



A Study Report on Overseas Employment from Bangladesh in 2015



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Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
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Nurul Islam BSc
Hon'ble Minister
Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare & Overseas Employment

Message

I am very much pleased to know that for the first time the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment has prepared and published a comprehensive report incorporating all relevant data and graphical illustrations on the overall performance of overseas employment from Bangladesh. As all of us are aware that overseas employment is an important sector which reduces the pressure on employment of the country especially among the young workforce. Overseas employment is not only creating jobs for our people but also contributing to our development initiatives through remittances and investment. The Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment has been relentlessly working for the welfare of these expatriates by undertaking various programs and initiatives in cooperation and consultation with our local and international development partners.

We are delighted to say that 2015 has been a successful year for Bangladesh as far as overseas employment and remittances are concerned. In 2015, a substantial upward trend is observed in overseas employment from Bangladesh. In 2014 there are 425,684 workers had been employed in the overseas job market while in 2015 it is 555,881 which is 30.58 % more compared to the previous year. Similarly, the number of woman migrant workers has also increased in comparison to the number of woman workers in 2014, the percentage of increase in 2015 is 36.44. We hope that in 2016, this positive trend will continue and more Bangladeshi workers will be employed outside of the country. At the same time the number of skilled and semi-skilled manpower from Bangladesh to overseas labour market has been increasing due to various intervention of the Ministry such as establishment of TTCs and IMTs. In 2015, we also witness positive growth of remittances from Bangladeshi expatriates' spread over 160 countries around the Globe. By sending more skilled and semi-skilled manpower, the rate of remittance inflow to Bangladesh will be enhanced significantly in the upcoming days.

I would like to extend my thanks to all concerned, especially the authors, who were actively involved and contributed to produce this report. I hope that in the coming years this initiative will be continued and more concerted efforts will be given for it.

Nurul Islam BSc



Begum Shamsun Nahar
Hon'ble Secretary
Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare & Overseas Employment

Message

I am very much delighted to see that the Ministry has produced a comprehensive report, though in a brief form, on the various achievements of the Ministry in 2015 with a special focus on overseas employment. In several areas the Ministry has recorded a number of successes in comparison to previous years. For instance, the number of overseas employment, the number of migrant female workers, number of migration from economically lagging districts, skill composition of overseas employments have shown positive trend in 2015 in comparison to those achieved in 2014.

These achievements are the result of multifarious interventions and initiatives undertaken by the Ministry in recent years. The Ministry endeavors to improve management of the migration process. In line with the present needs, it has been reforming legal and institutional mechanisms. The enactment of relevant acts, regulations and policies, preparation of database for the aspirant migrant workers, expansion of training facilities in different districts by establishment of Technical Training Centers, Institute of Marine Technologies, the expansion of Probashi Kallayan Bank and widening the scope of Wage Earners Welfare Board for serving the migrant workers and their families are few of them. In recent time, the Ministry has undertaken a project for relocating existing Bangladeshi schools to own premises in different cities of KSA taking into consideration of providing improved educational facilities to the children of Bangladesh expatriates.

Over the years there has been an increased recognition of the contribution of the labour migrants to the national economy. There is evidence that overseas employment is one of the main sources for employment. Along with the male workers, a significant number of woman workers are also going abroad with job. The participation of woman workers in the overseas employment is not only helping them to become economically solvent, but also contributing to the gender empowerment initiatives. Apart from these, remittance from migrant workers also contributes to our economy in various ways. In short increasing participation of Bangladeshi workforce in overseas employment has been contributing to our socio-economic upliftment over the years.

I would like to extend my gratitude's to those officials who have sincerely worked and contributed in preparing this report. I believe that this report can be a useful resource for finding the major achievement of this Ministry in 2015.

Begum Shamsun Nahar

Executive Summary

Exploring new employment opportunities, retaining existing labour markets and rendering services to the expatriate workers are the main tasks of the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment. It is important to assess the activities of the Ministry and know to what extent it was able to achieve its strategic goals and targets. In line with this view this report has been prepared.

Bangladesh has a huge potential of human resources which cater to the need of labour receiving countries. Workers are participating in the development process of both the sending and receiving countries through migration process. Migrant workers both male and female from Bangladesh are mostly employed in the Middle-eastern and South Asian countries. Workers are being employed with different skills and employment depends on the need of the workers in a particular country. But recruitment of the overseas workers is not a simple one; rather it is a complex process. So, it is important to know the different forces and dynamics of the whole migration process.

Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment has also been playing a proactive role in order to protect the rights of the migrant workers. It also works on the issues of legislative reforms, regulating the activities of the recruitment agents, ensuring rights of the workers, etc. It is important to analyze the overall issues of migration and relevant aspects of overseas employment undertaken in a year which will show the achievement and shortcomings of different areas as well as strength and weakness of the management. This report will help to understand the areas of concerns and assist formulation of policy, programme on migration and reform of the existing rules and regulation in line with the present needs.

The study regarding the overall overseas employment in 2015 and related activities by the ministry reveals that recruitment of workers from Bangladesh by the foreign employers has been increased 30.74% compared to previous year. In terms of number it has been increased from 425,684 in 2014 to 555,881 in 2015. Moreover, Bangladesh has been ranked 10th in the list of the highest remittance receiving country in 2015. In the 2014-15 financial year Bangladesh received 15.31 billion USD as remittance from expatriates. Female migration has also been increased by 36.44% in 2015 in comparison with previous year and for the first time it crossed the figure of one hundred thousand. As an individual country Oman remains the highest number of migrant receiving country in a row for several years and KSA became the 3rd highest receiving country while Singapore slipped down to 4th position in 2015. UAE's intake of female migrant workers was highest. In 2015, the percentage of skilled manpower rose to 39% from 34.95% in 2014. In 2015, the percentage of less-skilled workforce has been decreased to 43.67% in 2015 from 45.43% in 2014. Construction sector has emerged as a single job category where highest number of Bangladeshi workers were employed and 'General Workers' category is the second highest employment sector followed by 'Domestic Workers'.

The study also stated that Bangladesh signed a MOU with KSA regarding the recruitment of Domestic Service Workers in 2015. Moreover, Labour Wing of Oman and Dubai started a toll free hot line for the welfare of migrant workers. The report also mentioned that in 2015, workers were recruited mostly in individual category and 12.77% recruited on group category.

Ministry finalizes the Policy of 'Welfare of the Expatriates and Overseas Employment, 2015' and the rules under 'Overseas Employment and Migrants Act, 2013'. The Ministry is also preparing to operationalize the existing legal frameworks and enforcement of relevant rules and acts pertaining to migrant workers. Ministry also submitted the initial report of ICMRW to UN. It also emphasizes on skill development and it has been establishing more TTCs as well as IMTs.

A lot of challenges are prevailing ahead in achieving migration related targets of SDGs, 7th Five year plan, GFMD. To achieve the targets, concerted efforts are needed from all concerned stakeholders including the development partners.

Note from the Authors

In the socio-economic context of our country, overseas employment is one of the major issues we are dealing with. Overseas employment through contractual labour is one of the core elements of labour migration. Labour migration is also the outcome of human desire to seek better employment and livelihood outside of own territory. The ultimate result of labour migration process is transformed into services in destination country and remittance for source country. The development contribution that migrant workers make to their host and origin countries has been globally recognized. Keeping this in view, this report has attempted to reveal the major achievements and shortcomings in the labour migration sector in Bangladesh in 2015.

There are several indicators which measure the performance of migration sector. For instance the total number of outbound migrant workers, their skill composition, training and briefing received, male-female migrant ratio, flow of remittance, region-wise migration, reforms of rules and regulations, diplomatic efforts with the destination countries, welfare initiatives, are few of them. The report has attempted to use these indicators to assess the position of Bangladesh in 2015 in comparison to those achieved in previous years.

The analysis done in this report addressed major issues of migration as well as pertinent aspects of overseas employment and showed the achievement and shortcomings, as well as strength and weakness of the migration management process which are the major mandates of this Ministry. We believe that this study helped to identify the areas of major concerns which need to be addressed by formulating policy, programme and making necessary reforms.

The whole study has been carried out with the information and statistics stored in the BMET database. Information has also been collected from different wings of the ministry and the Labour Wings of different overseas missions of Bangladesh. Along with the table, we have tried to use graphics to demonstrate various data in this report for better understanding of the general readers.

We would like to express our deepest gratitude to the Hon'ble Minister and Secretary of this Ministry for their continuous support, guidance in preparing this report. We are also grateful to officials of the Ministry and BMET, especially database administrator, who were helping us through providing relevant data and information. We hope that this report will be a very good source of information on performance of Bangladesh in the labor migration sector. The report may also assist the relevant stakeholders working in this sector to undertake various plans and programs for the overall improvement of migration process of the country.

K M Ali Reza

Deputy Chief

Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and
Overseas Employment

Kazi Abul Kalam

Joint Secretary

Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and
Overseas Employment

Acronym

| | | |
|---------|---|--|
| ADB | : | Asian Development Bank |
| ADD | : | Abu Dhabi Dialogue |
| ADP | : | Annual Development Program |
| BGTTC | : | Bangladesh German Technical Training Centre |
| BKTTC | : | Bangladesh Korea Technical Training Centre |
| BMET | : | Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training |
| CP | : | Colombo Process |
| CIP | : | Commercially Important Person |
| DEMO | : | District Employment and Manpower Office |
| DFW | : | Domestic Female Worker |
| DSW | : | Domestic Service Workers |
| ECNEC | : | Executive Committee of the National Economic Council |
| FYP | : | Five Year Plan |
| GDP | : | Gross Domestic Product |
| GFMD | : | Global Forum on Migration and Development |
| ICRMW | : | International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families |
| IDB | : | Islamic Development Bank |
| ILO | : | International Labour Organization |
| IMT | : | Institute of Marine Technology |
| IOM | : | International Organization for Migration |
| KOICA | : | Korea International Cooperation Agency |
| KSA | : | Kingdom of Saudi Arabia |
| LW | : | Labour Wing |
| MEWOE | : | Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment |
| MOFA | : | Ministry of Foreign Affairs |
| PKB | : | Probashi Kollayan Bank |
| SDC | : | Swiss Development Cooperation |
| SDG | : | Sustainable Development Goal |
| SFMMTTC | : | Shekh Fazilatunnesa Mujib Mohila Technical Training Center |
| SOM | : | Senior Officials Meeting |
| TTC | : | Technical Training Centre |
| UAE | : | United Arab Emirates |
| WEWB | : | Wage Earners Welfare Board |

Table of Content

| | | |
|----|--|----|
| 01 | Introduction and Background | 07 |
| 02 | Overseas Employment in Different Countries | 08 |
| 03 | Overseas Employment of Female Workers | 11 |
| 04 | Male and female workers employment in last 5 years | 13 |
| 05 | Skill Composition for Overseas Employment | 13 |
| 06 | Destination Countries with different Skills | 15 |
| 07 | Job Category Wise Migration in 2015 | 16 |
| 08 | Workers from Different Districts of Bangladesh | 17 |
| 09 | Flow of Remittances | 18 |
| 10 | Skill Development Initiatives | 19 |
| 11 | Pre-departure Briefing | 20 |
| 12 | Initiatives of Probashi Kallyan Bank | 20 |
| 13 | Welfare Activities | 21 |
| 14 | Awarding CIP | 23 |
| 15 | Institutional and Policy Reforms | 23 |
| 16 | Legislative Reforms of Migration Management | 24 |
| 17 | Bilateral Agreement | 25 |
| 18 | Employers and Workers | 26 |
| 19 | Recruitment of Workers through agents and individuals | 26 |
| 20 | Returned Migrant Workers | 27 |
| 21 | Complaints management | 27 |
| 22 | Recruitment Agents | 28 |
| 23 | Submission of ICRMW Report | 28 |
| 24 | Participation of Regional and International Consultative Process | 29 |
| 25 | Seven Five Year Plan (7FYP) and Migration | 29 |
| 26 | Sustainable Development Goal and Migration | 30 |
| 27 | Key Challenges | 30 |
| 28 | Way Forward | 31 |
| 29 | Conclusion | 32 |

1.0 Introduction and Background

Overseas employment, mainly by the form of temporary contractual labour movement, has become an integral part of globalization process associated with increasing integration to national economies. It has not only reduces unemployment but also facilitates the flow of foreign currency in the country in the form of remittances. Moreover, temporary contractual labour migration has become an essential livelihood strategy for many people of Bangladesh. It has remarkable positive impact on social development and empowerment through skill transfer and by fostering local development.

In Bangladesh, around 2 million workforces are being added in the labour force each year. It is quite understandable that the required number of employment is not being created within the country in the present context of our economy. Thus overseas employment is one of the main sources for reducing the unemployment problem and it has become one of the demanding options for the youth. Now a days not only male workers are going abroad, but a significant number of female workers are also being employed in overseas job market.



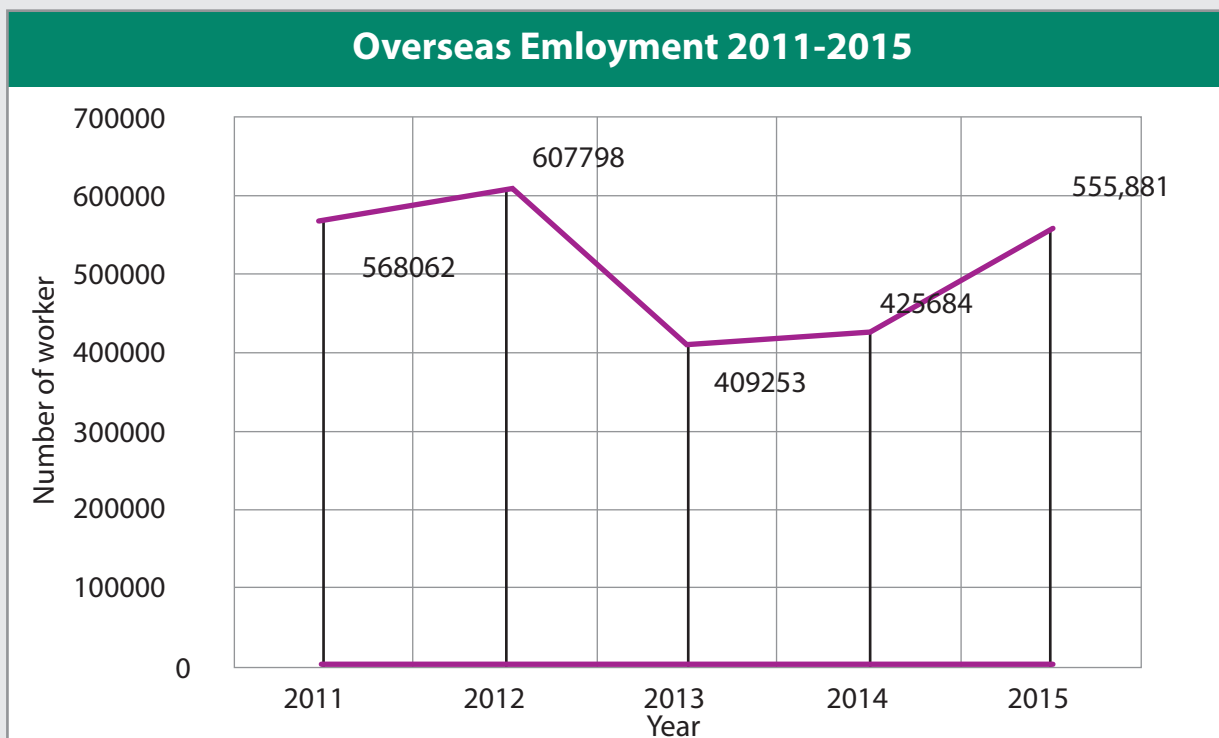
Remittance inflow from migrant workers contributes to our national economy in a large scale by increasing foreign exchange reserve, per capita income and employment opportunities. It has been continuously lifting-up the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of Bangladesh. Furthermore, it contributes to economic growth and development by enhancing trade, investment and development by serving as a channel for development finance (remittances), the transfer of skills and ideas, and the establishment of commercial and cultural networks.

Over the years there has been an increased recognition of the contribution of the migrant workers to the national economy. The establishment of Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment, the enactment of an Overseas Employment and Migrants Act 2013, registration of aspirant migrant workers in the database, expansion of training facilities in different districts by establishment of Technical Training Centers and Institute of Marine Technologies, the creation of Probashi Kallayan Bank for serving the migrant workers. Furthermore, the ratification of the 1990 UN Convention on Migrant Workers and Their Families, the celebration of 'The International Migrants' Day at the government level are the initiatives towards acknowledging the importance of the migration and the role of remittances from migrant workers to the national economy.

In the context of present era of globalization it has become inevitable to retain the existing labour market and needs its expansion. The Government has adopted a series of effective measures with a view to augmenting the overseas employment sector through some strategies and action plans. Migration governance should be made an integral part of the overall development strategy if Bangladesh desires to transform itself into a developed country from the present status.

2.0 Overseas Employment in Different Countries

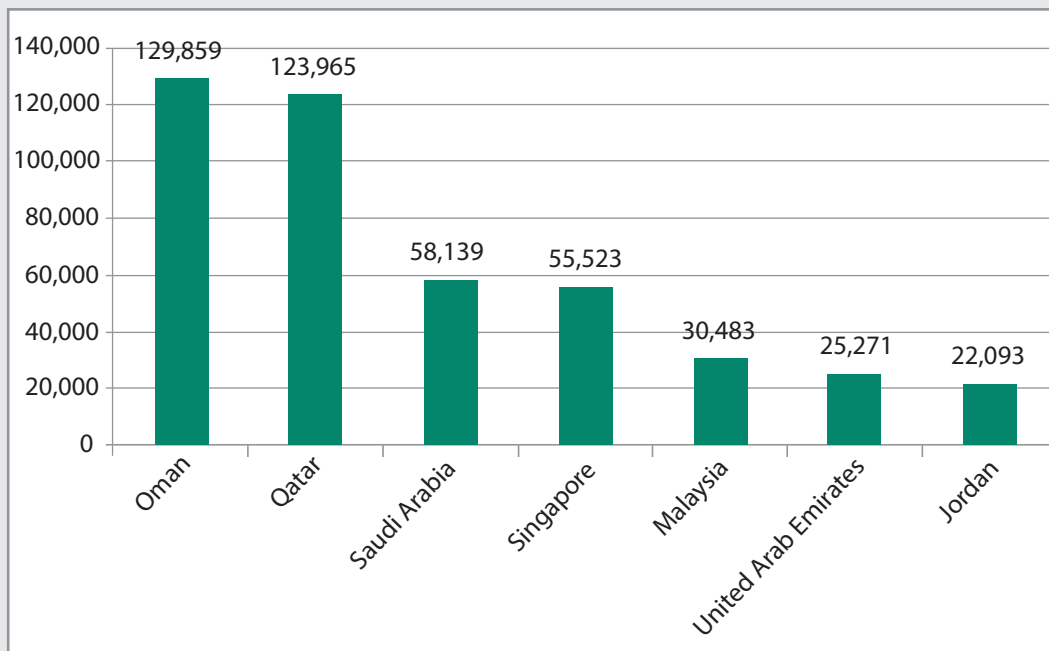
A significant number of workers are being employed in different countries each year. A substantial upward trend is observed in 2015 in respect of overseas employment from Bangladesh. In 2014, 425,684 workers were employed in the overseas job market while in 2015 it was 555,881 which is 30.58 % more than that of the previous year.



Oman remains the highest number of workers receiving country, while Qatar stood second followed by Saudi Arabia. In 2015, Oman alone received 129,859 workers in different categories while it received 105,748 workers in 2014; therefore in 2015, the number is 22.8% more than the previous year.

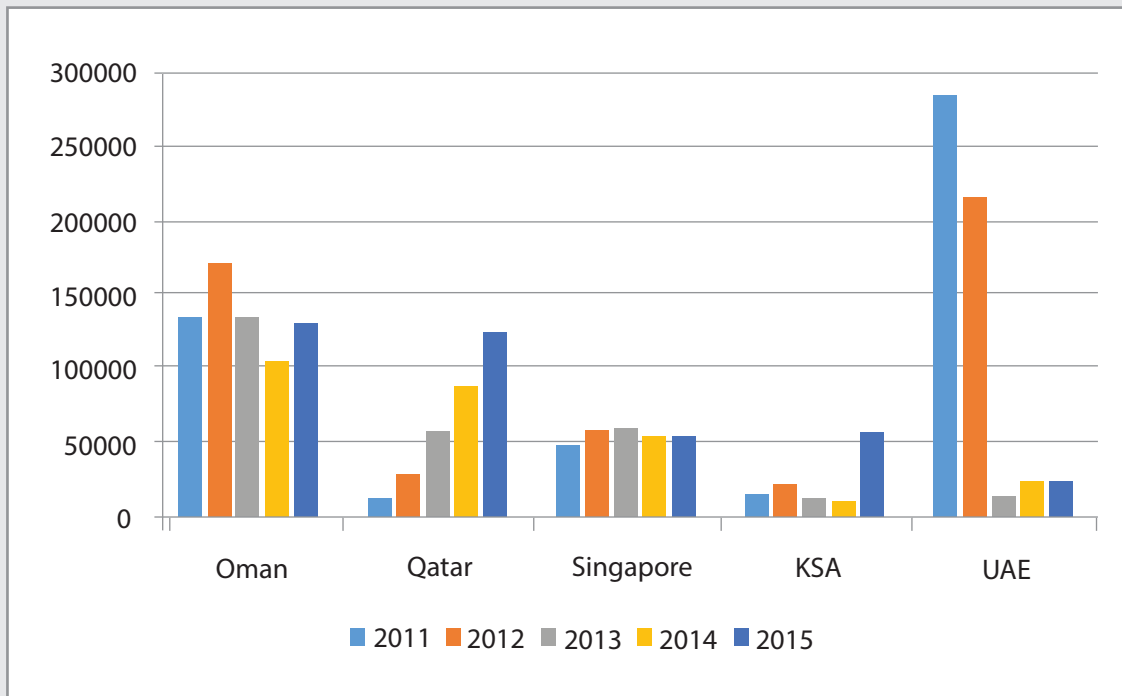


Qatar received 87,575 workers in 2014, while it received 123,965 workers in 2015, which was 41.55% more than the previous year. In 2015, Saudi Arabia was the third highest receiving country of workers from Bangladesh amounting 58,139. Although Singapore was the third highest receiving country in 2014, its position was slipped down to fourth place in 2015 with the number of Bangladeshi workers received 55,523 which was 1.41% lower than the previous year.



Major destinations for Bangladeshi workers in 2015

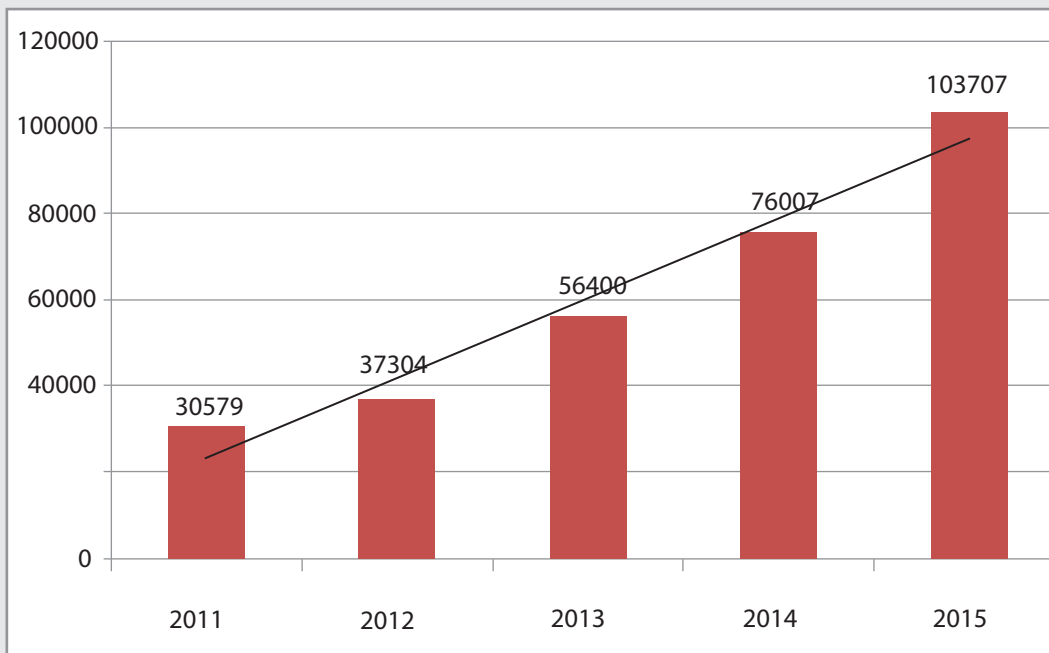
From the analysis of last five years (2011-2015) intake of Bangladeshi workers by the major destination countries, it is observed that the recruitment trend for Oman and Singapore is relatively stable. In case of Qatar, the recruitment number has been increased significantly over the years. However, in case of UAE, the number is dropped drastically. In 2015, the number of Bangladeshi workers flown to KSA is increased in comparison to the numbers of previous 4 years.



Intake of Bangladeshi workers by the major destination countries from 2011-2015

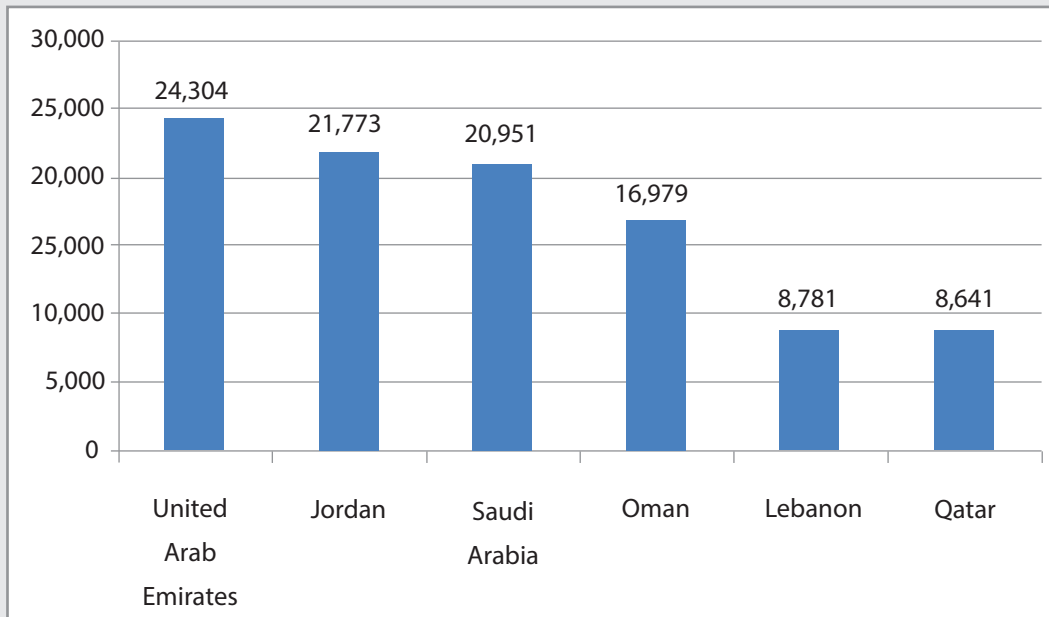
03. Overseas Employment of Female Workers

The number of female migrant workers has been increasing at an optimistic pace for the last 5 years. In 2011, total number of female workers were 30,579 which rose to 103,707 in 2015; the growth is 239.14%. In comparison to the number of female workers in 2014 (76,007), the percentage of increase in 2015 is 36.44. Out of 103,707 female workers in 2015, 61,864 were domestic workers.



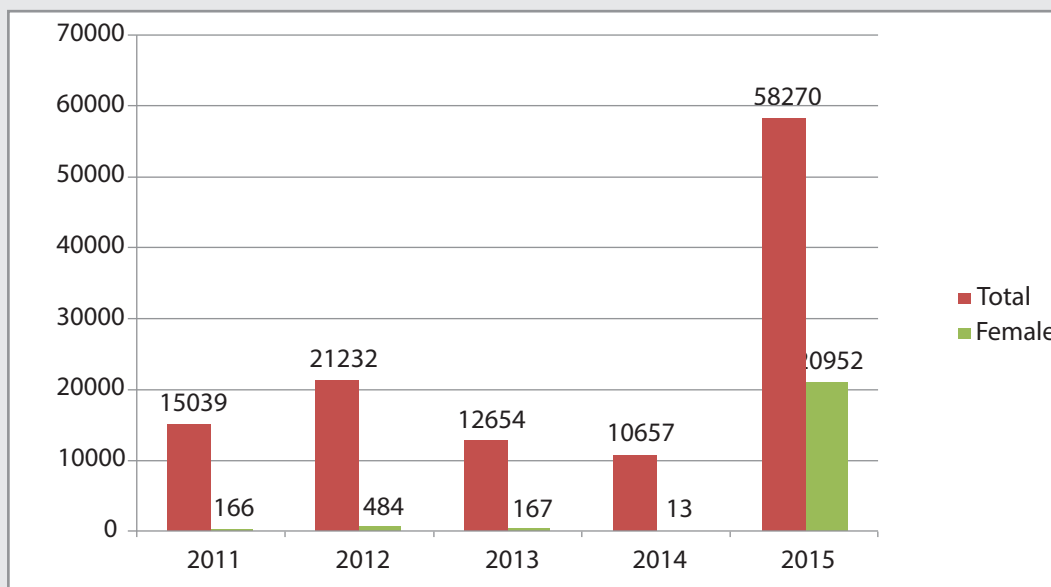
Employment of female workers from 2011-2015

The various regulatory, legal and protection measures for the female migrant workers have contributed to this growth. The trend also depicts that in the coming years the female migrant workers from Bangladesh will be increasing.



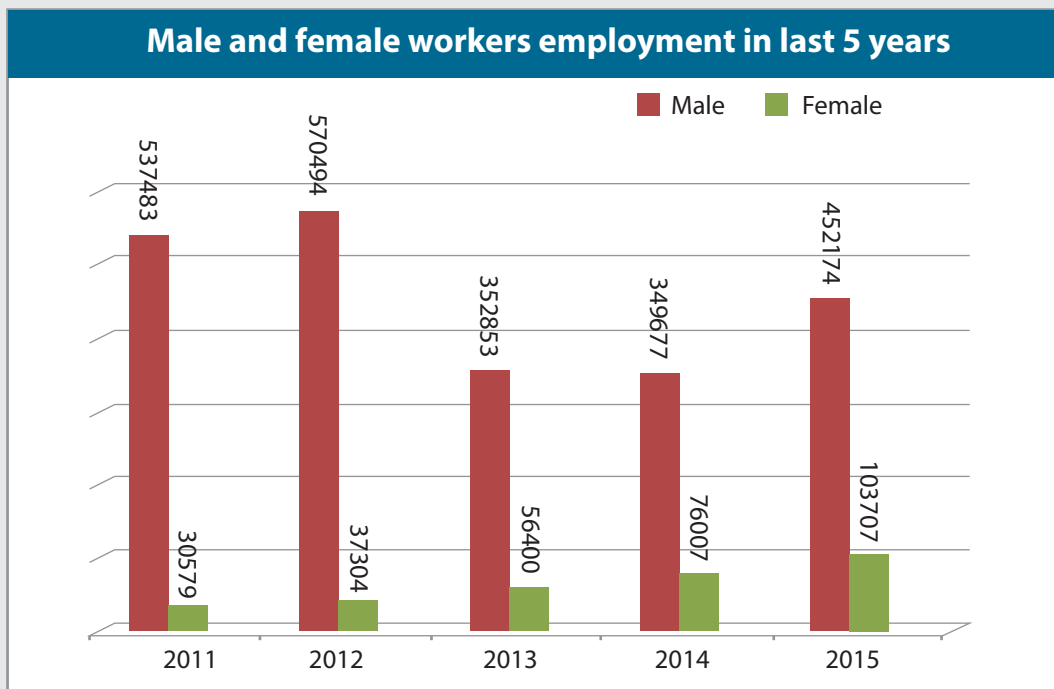
Top destinations of female workers in 2015

Among the destination countries, United Arab Emirates (UAE) was the most popular one for Bangladeshi female workers in 2015. UAE was followed by Jordan. In 2015, 24,304 and 21,773 women were employed in UAE and Jordan respectively. The other top destinations for Bangladeshi women migrants in 2015 were Saudi Arabia, Oman, Lebanon and Qatar.



Total and female migrants in KSA from 2011-2015

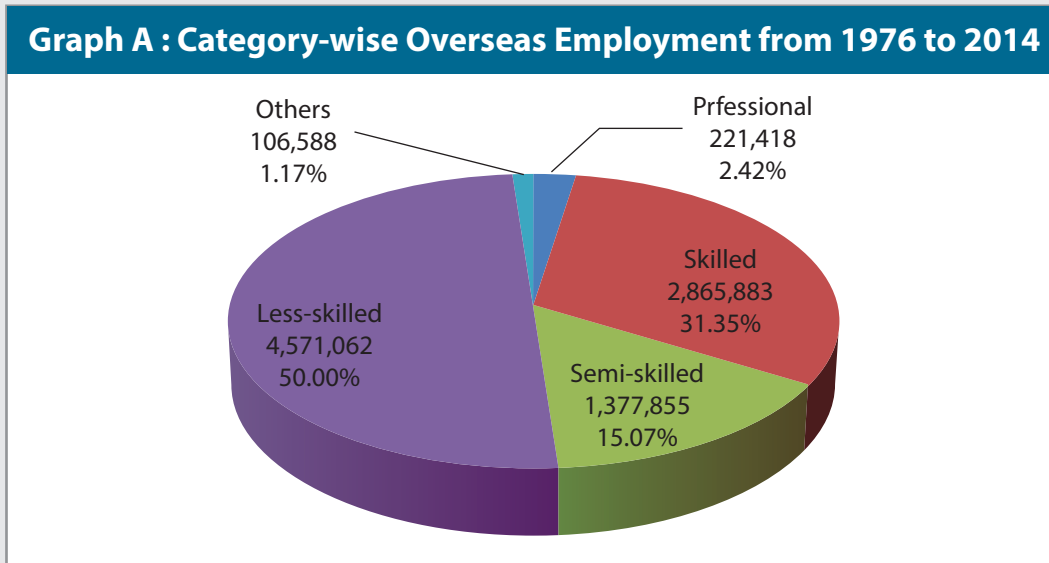
It is to be noted that Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) is one of the main destination countries for Bangladeshi workers in many respects. It was the highest Bangladeshi workers receiving country for long time and still it is the most preferred destination country for many workers. In 2015, KSA was one of the most significant destinations for female Bangladeshi workers. In 2015, 20,952 female workers were recruited by KSA employers in various job categories whereas only 13 women found their employments in KSA in 2014.



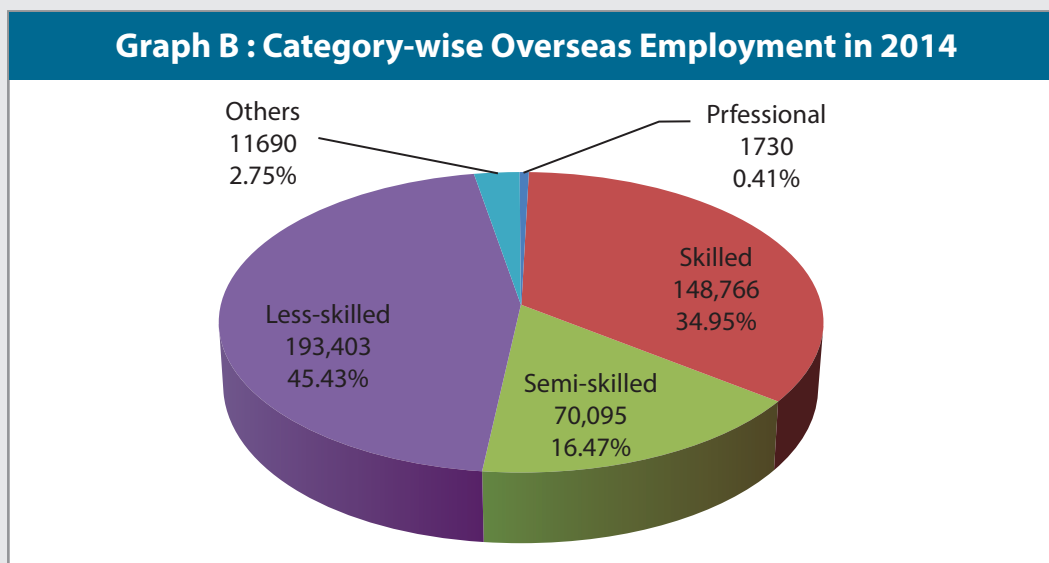
If we compare between male and female workers, we can find that in 2011, the female migrants were only 5.69% of their fellow male migrant workers. However in 2015 the percentage of female migrant workers increased to 22.93 percent of its male counterpart.

05. Skill Composition for Overseas Employment

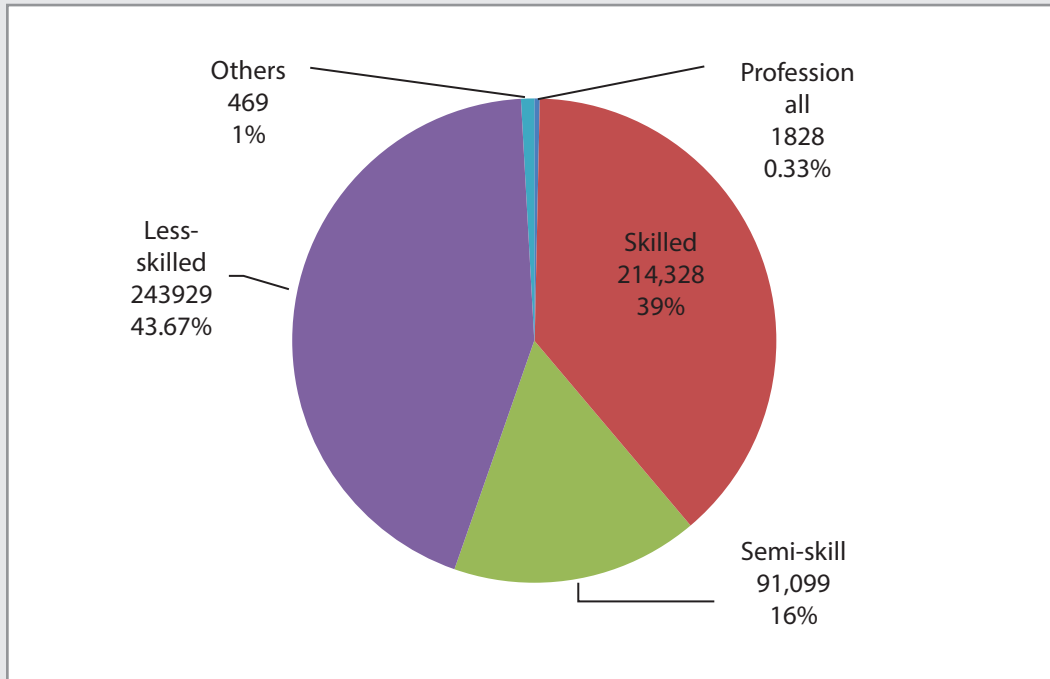
Analyzing the aggregated data on overseas employment from 1976 to 2014, it is found that among the skill composition of the expatriates workers during this period 31.35% were skilled, 15.07% semi-skilled, 50% were less-skilled.



On the contrary only in 2014, the percentage of skilled and semi-skilled manpower were 34.95 and 16.47 respectively which clearly indicates that in the recent trend the number of skilled and semi-skilled overseas Bangladeshi workers are increasing. At the same time the percentage of less-skilled workers is decreasing over the time.

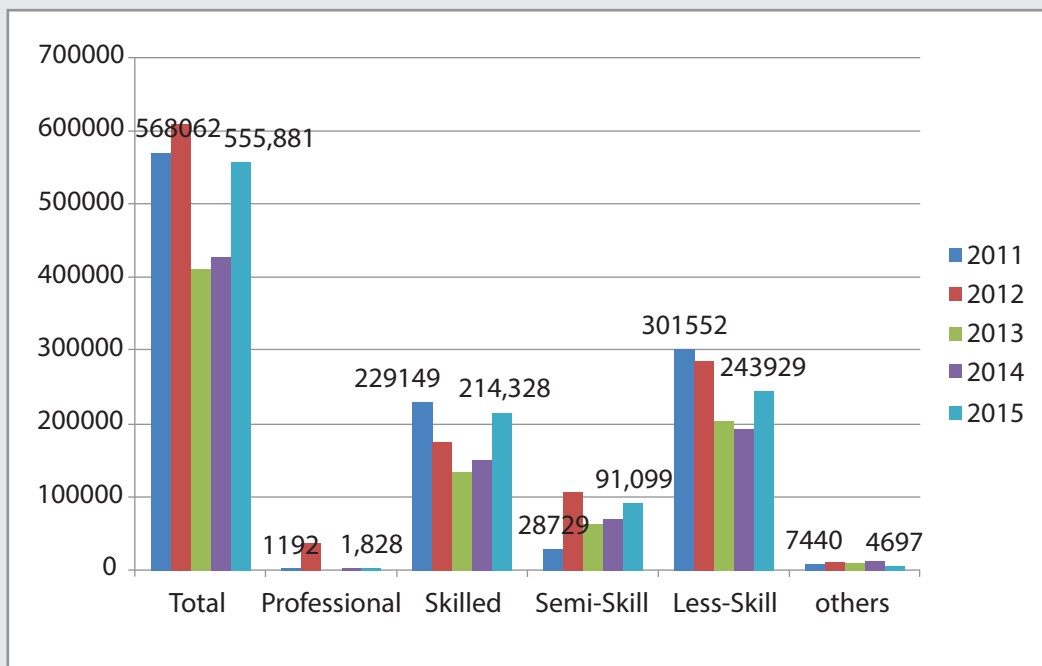


The data of skill-wise overseas employment shows that in 2015, the percentage of skilled manpower rose to 39% from 34.95% of the previous year. In 2015, the percentage of semi-skilled manpower remained almost same in comparison to that of 2014. However, the percentage of less-skilled workforce has been decreased to 43.67% in 2015 from 45.43% in 2014.



Skill-wise employment in 2015

Although the number of skilled manpower from Bangladesh to overseas labour market has been increasing over the years, the proportion of overseas-bound professional from Bangladesh has been decreasing. For instance, in 2014, the percentage of profession was 0.41, whereas in 2015, the number declined to 0.33%.

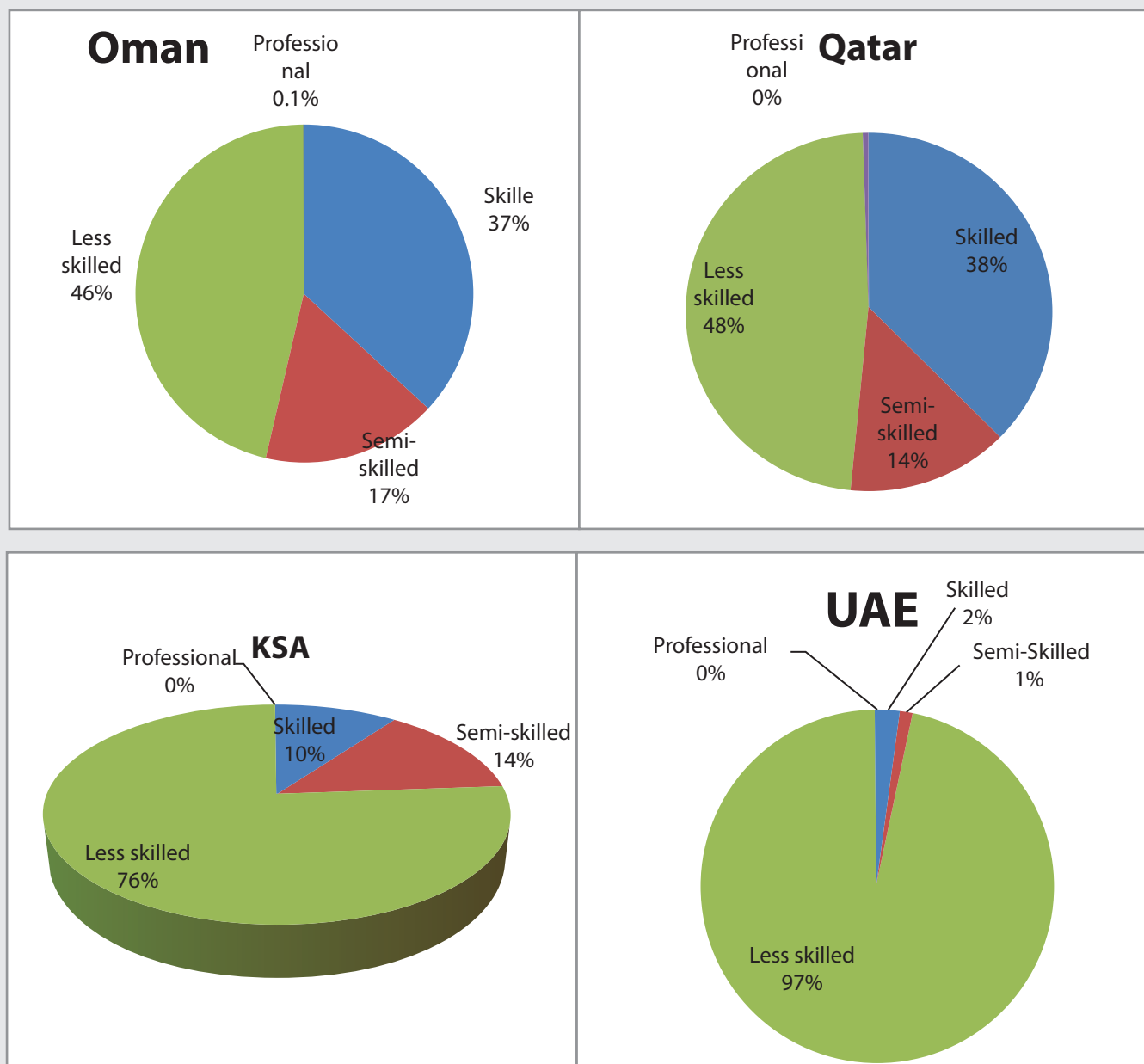


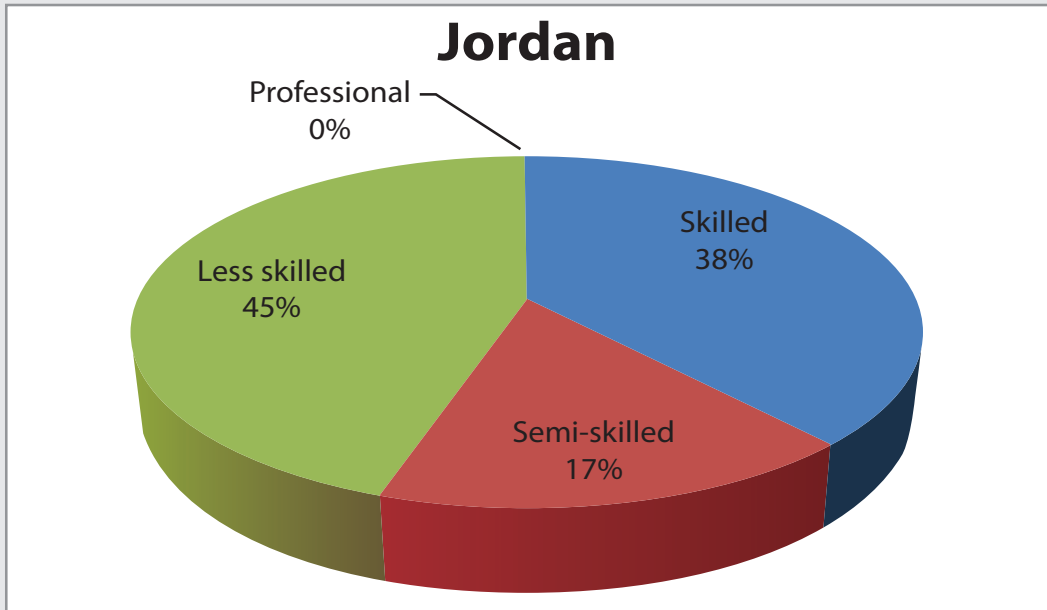
Skill composition of Bangladeshi workers from 2011-2015

By and large, the number of skilled and semi-skilled manpower from Bangladesh to overseas labour market has been increasing due to various intervention of the Ministry. The upward trend of skilled and semi-skilled manpower is resulting decline of the percentage of less-skilled manpower although the number of latter category is not diminishing due to increasing number of total migration from Bangladesh. The migrant under professional category has been decreasing due to various domestic and international factors which can be explained elsewhere in details.

06. Destination Countries with different Skills

Workers from Bangladesh have been employed in different countries with different skills. In 2015, Oman employed highest number of workers which is 129,829. Oman received 59,917 workers with less skill and it was 46.2%, while 47,953 were skilled workers and it was 36.9%, and 21,869 were semi-skilled and it was 16.8% of total employment. The skill composition of Bangladeshi workers recruited by other major destination countries namely Qatar, KSA, UAE and Jordan are illustrated in the pie charts given below:

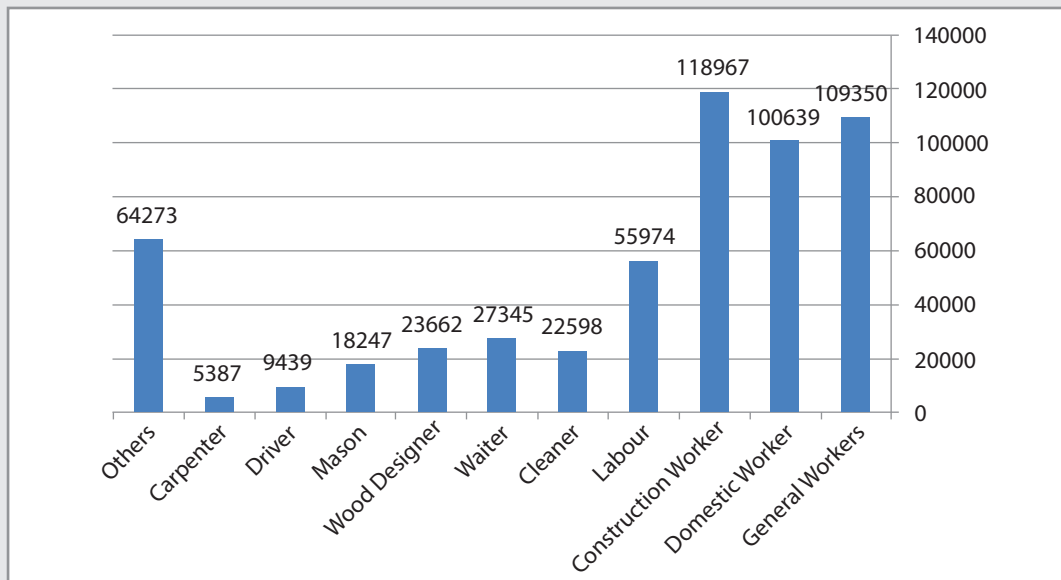




It is to be noted that in 2015, all the Bangladeshi migrant workers employed by Singapore are skilled, while Bahrain, Italy and Lebanon employed are all semi-skilled.

07. Job Category Wise Migration in 2015

In 2015, we have witnessed some changes in the composition of migration in terms of job category. The number of migrant workers in 2015 in 10 major job categories is shown below:

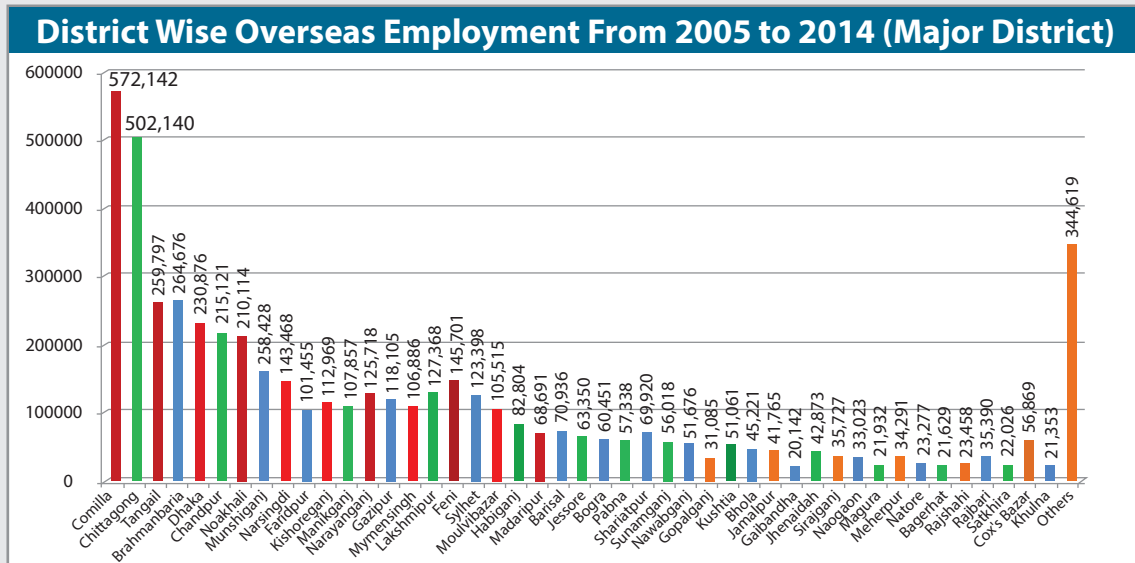


Composition of migration in terms of job category in 2015

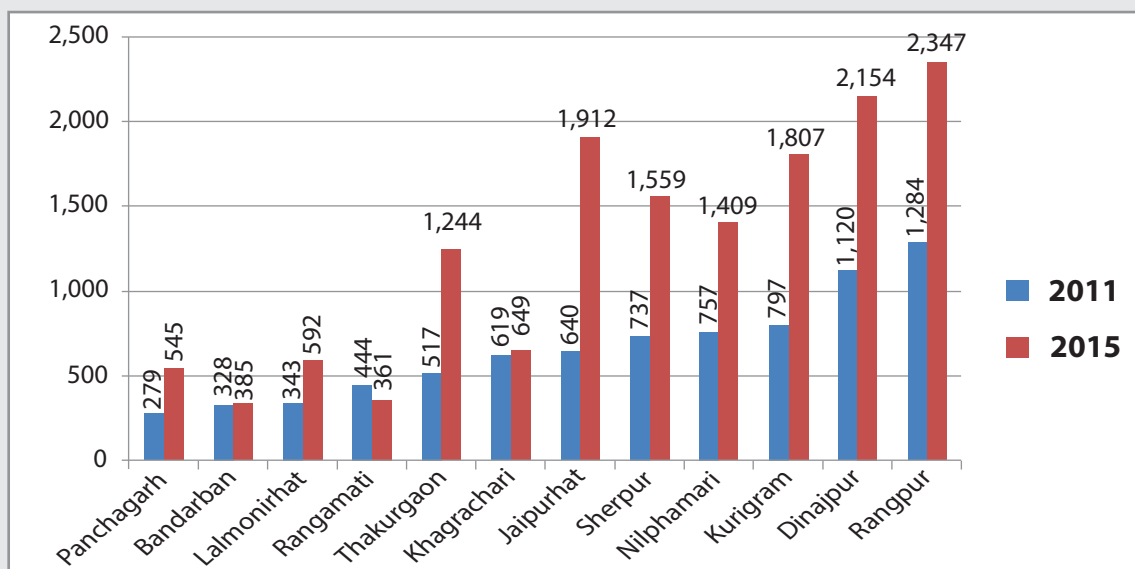
It is to be noted that construction sector is emerged as a single job category where highest number of Bangladeshi workers were employed and the figure is 118,967. "General Workers' category is the second highest employment sector followed by 'Domestic Workers'. The trade Cleaner, Waiter, Wood Designer, Mason, employed almost similar number of Bangladeshi workers.

08. Workers from Different Districts of Bangladesh

The cumulative data on district-wise overseas migration from 2005 to 2014 shows that Comilla stands on the top of the list. During the said period 572,142 persons from Comilla migrated for overseas employment. Comilla is followed by Chittagong which sent 502,140 workers abroad during the same period. Other major districts of migrant workers are Brahmanbaria, Tangail, Dhaka, Chandpur, Noakhali, Feni and Mymensingh.



Less developed regions, mostly lagging districts got enormous importance in the national policy and plan on migration. Importances are attached so that people from less developed districts are encouraged and promoted for the migration with overseas jobs.

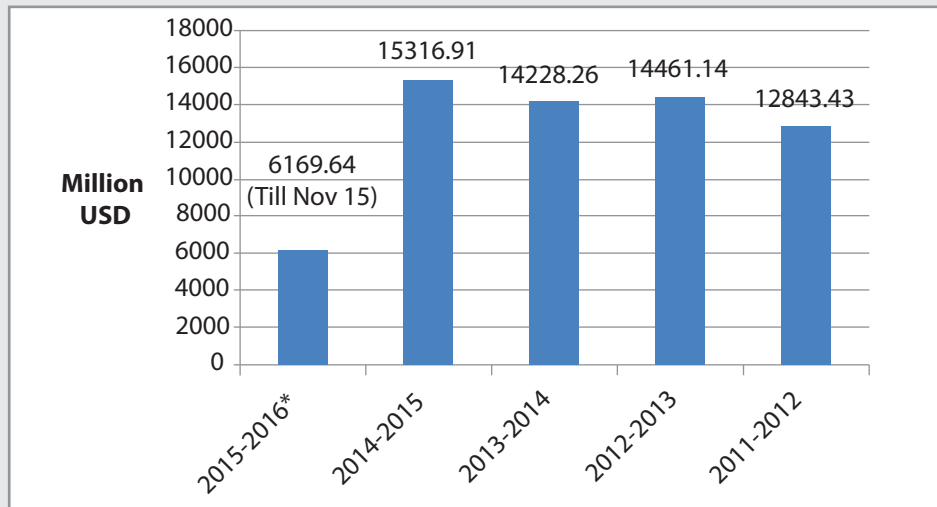


Comparison of migration from less developed districts between 2011 and 2015

Analyzing the overseas migration data of 2011 and 2015, it is found that the number of migrated workers from less developed districts such as Rangpur, Dinajpur, Kurigram, Niphamari, Sherpur, Jaypurhat, Lalmonirhat, Panchagarh and Thakurgaon has increased significantly. On the other hand, rate of migration from Khagrachhari, Bandarban remained almost unchanged. In case of Rangamati, the number is slightly slipped down; this is an exception in the migration trend. However, the overall ratio of overseas employment from the less developed regions has significantly increased in 2015 in comparison to 2011.

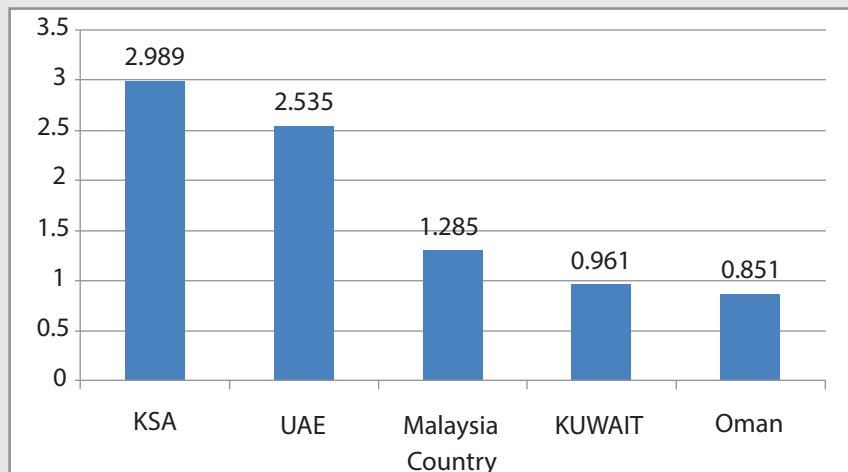
09. Flow of Remittances

International remittances inflows from Bangladeshi migrant workers provide a solid basis to our economy. It is contributing around 8 percent to our GDP. Two-three decades back, our national budget was heavily dependent on foreign aids. Scenarios have changed with time as remittance inflow has been increased. Bangladesh has been ranked 10th on the list of the highest remittance receiving country in 2015. In the 2014-15 financial year Bangladesh received 15.31 billion USD as remittance from expatriates. In first 5 months of 2015-16 financial year, the amount of remittance received was USD 6.169 billion.



Flow of Remittance in last five years

From the above figure we can see that the growth of international remittances for Bangladesh was almost stable during last five years although the world economy has experienced a lot of turmoil and recession during this period.



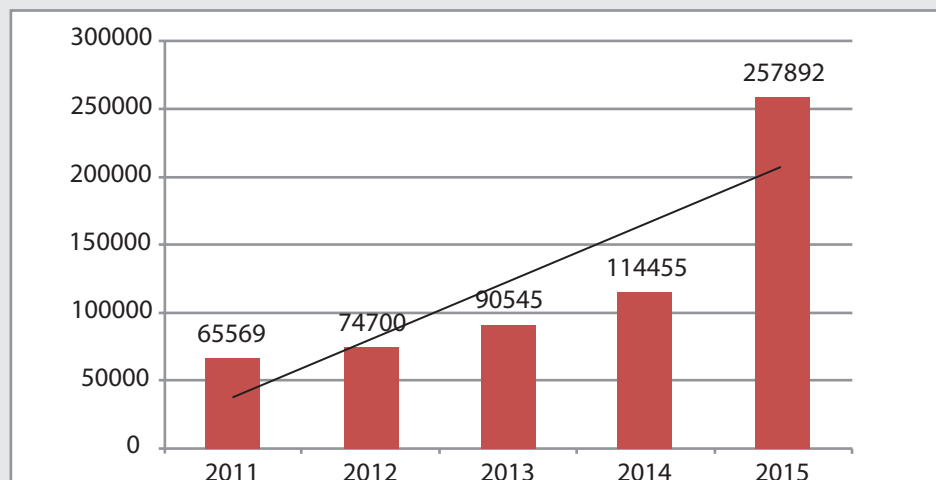
Top 5 Remittance Sending Countries in 2015 (till Nov) in USD Billion

Although Bangladeshi workers are spread over around 160 destination countries around the world, there are certain countries from where Bangladesh receives a major portion of its remittances. For instance, in 2015, Bangladesh received highest amount of remittances from KSA which is 2.989 billion USD, followed by UAE 2.535 billion USD. Other three top source countries of remittances for Bangladesh are Malaysia, Kuwait and Oman.

10. Skill Development Initiatives

Bangladesh has set a policy to send more skilled manpower abroad along with semi-skilled and less skilled workforce and in line with this policy it has been preparing a large pool of skilled people in different trades and categories. Government of Bangladesh has taken multiple initiatives, plans and programs to improve the skills of migrant workers according to the demand of the overseas recruiters and employers.

The Ministry has increased the number of trainees and training centers in different regions, including less developed regions. In 2010, a total number of 37 Technical Training Centers (TTCs) and 1 Institute of Marine Technology (IMT) provided skill and technical training to 59,554 trainees. During 6th Five Year plan period (2011-15), 27 more TTCs and 5 more IMTs were established to provide skill and technical training to 3,55,670 trainees. At present there are 64 TTCs and 6 IMTs functioning under this Ministry to provide technical training to the aspirant workforce who are being employed both in Bangladesh and in overseas job markets



Training Provided by IMTs & TTCs from 2011-2015

If we compare the training capacity of the existing TTCs and IMTs, we can see that in 2014, the number of people trained was 1,14,455, whereas in 2015, the number jumped to 2,57,892 which is 125.32% higher than that of the previous year. Just 5 years ago, i.e. in 2011 only 65,569 trainees passed from the TTCs and IMTs.

To provide skill training to at least 400,000 people annually, the MEWOE has taken initiatives to establish TTCs at Upazilla level. Some of the TTCs will have special provisions to run courses or trade on the basis of the requirements of the destination countries. As part of this initiative, "Establishment of 40 TTCs in 40 Upazillas and 01 IMT in Chittagong" project has been approved by ECNEC and its implementation process has already been started. In addition to these, the existing TTCs and IMTs are being renovated, equipped with modern machinery and more facilities are developed with the funding from Government of Bangladesh and development partners in line with the demand of the local and global job markets. As a result, their capacity is being enhanced and qualities are improved. After completion of the ongoing projects, the quality as well as capacity of the TTCs and IMTs will be further developed.

11. Pre-departure Briefing

Pre-departure orientation is one of the important aspects of the migrant workers. Small number of workers are actually received this sort of orientation programme earlier and maximum number of workers were not briefed prior to their departure. Migrant workers got briefing through the sessions conducted by BMET officials and the session includes learning of rules, regulation, norms, practices, culture, employment agreement, service conditions, working environment, salary and other benefits, remittance system, local languages etc. of the destination countries. Unfortunately workers of individual category were exempted from this programme and only a few workers having group visa attended the orientation. In 2011, the number of out-bound workers received pre-departure training was only 25,740. However, in 2015, this number rose to almost 147,828. The 'Pre-departure training' initiative by the Ministry is widely appreciated as one of the 'best practices' being carried out for the migrant workers.

In 2015, 3 days compulsory pre-departure orientation programme conducted for Oman, KSA, Qatar and Bahrain bound workers irrespective of group or individual visa system. According to BMET statistics 43,282 workers for KSA, 45,041 workers for Oman, 41,385 workers for Qatar and 18,120 workers for Bahrain received 3 days pre-departure briefing. These briefings were conducted at BKTTC Dhaka, BGTTTC Dhaka, SFMMTTC Dhaka and BKTTC Chittagong.

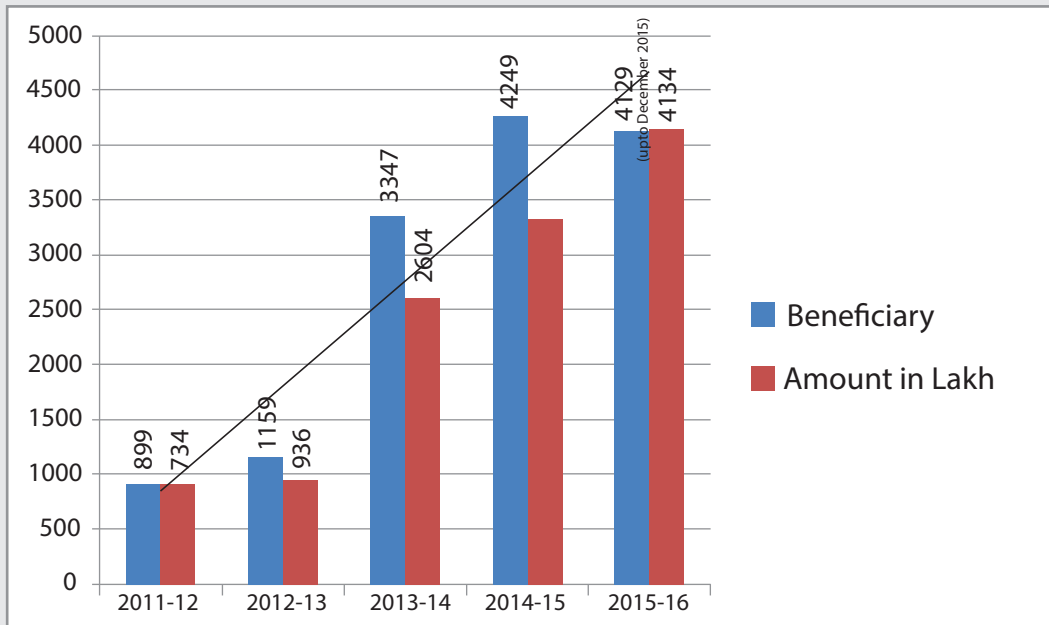
| Country | Number of migrants | | | Number of persons received Pre-departure orientation |
|---------|--------------------|--------|---------|--|
| | Male | Female | Total | |
| KSA | 37,187 | 20,952 | 58,139 | 43,282 |
| Oman | 112,880 | 16,979 | 129,859 | 45,041 |
| Qatar | 115,324 | 8,641 | 123,965 | 41,385 |
| Bahrain | 20,317 | 402 | 20,719 | 18,120 |

Source: Training Wing of BMET

From the above table it is found that Bahrain bound migrant workers are at the top of the list in terms of percentage of receiving pre-departure training, followed by KSA.

12. Initiatives of Probashi Kallyan Bank

To promote labour migration from less developed regions of the country through providing financial support the Ministry established Probashi Kallyan Bank (PKB) in 2010 and it has been providing soft loans to cover migration cost to the out-bound workers. The bank has also given emphasis on rehabilitation of the retrenched workers. PKB has disbursed Tk. 734 lakh to 899 beneficiaries in 2011-12 financial year. The coverage has increased to Tk. 3326 lakh to 4249 beneficiaries in 2014-15 financial year. In the first 6 months of the 2015-16, 4129 person received Tk. 4134 lakh from PKB as loan. The disbursement of 'Re-integration loan' has also increased manifold over the last five years.

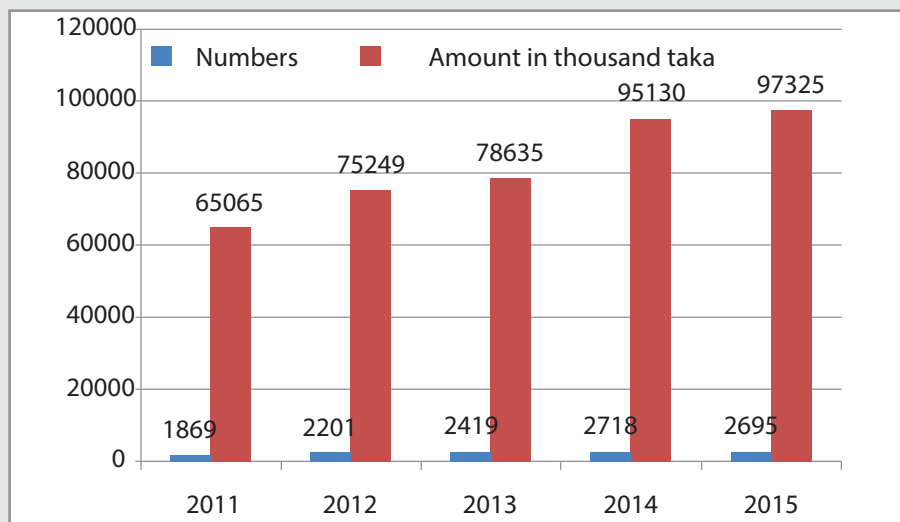


Loan disbursed by PKB

The share of migration loan to less developed regions (i.e. Rangpur, Khulna, Barisal and Rajshahi Divisions) is almost 40%. The recovery rate of the bank loan of PKB is quite satisfactory. From the above information it could be concluded that the PKB loan is becoming more popular among the aspirant migrant workers and returnees who are retrenched from their overseas job and wants to take further efforts to go abroad for employment or to start up their own business activities.

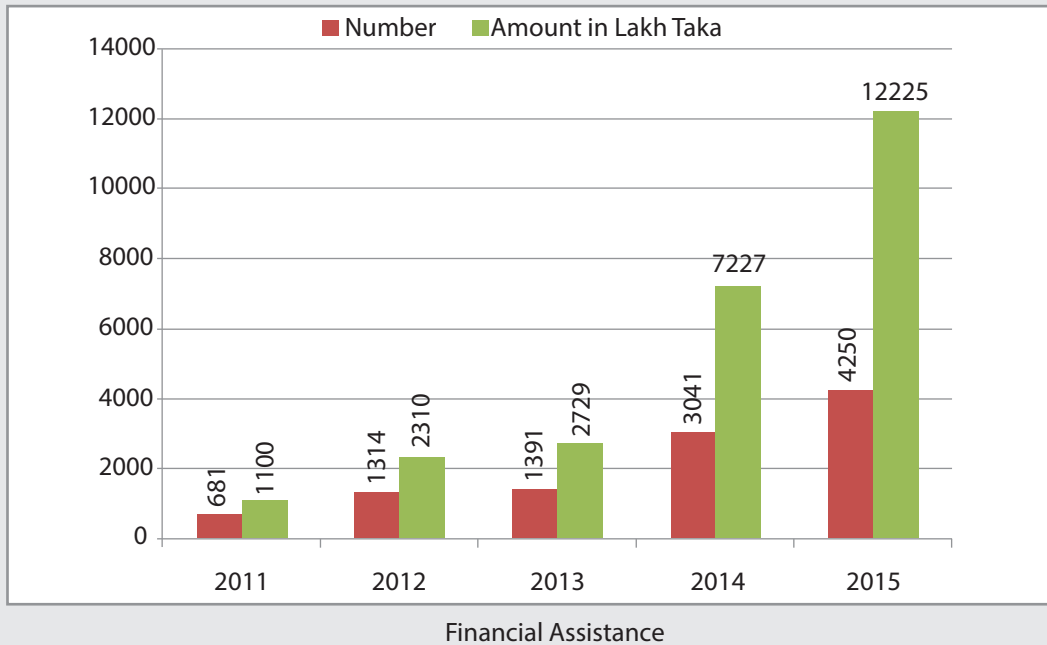
13. Welfare Activities

Through the Wage Earners' Welfare Board (WEWB), the Ministry started its welfare activities from the year 1990. Apart from 'Pre-Departure Briefing sessions' the Board provides services to the migrant workers regarding their Visa, emigration clearance through 3 Welfare Desks at departure and arrival lounge of the Dhaka, Sylhet and Chittagong Airports.



Burial and Transportation of Human Remains

It has also been providing financial assistance for burial of dead body of any Bangladeshi expatriates' and financial support to the family of the deceased migrant workers. In 2011, family of 1869 deceased migrant workers received Tk. 650.65 lakh, whereas in 2015 the number rose to 2695 and Tk. 973.25 lakh were given to their families to meet the expenses of burial services.



Similarly, the extent of financial support to the family of the deceased migrant workers has also been increased significantly. In 2011, the 681 families of the deceased migrant workers received Tk. 1100 lakh. On the other hand, in 2015, the number of family increased to 4250 and Tk. 12,225 lakh were distributed among them.

The Ministry has introduced scholarship program for the children of expatriates' workers. Education scholarship has been given for the students of PSC, JSC, SSC and HSC levels since 2012. During 2012-14, an amount of Taka 49 lakh has been given as scholarship. Only in 2015, Tk 98.30 lakh were distributed among the 664 children of migrant workers for the scholarship at various education levels. Over the time, the amount of these financial assistances and coverage are being increased with an aim to expand the welfare facilities for the families of the migrant workers.

Consulate General of Bangladesh in Dubai and Embassy of Bangladesh in Oman have started toll free Hotline in 2015 to render welfare services to the migrant workers under a project supported by SDC/ILO. Calls/queries received through toll free number in Dubai and in Oman include questions related to Consular services (attestation of documents, renewal of passport, endorsement in the passports etc.), MRP service (procedure, fee, timeline, status of MRP etc.), Procedure for realization of death compensation and company dues, labour problem in workplace, Procedure for applying for Travel Permits, Legal services, Recruitment procedure of DFW, Repatriation of dead body, Accident cases, Repatriation of patients, Birth Registration, other emergency issues etc. The relevant Toll-Free helpline numbers are:

- United Arab Emirates: 800 1952, and
- Oman: +968 80081234 and +968 24603514.

Number of calls received through hotlines after introduction of the system since June, 2015 in Dubai, UAE and Oman shown below:

| Month | UAE | Oman |
|-----------|------|------|
| June | 123 | - |
| July | 349 | 89 |
| August | 9483 | 604 |
| September | 4971 | 356 |
| October | 7424 | 256 |
| November | 7983 | 256 |
| December | 6030 | 138 |

Source: Dubai and Oman Labour Wing

14. Awarding CIP

The Ministry has initiated to honor and acknowledge the contribution of non-resident Bangladeshis to the socio-economic development of the country by awarding Commercially Important Person (CIP) status. Since 2011, a total number of 41 CIPs have been awarded in various categories shown below:

| Year | Number of CIP |
|------|---------------|
| 2011 | 09 |
| 2012 | 11 |
| 2013 | 11 |
| 2014 | 10 |

From 2015, the number of CIP awarded has been increased to 90 in three categories, namely remitter, investors and importer of Bangladeshi goods.

15. Institutional and Policy Reforms

The Government of Bangladesh has ratified the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (1990) and enacted the Overseas Employment and Migrants Act, 2013 to regulate labour migration. The adoption of the Overseas Employment and Migrants Act (2013) further reflect the political will of the present government to address migration and development inter-linkages in a comprehensive manner. However, there is an urgent need to sensitize the people and build the capacity of government, civil society and private sector actor to implement the existing legal provisions on migration.

The government is in the process of revising the Migrant Welfare and Overseas Employment Policy which is designed to promote employment and ensure a higher level of welfare of Bangladeshi workers abroad, as envisioned in the Perspective Plan 2010-2021. The proposed revised Migrant Welfare and Overseas Employment Policy emphasis on issues such migration with dignity, right-based approach and to ensure decent work for migrant workers. To improve professionalism and accountability, the MEWOE has developed 'Migrant Worker Recruitment Agents' Code of Conduct'. To strengthen monitoring of safe migration, the MEWOE has also developed a 'Recruitment Agents Classification System' which will be put in place in near future. These instruments and mechanisms are at different stages of approval of the government.

To ensure welfare of the migrant workers in the host countries, the Ministry has strengthened existing labour wings (i.e. 16 labour wings in 14 countries) in Bangladesh missions by allocating supporting staffs and resources. In addition to this, 12 other new labour wings have been established in 11 countries so that the migrant workers are served better by the Missions.

Initiatives have been taken to strengthen the existing set up of the MEWOE by taking into consideration the increasing challenges in the field of migration and its mainstreaming into development paradigm. The issues of expatriates' welfare and overseas employment are mostly managed by the MEWOE with the help of its agencies such as BMET and WEWB. Therefore, the MEWOW, BMET and WEWB need to be reformed in order to face the multifarious challenges in migration management. At the same time, the field offices (DEMO-District Employment and Manpower Office) serving the migrant and their family members at the grass-root level under this Ministry also need to be strengthened.

16. Legislative Reforms of Migration Management

Overseas migration from Bangladesh is regulated in according to the provision of 'Overseas Employment and Migrants Act, 2013'. There are 3 rules namely, 'Emigration Rules, 2002', 'The Recruiting Agent's Conduct and License Rules, 2002' and 'The Wage Earners' Welfare Fund Rules, 2002' are in operation and according to the Section 47 of the Act, Government will make necessary Rules. Until such Rules are made the Government may execute the existing Rules compatible with the Act. In 2015, MEWOE completed the drafting of 4 Rules namely, 'Labour Migration Management Rules, 2015', 'The Recruiting Agent's Conduct and License Rules, 2015', 'Migrant Workers Welfare Fund Rules, 2015' and 'Migrant Workers Registration Rules, 2015'. ILO provided technical assistance for drafting the said Rules.

'Overseas Employment and Migrants Act, 2013' stated the procedure of the issuance of the license, cancellation & withdrawal of license, forfeiture of security money, responsibilities of recruitment agent, classification of recruitment agents, registration of aspirant migrant workers and protection of their interests, employment contract of the workers, Labour Wing and agreement with destination countries, rights of the migrant workers, offence, penalty and trial process of the unlawful migration etc.

According to the Section 16 of the Act, Government may classify the recruitment agents in a graded manner. In this regard, ILO also provided technical assistance to prepare a Code of Conduct for the recruitment agents. This Code of Conduct and Classification System is based on Bangladeshi laws, ILO Conventions, recommendations, other relevant international and Bangladeshi instruments and best practices. It is also important to promote decent work and ensure flexibility in the functioning of global labour markets in order to protect workers human and legal rights, and ensure their safety and security.

Recruitment Agents Code of Conduct are outlined in Section 15 of the Act, and is designed to offer a platform to facilitate legal compliance and spur continuous improvement of policies and practices in the recruitment agent industry by entailing:

- Adherence to all national and international laws and regulations;
- Implementation of all mandatory administrative policies and procedures; and
- Implementation of a mechanism to monitor recruitment agents and to adopt best practices through the recruitment agent Classification System.

Code of Conduct of the Recruitment Agent stated the recruitment agent's duties include Professional conduct, Informed Consent, Migrant Stewardship and Access to Remediation and Resettlement. It also stated the workers' rights and Recruitment Agents Industry Stewardship. There will be a Classification Committee which will examine the performances of the agents and there will be an opportunity given for self assessment by the agent as well. To sensitize the system a workshop with selected recruitment agent has been conducted by ILO in 2015.

'Labour Migration Management Rules, 2015' controls migration process- procedure for processing permission of employment, conduct training, orientation of the workers, and disposal of complaints. Moreover it stipulates the role of Registrar and Labour Attaches. 'The Recruiting Agent's Conduct and License Rules, 2015' regulates the activities of Recruiting Agents, stated the procedure of application for license, renewal, restoration of cancelled license, agents conduct, fees of license etc. 'Migrant Workers Welfare Fund Rules, 2015' arranges welfare activities for the migrant workers and their families and manages welfare fund etc. 'Migrant Workers Registration Rules, 2015' stated the system and procedure of the registration of the aspirant migrant workers, returned migrant workers and preparation of other databases (if any).

'Migrant Welfare and Overseas Employment Policy, 2015' has also been drafted with the technical assistance of ILO in 2015. The objectives of the policy are:

- Promoting safe migration
- Protection of migrant workers and their family members
- Benefits and welfare services for migrant workers
- Migration of women workers
- Linking migration with national development
- Governance of labour migration

17. Bilateral Agreement

The MEWOE has done remarkable improvements in the area of bilateral understanding and cooperation. So far, bilateral agreements (BLAs) with Qatar, memoranda of understanding (MOUs) with Kuwait, UAE, Malaysia, Jordan, South Korea, Oman, Libya, Iraq, Maldives and Hong Kong have been signed. Another 3 new MOUs with Lebanon, Thailand and Bahrain are expected to be signed soon. Such initiatives are significant for not only creating potential markets for different types of skills, but also for creating opportunities for better negotiations on worker's rights in the host countries.



In 2015, BLA was signed with KSA on recruitment of Domestic Service Workers (DSW). A MOU with international Manpower Development Organization (IM) of Japan was signed on 8 July 2015. Moreover 6th and 7th Joint Working Group Meeting with Malaysian Govt. was held in 2015. A high-level delegation from Bangladesh visited Thailand in July and November 2015 and Australia in November 2015 in order to explore overseas employment opportunities.

18. Employers and Workers

Employers always prefer to recruit best workers to serve their organizations. In case of the recruitment of foreign worker, employer tries to get maximum benefit in terms of productivity, reliability and dependability with comfort. Over the periods, Bangladeshi workers earned reputation in labour receiving countries. Bangladeshi workers are mostly being employed in the Middle-Eastern countries followed by South Asian countries. Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) is the most preferred destination of the workers and other Middle-Eastern countries as well. Bangladeshi workers are mainly employed as less and semi-skilled workers in different countries around the globe.

Bangladeshi workers are getting two types of BMET clearance; one is group basis in a particular organization while other category is an individual. In 2015, it was found that Twaik Company Limited of KSA employed highest number of 6,937 workers followed by another Saudi Company namely Ahmed Solaiman Al Fahad and Sons Limited Company which recruited 4,652 workers. Seder Group Trading and Contracting Company of KSA recruited 3,943 workers and became third highest recruiter while another Saudi Company Initial Saudi Arabia Limited became fourth highest number of recruiter of Bangladeshi workers. Mafaheem Construction, Operation and Maintenance of KSA was the fifth highest recruiter of Bangladeshi workers. Interestingly Hanwaha Engineering and Construction of Iraq recruited 1,698 workers and was the sixth highest recruiter of Bangladeshi workers while Iraq took 11th position in terms of total recruitment. Classic Fashion Apparel Industry Limited Company of Jordan recruited 1,579 workers and remained as seventh highest recruiter of Bangladeshi workers.

According to the above statistics it was found that individual employers of KSA recruited highest number of workers though KSA was the third highest recruiting country in 2015. No company found in Oman or Qatar in the top ten group recruiters though Oman and Qatar were the highest and second highest recruiting countries respectively. It was also found that three of the highest recruiting companies are cleaning company. Fifth and sixth highest recruiters were the construction companies and construction workers of different trades being employed in these companies. Garment workers were also recruited as the seventh highest recruiting category mostly employed in various companies of Jordan.

19. Recruitment of Workers through agents and individuals

Overseas employment is mostly processed by recruitment agents. (RA) It was found that BMET has given clearances to 4,79,637 individual visa and 70,976 demands of group visa in 2015. Recruiting agents work as authorized representatives of the Ministry. The Ministry has framed specific rules, regulations for the operations of recruiting agencies. There are mechanism to make them accountable for their activities. If the Ministry finds any irregularities in the recruitment process of the agencies, legal actions are taken against them. However, there are incidents where middlemen come in between the aspirant migrant workers and the recruiting agents and exploit the workers which result in higher migration cost. The Ministry is very much vigilant to track down the unauthorized middlemen and bring them into justice for their wrong doing. Moreover, there are cases where recruiting agencies split group demands into an individual visa to avoid systemic procedures of getting recruitment permission from appropriate authority.

If we analyze the recruitment of individual cases it was found that some companies have recruited a significant number of workers for them in different point of times. It means that the demands are submitted individually instead of submitting them as a group demand. It is heard that recruiting agencies encourages employers to prepare demand in an individual manner. It was also heard that a good number of recruiting agencies didn't collect demand from the employer rather they assist the individuals to get 'emigration clearance' from BMET by using their license.

20. Returned Migrant Workers

A significant number of workers are going abroad for overseas employment in each year from Bangladesh. All records are being kept in the database of BMET, but there is no data readily available on returned migrant workers. Since Immigration Department at airports are suppose to keep all information of all passengers, so there might be an arrangement with the said department in near future in order to keep statistics of the returned migrant workers. Probable steps could be a small modification of the disembarkation card of the Immigration Department which may help to keep the desired information. If additional information regarding returned workers like whether the worker was engaged in work or not and if so whether worker is coming back permanently or temporarily can be added in the said card then it would be easier to get information of returned migrants. It is to be noted that RMMRU recently completed a research through which it was found that around 9% of the total outbound migrant workers in last ten years came back.

21. Complaints management

Complaint is a common phenomenon in overseas employment. There are two stages of complaints from the migrant workers in the migration discourse. One is post migration and other is the pre-migration. It was experienced that complaints found in both stages. Agents have taken money, but are not sending worker abroad is one of the major complaints against recruiting agencies in pre-migration stage. Wages not paid in due time, not getting wages, not getting other benefits as per service contracts, exorbitant migration cost charged by the agents etc. are the major elements of the complaints in post-migration stage. As per section 41 of 'Overseas Employment and Migrants Act, 2013' aggrieved person can lodge complaints in the Ministry or BMET. Migrant workers can also submit complaint in the Bangladesh missions abroad. According to the said section of the Act, after receiving the complaint investigation is to be completed within 30 working days and if the complaint is found valid, the Government has to dispose complaint directly or through arbitration within 3 months from the date of completion of the investigation.

According to BMET, a number of complaints lodged against the recruitment agencies in 2015. After completion of the investigation 14 complaints were established while 13 complaints were not established and the number of settled complaints was 36. Tk. 10,89,000 were collected from recruiting agencies on the basis of established complaints in 2015. 04 Licenses of recruiting agencies were cancelled and security deposit forfeited and 07 licenses were suspended and their operations are withheld. Total valid license as of 31 December,2015 is 961.

MEWOE has also received complaints of different nature from the aggrieved persons. MEWOE received 213 complaints in 2015 with different issues from home and abroad. After receiving the complaints MEWOE sent it to the relevant organizations with a request to take necessary actions on it and to keep the ministry updated. Each individual also received the copy of the said letter in order to get update of the matter. It was found that most of the complaints are about abuses of the domestic female workers abroad, non-payment of insurance and wages in time, tracing out of migrant workers abroad, forced occupation of lands, extortion of money by miscreants or relatives, threats to life and property, abduction of expatriate's children, asking for ransom, not getting compensation from wage earners' welfare board, assistance for the sick or stranded workers abroad or request to provide medical treatment for the sick migrant workers, etc.

22. Recruitment Agents

Recruitment agents are the main actors in the overseas employment arena. They arrange the demand from different employers of different countries. In 2015, it was found that recruitment agents collected maximum number of demands from KSA followed by Singapore, Malaysia, Iraq, and Qatar etc. According to BMET database, recruitment agent namely Bangladesh Export Corporation (RL 803) sent maximum number of 21,952 workers in 2015 followed by Tower Trade International Limited (RL-499) which sent 19,629 workers. Ifti Trade International (RL-1212) sent 15,851 workers became third highest sending agency and Makka Madina Trade International (RL-810) sent 14,968 workers ranked fourth highest sending agency. 3 recruiting agencies namely Estema International Recruiting Agency (RL-1251), A. A. Overseas Limited (RL-851) and Biplob Overseas (RL-832) sent 12,855, 12,498 and 12,341 workers abroad respectively in 2015 and ranked fifth, sixth and seventh highest sending agencies. BOESL (RL-147) is the only government owned agency sent 11,336 workers ranked eighth highest agency while R. S. Linkers Ltd. (RL-96) sent 9,976 workers and Star Manpower Services (RL-760) sent 9,252 workers became ninth and tenth highest sending agencies respectively.

It is observed that the highest sending agency Bangladesh Export Corporation (RL-803) is mainly sending domestic female workers in different countries. The other top ranking agencies were not also very much well known before. It is also heard that all of the agencies have no marketing strategy and do not have any well established human resource department of their office, but they manage to send a good number of workers abroad only by sending workers through popularly known as 'processing' i.e. people collect demand/visa individually and these agencies use their licenses to get 'BMET Clearance'. It is also evident that there is a serious lack of the recruitment agents in their efforts in market exploration, collection of demand and any sorts of effective initiatives.

Among the top 10 recruiting agencies for female migrant workers M/S Bangladesh Export Corporation has occupied the top slot which recruited 15,885 female workers for overseas employment. This number is 15.31% of the total female migrant workers (103,707) in 2015. Other leading recruiting agencies for female workers are East-West Trade Linkers, BOESL, M.H. Trade International.

23. Submission of ICRMW Report

Government of Bangladesh ratified the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (1990) and enacted the Overseas Employment and Migrants Act, 2013 to regulate labour migration. Bangladesh submitted initial report on the legislative, judicial, administrative and other measures taken to 'the Convention' or 'ICRMW' in accordance with article 73, paragraph 1, of the Convention. The Report has been prepared in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (CMW), and through a consultative process involving all stakeholders, including various Government Ministries/ Divisions/ agencies concerned, national institutions, notably the National Human Rights Commission and civil society organizations.

The Government of Bangladesh unconditionally acceded to the Convention. The accession itself had been a significant step by Bangladesh towards protecting the rights of migrant workers and members of their families, and fulfilling the Convention obligations. Bangladesh, as a State Party, seeks to ensure, and is deeply committed to upholding the minimum international guarantees relating to the human rights of migrant workers and their families. Bangladesh submitted the report to CMW through MOFA on 7 December 2015.

24. Participation of Regional and International Consultative Process

The MEWOE has been actively participating various Regional Consultative Process (RCPs) and International Fora of Migration. MEWOE participated in the 5th ADBI-OECD-ILO Roundtable on Labour Migration in Asia: Building Effective Structures and Institutions for Migration Governance, Jointly organized by the Asian Development Bank Institute, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and the International Labour Organization and hosted by the Asia-Pacific Finance and Development Institute (AFDI) in Shanghai, China from 28-30 January 2015. The Secretary of the Ministry led the tripartite Bangladesh delegation to the ILO's Asia Tripartite Meeting on 'Realizing a Fair Migration Agenda: Labour flows between Asia and the Arab States held on 06-07 May 2015 in Bali Indonesia.

Bangladesh, as a member of the Colombo Process, joined the Senior Official Meeting (SOM) held in Colombo, Sri-Lanka in November 2015. Bangladesh has been contributing in this forum through both sharing its best practices and reviewing and implementing its recommendations. Bangladesh is also participating and contributing to the Abu Dhabi Dialogue (ADD) process which was set up for an action-oriented strategic partnership between countries of origin and destination. Bangladesh hosted 4th Regional Training on Migration and Development and 7th Working Group Meeting of Budapest process in Dhaka in November 2015. Since 2007, Bangladesh has been participating actively in the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD). It has assumed the Chairmanship of the GFMD and is going to host 9th GFMD Annual Government Meeting in December, 2016. This Ministry is actively involved with the GFMD process and extending its cooperation to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

25. Seven Five Year Plan (7FYP) and Migration

The Seventh FYP has focused on the following major issues pertinent to migration and development:

- Promoting labour migration, specially from less developed districts;
- Improving the skills base for the development of new overseas labour market opportunities for Bangladeshi nationals;
- Ensuring the protection of migrant workers' human and labour rights. The plan has also delineated to implement the certain projects and programs in order to achieve the migration related targets set in the plan:
- Establishment of District Employment and Manpower Offices (DEMO). all over the country will assist migration management process.
- Costs of migration and remittance transfer will be reduced to facilitate the process.
- A 'Catering Institute' will provide market oriented skill training to address demand for new skills and knowledge.
- Completion of 40 TTCs and 1 IMT to ensure skill training program at grass root level including less developed regions.
- The quality component of training and skill development will be further enhanced. This will be done through capacity building of trainers by setting up a permanent institute for trainers.
- Existing training of domestic workers will be extended, and all potential female migrant workers will be trained. The Government has set a target to increase the share of female migrant workers from 16.51 percent in 2014 to 30 percent in 2020.

To achieve the above mentioned objectives pertinent to migration and development cited in the 7 Five Year Plan, the Ministry has undertaken a number projects and programs funded by GoB and the development partners.

26. Sustainable Development Goal and Migration

Due to growing importance of international migration in development, 3 specific targets are proposed in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). These are:

- Target 8.8: protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments of all workers, including migrant workers, particularly women migrants, and those in precarious employment.
- Targets 10.7 : facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies.
- Target 10c: by 2030, reduce to less than 3% the transaction costs of migrant remittances and eliminate remittance corridors with costs higher than 5%)

To achieve the migration related goals and targets set in the SDG and monitor the progress, the Ministry has formed a committee with the chair of Joint Secretary (Development and Planning) of this Ministry which has already started working. The committee will come with specific recommendations and plan of action to assist in achieving the goals and targets in relation to migration and development.

27. Key Challenges

Diaspora involvement is investment: Concerning the goal of accelerating the rate of public and private investment, it is worth noting that the Bangladeshi Diaspora possesses a wealth of resources, knowledge, and cross-border networks that could contribute to trade, investment and skills development. Diaspora investors are unlikely to be attracted to contexts characterized by a number of challenge areas i.e. governance and infrastructure. Some measures to encourage foreign investment relate to the reform of investment codes to ease the process of setting up businesses, the provision of tax incentives, the establishment of 'one-stop-shops' that expedite in one single place the different administrative procedures, or that provide referral services relating to business creation.

Development of Entrepreneurship: More targeted financial, training and social protection policies and measures could support migrant-led SMEs development. Particular attention should be paid to enhancing the regulation of financial entities providing credit and micro-credit. Entrepreneurs should also be offered information and opportunities for training, and protection against risks e.g. insurance, to prevent them from failing into unsustainable debt.

Reforming Remittance Regime: A key challenge is to improve the regulatory frameworks governing remittances to ensure that: (i) remittance senders and beneficiaries receive accurate and transparent information on remittance, (ii) financial and non-financial institutions in the remittance market provide inclusive services and are publicly accountable; (iii) cooperation with countries of destination to lay the ground for agreements between central banks to facilitate remittances through the management of exchange rates; and (iv) regulatory frameworks allow for the development of partnerships between financial and non-financial institutions to expand service provision, including diversifying the offer of transfer options. These issues have been addressed in various national, regional and international forum such as Colombo Process, SDG, GFMD, etc.

Economic and Social Integration of Returnees: The Ministry is trying to formulate a policy/guideline which will help the returned migrants to integrate with the mainstream socio-economic activities of the country. It is to be noted that Probashi Kallayan Bank is currently providing 'rehabilitation loan' to those returned migrants who are destitute, marooned and victim of unexpected circumstances. Such initiative need to be enhanced after proper scrutiny of individual cases.

Protection of migrant workers and their families: To protect migrant workers and their families, a good number of initiatives have been undertaken by the Ministry. The number of Labour Wings in the Mission already has increased, their capacity has been developed and strengthened through continuous training and interaction so that they can protect migrant workers in destination countries. Initiatives has been taken for periodic review of bilateral and multilateral employment agreement and generate greater oversight of working conditions to ensure protection of expatriate workers including special emphasis on female migrant workers. The Ministry is also working for eliminating fraudulent recruitment activities and ensures standard and ethical practices. To protect the family members of migrant workers, who may remain vulnerable due to absence of their bread earners, the Ministry is working through the DEMO, and local administration. An enforcement team has been constituted by this Ministry to detect and punish any fraudulence practice happening in the migration process.

Modernizing Migration Governance System: During last few years migration governance process has gone through a lot of transformation. Digitization is one of the tools of this reform which is being deployed and used by the ministry and its agencies. The ministry believes that comprehensive digitization of the migration process is also required for the effort to demonstrate results related to sound planning and management of labour migration as well as for the recruiting agency regulation.

Resource Allocation: Currently the Ministry is receiving around 0.25% of the total Annual Development Program (ADP) of the government in carrying out migration and skill development programs and projects. For rapid improvement of the migration related indicators set in the 7th Five Year Plan and SDG, more resources need to be allocation for this Ministry. Apart from GoB funding, the Ministry is also exploring possible funding through development partners such as World Bank, ADB, IDB, CIDA, SDC, ILO and IOM in implementing development projects and programs.

28. Way Forward

In the coming years, the Ministry has to put concerted efforts with the involvement of other stakeholders from government and non-government sectors in order to achieve the goals and targets of the labour migration sector. It also has to focus on the following areas and prepare a time bound action plan for the implementation:

- Attaining objectives of 7th FYP through undertaking development projects and programs.
- Linking migration with national development.
- Strengthen institutional reforms to achieve the nation's vision 2020, 7th FYP and migration related targets of SDGs.
- Strengthen skill development program by upgrading skills, international certification and mutual skill recognition.
- Safe and decent work for female migrant workers.
- Develop an efficient, inclusive, governance framework for labour migration.
- Establish more coordinated mechanism to ensure strong governance in the labour migration recruitment process.
- Mainstreaming migration into development process.

- Updating migration related legal frameworks and enforcement
- Successfully holding GFMD at Dhaka in 2016
- Building awareness amongst the aspirants workers so that they are not exploited by any person or agencies.
- Recruiting agents need to be proactive in exploring overseas labour market for Bangladeshi workers

29. Conclusion:

The study shows that in the endeavors of creating overseas job opportunities for Bangladeshi workers and in the governance of migration, Bangladesh has made great achievements in 2015. The Ministry has also been successful in maintaining the existing traditional manpower markets and creating new opportunities for Bangladeshi manpower which resulted in overall growth in the overseas employment. However, there are huge challenges in developing a national strategy to integrate migration in the development initiatives envisaged in the 7th Five Year Plans and other recent policy documents. In addition to these hosting the GFMD successfully in the end of this year in Dhaka will pave the way of a new era for Bangladesh in the field of migration and development.

The activities of the Ministry in Picture



On the occasion of International Migration Day 2015, a Seminar on ‘Sustainable Development Goals and Migration’ was organized in the Ministry on 17 December 2015.



On the occasion of International Migration Day 2015, a rally was organized on 18 December 2015. The rally was led by Hon'ble Minister Mr. Nurul Islam, BSc.



The main program on the occasion of International Migration Day 2015 was held in Bangabandhu International Conference Centre (BICC), Dhaka.



On the occasion of International Migration Day 2015, a Fair was organized on 18 December 2015 in BICC. The Fair was inaugurated by Hon'ble Chief Guest of the program.



H.E. Australian High Commissioner to Bangladesh met Hon'ble Minister over a Courtesy Call on 28 October 2015.



H.E. Ambassador of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to Bangladesh met Hon'ble Minister over a Courtesy Call on 29 October 2015.



Hon'ble Minister Mr. Nurul Islam, BSc, is distributing certificates among the participants successfully completed ToT arranged through City & Guilds on 20 October 2015.



Hon'ble Minister Mr. Nurul Islam, BSc is among the newly elected non-gazetted Government employees samity at their reception and installation ceremony on 21 December 2015.



Hon'ble Minister Mr. Nurul Islam, BSc is with the Secretary of the Ministry, Director General of BMET and other high officials on the occasion of signing of the Annual Performance Agreement (APA) on 8 October 2015.





Hon'ble Minister Mr. Nurul Islam, BSc with the Secretary of the Ministry, Director General of BMET and other high officials are paying homage to the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on his 40th Death Anniversary and National Mourning Day on 15 August 2015.



Signing bilateral MoU with visiting Japanese delegation on 8 July 2015.



Holding bilateral meetings with visiting Malaysian Delegation on 3 November 2015.



Holding Meeting in the Ministry with visiting Saudi Arabian Delegation on 14 May 2015.

