In all the efforts and action plan women migration can achieve its share of attention.

Government has issued a new circular to facilitate women migration process. The provisions in these measures are as follows:

1. Strengthening of training of women workers
2. Establishment of safe houses in the Bangladesh Mission abroad.
3. Monitoring by Missions for the house-keeping workers.
4. Special briefing for the women migrants arranged.
5. Awareness campaign for safe channel of women migration.
6. Reporting in the mission by the Recruiting agencies about migration of women workers.

2.00 Awareness building of women migrants regarding safe channel of migration

BMET arranges regular pre-departure briefing sessions to make them aware about agreement of service conditions, working environment, culture, wages and other benefits, remittance system, local language of the host country, etc. To develop awareness on the use of legal channel of migration, campaign through electronic and print media is also going on. Some local level workshops have also been arranged at district and upozilas. Attending this briefing session is mandatory in case of recruitment in a group by the recruiting agency to get the emigration clearance¹⁰ from BMET. In the study, it is found from the respondents that only a few attended this pre-departure briefing session at BMET.

Bureau of Manpower Employment Training (BMET) arranges awareness campaign and other promotional activities in relation to stimulate the conception regarding safe migration. BMET is also implementing some projects with UNWOMEN¹¹, RMMRU¹², IOM¹³, and ILO¹⁴ to promote safe female migration. In these projects, the following components are specifically designed:

1. Mass awareness raising of the women migrant workers and general masses including all stakeholders on safe women migration from Bangladesh.
2. Establishment of Women Migrant Resource Centre at BMET head office, Dhaka.
3. Preparation of Leaflets, Posters, Brochure, Information-booklets, etc. for awareness raising/ information dissemination.

¹⁰ Emigration clearance is given by BMET for every migrant worker after checking the visa and other related papers.

¹¹ UNWOMEN is the UN body for women (formerly UNIFEM)

¹² RMMRU stands for Refugee and Migratory Movement and Research Unit. This is a research organization under the University of Dhaka engaged in migration research and advocacy.

¹³ IOM is the International Organisation of Migration

¹⁴ ILO is International Labour Organisation

4. Preparation of Short Docu-drama for TV/publicity and Awareness through Radio.
5. Awareness raising Workshops at district levels for safe women migration.
6. Orientation for the Officers in charge of Probashi Kalyan Desks¹⁵ at DC¹⁶ Offices.

It is found from the analysis of the interview in the FGD¹⁷ that a negligible number of woman migrant worker know about the created facility and very few attended these services. Some NGO¹⁸s, like BRAC¹⁹, Manusher Jonno Foundation²⁰, BOMSA²¹, WARBE DF²², SSKF²³, OKUP²⁴ etc. are also operating some projects regarding awareness raising. Even that this approaches are not getting target oriented result in comparison to the required needs for the aspirant migrant workers.

CEDAW²⁵ is an international tool to ensure women rights in their overall working life. It's major features which are supposed to protect the rights of women migrants are as follows:

Article 1 : Gender based discrimination

Article 5 : Non-discriminatory gender role

Article 6 : Trafficking

Article 10 : Equal rights to education

Article 11 : Equal rights to employment

Article 12 : Equal rights to health, safety and privacy

Article 15 : Equality before law, laws related to freedom of movement, association, choice of residence and domicile

Article 16 : Equal rights within the family including property rights

¹⁵ Probashi Kalyan Desk is the specialized desk established at every Deputy Commissioner's Office at District Administration. These desks are specially formed to extend all sorts of assistance and services for migrant workers.

¹⁶ Deputy Commissioner

¹⁷ Focused Group discussion

¹⁸ NGOs are the non government non-profit organizations extending services to the migrant workers at various level to promote their welfare and awareness.

¹⁹ BRAC stands for Bangladesh Rural Advancement Council. It is an NGO with national and international level of activities in different fields including migration.

²⁰ 'Manusher Jonno Foundation' means 'Foundation for Human'. It is big level NGO.

²¹ BOMSA stands for Bangladesh Ovivashi Mohila Sromik Association, which means Bangladesh Association for Women Migrant Workers. It is an NGO working for female migrant workers for the protection of their rights.

²² WARBE DF stands for Welfare Association for Repatriated Bangladeshi Employees Development Foundation.. It is an NGO working for migrant workers for the protection of their rights.

²³ SSKS : Shosti Somaj Kalyan Songstha

²⁴ OKUP : Ovivashi Kormi Unnayan Program

²⁵ CEDAW is the international Convention to protect the right of women and a legal instrument to act against all forms of discriminations against women

But unfortunately provisions of CEDAW are not complied by the migrant receiving countries in most of the cases as found in the study area. UN Convention 1990 is prevailing for protection of rights of the migrant workers and their family members. This is also not practiced due to absence of the receiving countries on its ratification. Bangladesh signed the convention but not yet ratified.

Chapter: Eight

Skill training for Women migrants

1.00 Present perception

Alleviation of poverty and sustained economic growth emphasize the human capability development process in Bangladesh is accompanied by planned human resource development activities. Women workforce constitutes a considerable component towards sustainable economic and social development of the country. In the context of the globalization process, it is felt necessary to develop appropriate human resources to meet the demand of international market aiming at improving effective skill and knowledge.

Bangladesh is a country with shortage of natural resources but rich in population. Utilization of human potential needs to be adopted as a development strategy to use the real resources for improvement of productivity. To reap the fruit of technological advancement, Bangladesh is to plan and prepare to build up skilled workforce. There exists significantly excess supply of unskilled labour, on the other hand a dearth of labour with specific skills, particularly in the female workforce.

2.00 Training facilities and overseas employment market

Skill development training is an essential approach towards improving the skill and knowledge to perform their job more efficiently and enhance the capability to cope with the adverse situation in the countries of destination. Training can upgrade their behavioral nature and attitude to face the every day life in a disciplined manner. This development will ensure their better and long lasting stay with the employer. It increases the wage level and enhances their employability. Trained manpower always deserves better level of remuneration and face fewer problems. Philippine and Indonesia have well organized training system for upgrading the skill of women workers in house keeping trade. Gradual transformation of huge unskilled workers into an organized trained workforce can create a better image of Bangladeshi women migrants and will help in branding Bangladesh with a substantial demand of skilled manpower. Its ultimate effect will result in higher level of earning of remittance and ensures better standard of living.

In the context of the existing potential for employment of women workers in the developed countries, it is necessary to create sufficient infrastructural facility to train the women workers in their relevant trades for the overseas employment

market. There exist a good number of public and private training facilities in some traditional skill like garments, computer, electronics, etc but the percentage of women trainees is not significant. Only five technical training centers (TTC) under the Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training and one Training Center under the Department of Youth Development provide quality training on house keeping trade. It also faces pressure from the outgoing workers for overseas employment. These are as follows:

- 1) SFM²⁶ Mohila TTC, Darus Salam, Mirpur, Dhaka
- 2) Bangladesh-Korea TTC, Darus Salam, Mirpur, Dhaka
- 3) Bangladesh-German TTC, Section 2, Mirpur, Dhaka
- 4) Keraniganj TTC, Hazratpur, Dhaka
- 5) Faridpur TTC, Sre Angan, Faridpur

Earning of a significant amount of foreign currency would be possible through sending more skilled workers instead of unskilled labour in the overseas employment market. Ensuring employment of more skilled workers remittance can be enhanced to a great extent through their higher wages. Wages of a skilled worker is three to four times than that of an unskilled one. The need for skilled manpower both at home & abroad is increasing day by day and in the context of this ever-increasing need, vocational training activities should be expanded. The benefits can be derived through producing skilled labour force is available to face competitiveness in the world market. To create more employability, Language and soft skills of aspirant migrants also need to be improved. With these views, skill development training program of women workers should be strengthen effectively to cater to the needs of the overseas market.

Overseas employment market encourages enhancement of human capital and develop them to cope with international demand and competent enough to be globally employable. Bureau of Manpower, Employment & Training (BMET) along with other organizations develops human resource by providing vocational skill training through its institutional capacities.

The benefits of globalization can be derived only if a skilled labour force is available to face competitiveness in the world market. Globalization has gained momentum in the recent years integrating developing countries into the process. The skills and productivity of labour force providing appropriate training she will also be able to achieve greater success to participate in global employment. Economic empowerment at the micro-level is the basic pre-requisite for upholding the status of women and to reduce the discrimination among men and women in achieving the millennium development goal (MDG) and reducing poverty particularly for the women.

²⁶ SFM stands for Sheikh Fazilatunnesa Mujib

Another essential aspect is language. Lack of communication skill hinders the possibility of migration in diversified occupation from Bangladesh. In the profession of Nurses and Care givers Bangladeshi women could acquire a good potential market in the developed countries. But proficiency in language is the prime requirement to work efficiently in these is which impedes the flow of deserving workforce in these sectors.

In the analysis to the responses of the women migrants in the study area it is found that knowledge and skill regarding vocational and technical trades is very much absent among the returned migrant workers. But in the group of outgoing potential migrants the interest of acquiring skill training is increasing. Communication skill is also found far behind than required among the women migrants but there is tendency to learn the language now.

Chapter: Nine

Re-integration of women migrant workers

1.00 Present situation

In the paradigm of short term migration, migrant workers return to the country after completion of the tenure of agreement. Usually this tenure is three years. They come back with skill and experience. It has an impact on the economy for absorption of the returned migrants in the domestic employment market. There are a very few approaches towards effective social and economic re-integration of returnee migrants particularly for women both from the government and private or NGO sector. This issue is to be considered as important in making the migration a success. In the study area it is found that the planning for re-integration and utilization of remittance earned is very much disorganized.

2.00 Present programs in re-integration of returnee migrants in Bangladesh

With the increasing importance of migration, government wants to maximize the contribution of manpower export for economic growth and poverty reduction of the country. It is now well accepted that one of routes to achieve the economic emancipation for Bangladesh lies in manpower export sector. The total migration process needs to be addressed with an integrated approach towards creating a congenial environment for safe migration for all.

The remittances are generally treated as income source of the family of a migrant worker. Usually the returnee migrants try to utilize the remittance in the investment opportunities. In the responses from the returned women migrants, land is found the safest and most profitable investment. Migrant workers chose to invest in all kinds of land – arable, homestead, commercial, etc. They have also mortgaged in land as an income-earning avenue. Investment in savings among these families is found to be relatively low. Other investment sectors through utilizing remittance are considered as financing in sending other family members abroad; construction of structured home, investment in business, etc. Investment of remittances in productive venture is not always because of the lack of willingness of the part of individuals or families, but also due to lack of viable investment opportunities.

IOM and RMMRU have conducted two separate surveys on utilization of remittance. These two studies were also aimed to draw the socio-economic profiles of the families. Studies showed that the majority of the remittance receiving families is joint families with an average size of six persons. So family based projects on agricultural farming will be suitable for the returned migrants. It also predicts use of remittance by the migrant workers for the following expenses:

- i) Repayment of loan received in paying the migration cost
- ii) Social ceremonies
- iii) Community development activities
- iv) Business Investment
- v) Savings

There is no significant program from the government regarding the rehabilitation of the returnee migrants. A few associations of the migrant workers are working with different agenda on the welfare of the migrant workers. They are operating some projects regarding awareness raising towards productive investment of remittance earned. Even that all these approaches are not sufficient in comparison to the required ones.

3.00 Glimpses of Saving Schemes and account facilities for migrant workers

i) Non-Resident Foreign Currency Deposit (NFCD)

Migrants can have a NFCD account in any branch of Bangladeshi and foreign banks. The account can be opened for different periods: one month, three months, six months or one year in foreign currency. This account can be maintained for an indefinite period even after the return of the wage earner (migrants). One is also eligible to open an NFCD account with his/her savings within six months of one's return to Bangladesh.

ii) Wage Earners' Development Bond

The remittance of Bangladeshi migrants abroad can be invested in Bangladeshi currency in five-year Wage Earners' Development Bond. The profits are investable in Bangladesh and the bonds accrue an annual interest rate of 12%.

iii) Non-resident Investor's Taka Account

One can open a NITA by the money remitted for investment in the share and securities of the capital market of Bangladesh. Such an account may be opened in any dealer branch of an authorized bank. The central bank also allows investment of funds in remunerative business projects to the account holders.

Most of the commercial banks, nationalised and private, offer the Bangladesh Bank facilities and instruments to Bangladeshi wage earners. These include the NFCD account, Wage Earner's Welfare Bond and Non-resident Investor's Taka Account.

4.00 Re-integration program may need the following approaches:

i) Awareness campaign for women migrant workers

Awareness campaign and information dissemination are two major contributors towards establishment of returnee migrants in the country. These will facilitate the self-employment initiatives of the returnee migrant workers. A continuous basis program may be adopted to implement the following activities in particular:

1. Mass awareness raising for the returnee women migrant workers and general masses including all stakeholders.
2. Information dissemination regarding investment facilities.
3. Counseling for proper utilization of remittances.

ii) Migrant Resource Center

A resource center has been established in BOESL with the assistance of IOM and another resource center exclusively for women workers has been set up in BMET under a project assisted by UNIFEM (presently UNWOMEN). These centers are meant for extending all sorts of cooperation and information dissemination for migrant workers including supports towards returnee women migrants. Similar type comprehensive resource center may be established from government and NGOs at district level for dissemination of required information for the returned migrants to advise all sorts of assistance towards successful re-integration.

iii) Loan and micro credit

The major chunk of returnee migrants and their family members are interested to engage them in small business, agro-based farming like poultry, cow rearing, fish culture, improved cultivation, small transport vehicle, setting up shops, etc. Micro Finance Institutions (MFIs) have emerged as major actors in savings mobilization and credit disbursement at the grassroots level in Bangladesh. Their success in mobilization of savings and collateral free credit delivery system and door-to-door services through contacts at the grassroots make them potential institutions for encouraging savings and investment of remittance in Bangladesh. Bank finance and credit facilities definitely augment their initiatives along with their own collateral

and equity in investment. Women migrants need proper counseling in regard to appropriate place of investment and to attain the small entrepreneurship quality.

iv) Counseling program for the returnee women migrant

Most effective and needful service to the women migrant workers are counseling on how to invest and utilize the savings from remittance. Improper use of remittance may compel them in unsuccessful migration and lead the returnee migrants to a worse situation on than before.

Migrant workers are coming back with skill, knowledge and some savings. But without having proper guidance and information, they cannot invest the expertise and money in a productive venture. There should be program and plan aiming to contribute to provide orientation to the returnee migrant workers about all necessary information, knowledge and skills essential for the better management of their re-integration with a series of activities. It is necessary to provide various info services to the returnee migrants through various project activities.

For the returnee women migrants, those faced problems in the country of workplace; assistance is needed for reporting to police, filing complaints to BMET & special courts and liaison with law agencies.

v) Productive Investment of Remittances

Some NGOs have several programme packages those are accessible by migrant workers and the members of their families. Provision may be opened to emerge suitable mechanism that targets remittance for savings under the present institutional structures. NGOs can induce migrants and their families to be involved income-generating activities associated with savings from income in the overseas stay.

Chapter : Ten

Conclusion and Recommendations

1.00 Capacity building of women migrant workers

Female labour force is appreciably increasing day by day both in sending and receiving countries. Country's development activities cannot get momentum without the active participation of women. An integrated program should be adopted to prepare the vast womenfolk for employment generation specifically for the poor and disadvantaged women. There exists a good demand of women workers in the overseas employment market particularly in the jobs of nurses, garment workers, care givers and house keepers.

Technological changes in the modern world require development of human resources with appropriate competence level in which women can play a pivotal role. To achieve the target women economic empowerment, it is important to analyze and explore the potential of women resources.

It needs special emphasis on human resources development and dedicates more funds to skill development particularly for womenfolk in the annual as well as in the perspective plan. The focus of world economy has been changed from the cheap unskilled labor to highly skilled and organized workforces.

2.00 Protection of rights

Rights, protection and welfare of the migrant workers are mainly developed on the smooth flow of information in every steps of the four phases of migration. There is need to provide orientation to the aspirant migrant workers about all necessary information in to reduce migration cost and protecting the migrants against exploitation. This will enrich the workers providing the migrants with knowledge, information and skills essential for the better management of the entire migration process including their re-integration. This campaign is needed at Pre, Post and Returnee Women Migrants.

Presently the services through mobile phone operators become very much popular and effective to reach the target groups. Information dissemination at different stages of migration may be facilitated through mobile phone operators, SMS call center or helpline services. It would be an automated, quick and efficient info service.

3.00 One stop service to extend need-based information

A one-stop service center may be established to extend need-based information towards migration process to benefit the women migrants and the members of their family. A dedicated call centre may be established to provide assistance to the women migrant workers.

4.00 Special efforts for the women migrants in distress

The workers are not aware about the proper use of the remittance through savings and investment, which direct them towards similar economic conditions as previous status or sometimes worse than before. To rehabilitate and re-integrate the women migrant workers a special program may be designed in an appropriate manner for the women workers who experienced physical and psychological trauma during their stay abroad.

5.00 Awareness campaign

Awareness campaign and other promotional activities in relation to stimulate the conception regarding returning safe migration need to be launched. Following components may specifically be addressed in these programs:

1. Capacity building of District Employment and Manpower Offices and Probashi Kalyan Desks at DC²⁷ Offices to deliver services to the returnee migrants more efficiently.
2. Another approach may be the introduction of services through establishment of Migrant Resource Centre both centrally at BMET and at the district level offices for returned migrants to provide all sorts of information regarding successful re-integration.

6.00 Enhancement of skill training

To meet the future demand for skill training it is essential to encourage private sector and NGOs in a big way in the vocational training field. It needs special emphasis to dedicate skill development of the workers. The focus of world economy has been changed from the cheap unskilled labor to highly skilled and organized workforces. Developing human resources through institutional and informal training should get priority. With these views, skill development training program of women workers should be strengthened and be made effective to cater

²⁷ Probashi Kalyan Desks at DC offices are the welfare desks established at the District Commissioner's Offices in 64 districts

to the needs of the overseas market. Specific demand may be explored for women workers in different trades other than house keeping trade for returnee migrants. The main thought is to be given on developing human resources through institutional and informal training. This also needs international recognition or certification of the training courses.

7.00 Implementation of projects in promoting safe women migration

Projects may be taken to facilitate the following activities:

- To arrange orientation programs for pre-migration decision making, pre-employment and pre-departure stages of women migrants.
- To organize awareness program.
- To provide personalized adequate info support for returnee women migrants to be an entrepreneur through SME/Micro Credit possibilities.

Strategies for re-integration may be adopted both in the short and long term for returnee migrants. With a view to achieving the objectives of economic and social re-integration of the returnee migrants a project may be taken for implementation of all the relevant activities. Sustainable re-integration program needs a long-term perspective plan, which is to be implemented in successive projects. Issue of climate change should also be considered in designing the program.

Stakeholders in migration process need to be involved in this project including government functionaries, local government bodies, some relevant ministries and departments, Banks, Financial institutions, civil society and commercial corporate to make the project a success. Government and local Government bodies will facilitate the services with necessary guidance and monitoring.

8.00 Program for Returnee migrants

Empowerment of the migrant workers may be possible through ensuring appropriate social and economic re-integration which can be ensured through the following measures:

1. Liaison with Investment opportunities in the country at various levels.
2. Arrangement of loan from banks for SME initiatives.
3. Providing Training on cooperative basis to the returnee women migrants.
4. Arrangement of re-migration.
5. Basic training in technically employable trades.
6. Refresher training of semi skilled level of workers to upgrade their skill.
7. Assisting in Information and Communication Technology project.

For Deprived Returnee Women Migrants:

8. Reporting to the concerned authorities
9. Filing complaints to the BMET and Special Courts
10. Liaison with law agencies

9.00 Policy Reforms

To ensure the protection of rights of the women migrant workers following measures may be adopted:

1. Simplifying the procedure for migration of women migrant workers.
2. More bilateral agreements should be signed with the receiving countries ensuring their rights and safety.
3. Policies and programs to empower women migrants, and those left behind by male migrants, to participate actively in decisions that affect them and their families, including support for the formation of voluntary organizations composed of migrating women and women left behind by migrating male relatives.
4. Improvements are also needed in the access of migrant women to primary and reproductive health care services, including programs to address gender- and sexual based violence, and HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases.
5. Awareness may also be extended to address the health issues of the migrant workers particularly STDs, HIV and AIDS.
6. Family members of the migrant workers need to be assisted to re-integrate in the society culturally. In this regard stipend program for meritorious students may be an incentive from the fund.

10.00 Creation of a special fund

A fund may be created from the remittances sent by the Bangladeshi migrant workers. This fund can be used to lend money to the returnee migrants for entrepreneurship development. Under such a scheme small remittances may contribute to a large pool of funds that may be accessed by people with entrepreneurial ability. A structured mechanism will govern the operational features of the fund to facilitate the prospective proposals of investment from the

returnee migrants. The *Probashi Kalyan Bank*²⁸ (Expatriates Welfare Bank) would be a viable approach to cooperate in this regard.

11.00 Community Based training (CBT) for women returnees

Community Based Training was a successful project implemented by ILO with BMET addressing economic empowerment of rural women. The selected women from village areas had been trained in various trades on different modules, which ultimately lead them to facilitate in self-employment. This type of training program may be replicated for returnee women migrant workers for their economic re-integration. It will facilitate to provide adequate personalized support for returnee women migrants to be an entrepreneur.

12.00 Long Term strategy

Strategies for re-integration may be adopted both in the short and long term for returnee migrants. Sustainable re-integration program for the returnee migrants needs a long-term perspective plan, which is to be implemented in phases in successive projects. The implementation program will be planned on long term and short-term basis. CEDAW²⁹ is an international tool to ensure women rights in their overall working life. Provisions of CEDAW may also be useful in protecting the rights of migrant workers particularly in case of re-integration program.

13.00 Actions expected in the countries of destination

It is essential to curb the highly lucrative “visa trading” in some countries. All migrants should have equal access to a facility to lodge grievances about abuse and seek redress. Female workers should be allowed mobility to challenge exploitation practices of employers.

14.00 Conclusion

Promotion of women migration is encouraging now. At the same time the issues of reducing migration cost, awareness on migration procedure and utilization of remittance are to be considered with utmost importance. Exploitation and vulnerabilities to the abuse in the country of destination need to be addressed from all stakeholders like Government, NGOs and other related bodies.

²⁸ A specialised Bank named Probashi Kalyan Bank has been proposed to be established by the Ministry of Expatriates’ Welfare and Overseas Employment of the Government of Bangladesh to provide loan facility to the migrant workers to meet the migration cost and to extend financial assistance to the returned migrant workers for investment in various projects.

²⁹ CEDAW stands for Convention for Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women

It is necessary to make migration a win-win-win situation – for host countries, source countries, and the migrants themselves. In thinking through strategies to increase the benefits of migration, it is important to keep the gender dimension in mind. Women have been an important component of international migration. A gendered perspective is essential to understanding both the causes and consequences of international migration.

Annexure : 1.1

Forms for collection of Information :

Form no. 1 : For returnee women migrants

1. Personal Information

(1) Age		(4) Marital status ³⁰	M	U	D	O
(2) Educational Qualification		(5) Country of employment				
(3) Period of previous stay		(6) Media of Recruitment				

2. Migration Cost

(1) What was the Migration cost		(4) Migration cost this time				
(2) How the migration cost managed						
(3) Any problem faced before migration						

3. Earnings

(1) What was wage ?		(5) Was there any other income	Y	N
(2) Any tips	Y	N	(6) If yes, what was the amount	
(3) How did you remit money			(7) What was total earning	
(4) To whom did you remit money			(8) Have you opened Bank account	Y N

4. Family Profile

(1) Profession of Father/Husband		(4) Number of family members		
(3) Source of Income			(5) Who looked after children	
(5) How many children, age,			(6) Any other problem?	

5. Problems faced at workplace

(1) Any harrassment	(a) Oral	(b) Physical	(c) Others		
(2) Less salary	yes	No	(3) Delayed salary	Yes	No
(4) Physical torture	yes	No	(5) Whom of the family members tortured		
(6) Confinement	yes	no	(7) Any sexual harrasment	Yes	No
(8) If yes, what type ?					
(9) Stopping of meal	yes	no	(10) Working hours		

6. Other benefits

(1) Facility of phone	yes	no	(2) Do you know Bangladesh Mission	yes	No
(3) Facility to go outside of	yes	no	(4) What about home sickness	yes	No

³⁰ M: Married, U: Unmarried, D: Divorced, O: Others

home					
(5) Problem of not knowing language	yes	no	(6) Problem for having no training	yes	No
(7) Problem for no skill in household equipment	yes	no	(8) Facility for medical treatment	yes	No
(9) How did you contact your home?					
(10) Any problem at Airport?					

7. Workload

(1) What were the works?	i) Cleaning ii) Washing of clothes iii) Cooking iv) Baby care v) Others
(2) Any other work	

8. Improvement of family from your income

(1) House		(6) Farm	
(2) Transport		(7) Festivals	
(3) Land		(8) Household goods	
(4) Shops		(9) Savings	
(5) Ornaments		(10) Others	

9. Future planning

(1) Why have you come back		(2) Development of family	
(3) Next plan			
a) Re-migration		d) Training needed	
b) Settling in country		e) Small business	
c) Others			

10. Training

(1) Any training before migration?	y	n	
(2) If yes, from where?			
(3) What was benefit of training?			
(4) Any problem for not having training?			

11. What is your advice to the future migrants?

Annexure : 1.2

Form no. 2 : For aspirant outgoing women migrants

1. Personal Information

(1) Age		(2) Marital status ³¹	M	U	D	O
(3) Educational Qualification		(4) Country of employment				
(5) Media of Recruitment						

2. Migration Cost

(1) What was the Migration cost?	
(2) How the migration cost managed?	
(3) Any advance paid?	

3. Earnings

(1) What is the wage?		(5) Have you opened Bank account	Y	N
(2) How will you remit money?				
(3) To whom will you remit money?				
(4) What is your future planning?				

4. Family Profile

(1) Source of Income		(4) Number of family members	
(2) Profession of Father/Husband		(5) Who will look after children	
(3) who is the head of the family		(6) How many dependents	

5. Problems faced in connection to migration

(1) Getting news of job		(6) Getting visa	
(2) Training		(7) Collection of money	
(3) Examining papers		(8) Decision of the family	
(4) Manpower clearance		(9) Others	
(5) Medical			

³¹ M: Married, U: Unmarried, D: Divorced, O: Others

Annexure : 1.3

Form no. 3 : For the members of the family of women migrants workers

1. Personal Information

(1) Number of family members	(2) Period of employment	
(3) Educational Qualification	(4) Country of employment	
(5) Who is the head of the family		

2. Migration Cost

(1) What was the Migration cost	
(2) How the migration cost managed	
(3) Has the money recovered by remittance	

3. Earnings

(1) What is the wage ?		(4) Have you opened Bank account	Y	N
(2) How do remittance come ?		(5) Any other tips		
(3) Frequency of sending remittance		(6) How much remitted so far		

4. Family Profile

(1) Source of Income		(4) Number of family members	
(2) Profession of Father/Husband		(5) Who will look after children	
(3) Frequency of phone call		(6) How many dependents	

5. Problems faced in connection to migration

(1) What is the problem faced		(6) Elderly care	
(2) Education of children		(7) Land related	
(3) Health services		(8) Security of the family	
(4) Adolescence children		(9) Others	
(5) Child care			

6. Benefits accrued out of migration

(1) Financial		(6) Health care	
(2) Social Status		(7) Land acquire	
(3) Education of children		(8) Security of the family	

7. Improvement for the family due to migration

(1) House		(6) Farm	
(2) Transport		(7) Social festivals	
(3) Land		(8) Households of the family	
(4) Shops		(9) Others	
(5) Ornaments			

Questions for collection of comments from the stake-holders

1. What are the main barriers in women migration from Bangladesh?
2. How to Expedite Safe Migration at all steps?
3. How to Disseminate Information of the Grass Root Level?
4. Do you think the present migration process is favourable for women migration?
5. If not, please suggest improvement.
6. What are main vulnerabilities in women migration?
7. Do you think that economic empowerment of women is possible through migration? You
8. r idea about demand of women workers in the global employment market?
9. What may be the potential trade areas in which demand of women workers exists?
10. What are the problems usually faced by women migrant workers?
11. Do you think women migration benefits their socio-economic improvement?
12. What are the real benefits accrued from women migration?
13. What is your comment about migration cost in women migration?
14. What is your comment about channel of women migration?
15. What is your suggestion regarding improvement of migration management
21. .

Regarding role of different agencies

1. Role of government
2. Role of Recruiting agencies
3. Role of NGOs
4. Role of civil society
5. Role of International Organisations
6. What is your suggestion about reducing migration cost?

7. What is your suggestion about ensuring safety and security of women migration?

8. What is your suggestion about proper utilization of remittance by women migrants?
9. What is your suggestion about skill training of women migrants?
10. What is your suggestion about pre-decision making, pre-employment and pre-departure briefing for women migrants?
11. What is your advice to the potential aspirant migrants?

List of persons interviewed

1. Md. Abdul Malek, Former secretary to the Government and former Director General, Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training.
2. Md. Selim Reza, Director (Emigration), Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training.
3. Kazi Abul Kalam, Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment.
4. Md. Abdul Alim, Proprietor, S.A. Trading.
5. Mahbubur Rahman, Secretary, Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agency (BAIRA).
6. Dr. CR Abrar, Professor, Department of International Relations, Dhaka University and Adviser, Refugee and Migratory Movement and Research Unit.