

**Situation of women migrants in  
Bangladesh**  
**An indepth overview**

**Study submitted by  
BOMSA  
and conducted by Samiha Huda, Consultant**

**for  
DanChurchAid, Bangladesh**

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## Chapter One: Background and Rationale

Economic disparities between the developed and developing countries play as the key determinant of people's movement. The increase in women migrants has different explanations. Both- supply and demand side has its own realities. The issue of labour migration in countries like Bangladesh is often discussed and debated for various reasons. Extensive outflow of labour migrants into regional, if not global, labour markets benefit the national economy and at the same time witness a number of challenging situation. The types of labour that are currently in demand have changed substantially since the 1990s in terms of both overall magnitude of migrant workers and increased diversification in their job. Migration has always been the most effective livelihood strategy for the people of Bangladesh. Today the potential migrants migrate to overseas countries as their right to ensure a better livelihood, mainly to Middle Eastern and South East Asia countries.

Migration has always been an effective livelihood strategy for the people of Bangladesh. Today, significant labour migration has become more of a reality for people in Bangladesh and will remain so in the future. An estimated 7.5 million migrant workers have left Bangladesh since official records of labour migration started in 1976. While the total number of migrants was about 6000 in 1976, there has been phenomenal growth since that year. A significant number of people migrate for overseas employment, mainly to Middle Eastern countries and some of the South East Asian countries every year. The recruitment process of migrant workers in Bangladesh is complex. The whole process is characterized by a host of intermediaries called *dalal*<sup>1</sup>. The recruitment of migrant workers is in the hands of the private recruiting agents and individuals.

Migration of Bangladeshi labour force to the Middle East commenced with the oil price boom in Gulf countries in the seventies. Middle East migration covers a range of human resources from low skilled labour to the semi-skilled and professional groups. An estimated 7.5 million migrant workers have left Bangladesh since official records of labour migration started in 1976. While the total number of migrants was about 6000 in 1976, there has been phenomenal growth since then. Yearly migration from Bangladesh is about 0.3 - 0.4 million. In 2010, the migration from Bangladesh was figured 3, 90,702 (BMET). Although the unemployment rate rose in Asia due to the global economic crisis (2009-2010), its impact was most severe in the export dependent economy (World Migration Report, IOM 2010). However, Bangladeshi women migrants were less affected as most of them were involved in the informal service industry. From 1991 to 2010 a total number of 1, 48,460 women migrated to overseas employment in various countries of the world (BMET).

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<sup>1</sup> Intermediaries in the recruiting process, who has not approval from any recruiting authorities or from the government, often reported to cheat and fraud migrant workers.

The recruitment process of migrant workers in Bangladesh is complex. The whole process is characterized by a host of intermediaries called *dalal*<sup>2</sup>. The recruitment of migrant workers is mostly in the hands of the private recruiting agents and individuals with some exception of intervention of the Government of Bangladesh.

Today, the country's economy largely depends on remittances sent by the migrant workers. Bangladeshi migrant workers send billions of dollars as remittances each year with a positive impact on the Bangladeshi economy. In other word, the country's economy largely depends on remittances sent by the migrant workers. Bangladesh stands amongst the top ten remittance receiving countries in the world (Please see Figure 1 in Annex 1). The remittances make a substantial contribution to family welfare, social development and macroeconomic growth. It was recorded that US\$ 14.27b was sent as remittances in 2012 from migrant workers (Source: Bangladesh Bank). Remittances from Bangladeshi migrants recently have constituted a larger share of the country's development budget than foreign aid as it constitutes 11.2% of GDP, which is 6 times that of Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) and 9 times the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) flow to Bangladesh. This not only helps to get the national economy rolling, at the same time migrants' families are directly benefited from the remittance flow.

Globalization, along with local factors, has made the management of the labour migration a complex and difficult undertaking. Therefore, the multi complex migrations in Bangladesh always lack a comprehensive response to address the problem which is important for protecting migrants' rights.

DanChurchAid has been working on humanitarian assistance and long-term development in Asia for the last 30 years. The work in Asia focuses on many important issues including migration and poverty. Considered as one of the poorest and most densely populated countries in the world, nearly half of the country's 160 million inhabitants live below the poverty line.

Bangladesh, as an agriculture-based country is extremely susceptible to natural disasters, which occur quite frequently, adding to the hardship and poverty faced by its people. A large number of the population, lose their shelter to natural disasters and live a life with a great deal of difficulty. Natural calamities and disasters force people to migrate – internally and internationally.

DanChurch Aid (DCA) Bangladesh has been working to help the disadvantaged since 1980 in rural districts. A more comprehensive approach has been taken recently to address the situation of migrant workers.

### **Project Objectives:**

- Empowerment of migrant workers through information provision leading to increased access to services, including justice;
- Capacity building of related institutions and local government representatives for more efficient and effective systems; and

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<sup>2</sup> Intermediaries in the recruiting process who has not approval from any recruiting authorities or from the government, often reported to cheat and fraud migrant workers.

- Advocacy for improvements in systems and increased accountability of institutions

### Scope of the study

The study intends to know the situation of female labour migrants in selected districts of Bangladesh. As the project is approaching its final year of implementation, this study would document the effect of the project implementation and activities on migrant women's lives. In other words, the study would like to know the status of female migrants and their children. The study will:

- Assess the present situation of female migrants in selected upazilas of Bangladesh
- Recommend input for the improvement of the female migrant workers
- Assess the situation of the children of female migrant workers
- Highlight contribution of female migrant workers in their families
- Recommendations for policy level

This study on female migrants provides an opportunity for all project stakeholders to take stock of the situation of female migrants in Bangladesh. More specifically, it looks beyond migrant women as an individual rather tries to capture the situation of migrants' children and family.

### Methodology

In order to analyse the situation of female migrants a mix of qualitative and quantitative approach has been applied. Adequate training and briefing has been given to survey team. A set of questionnaire was developed, pretested and was reviewed by the funding and implemented agencies and further data was collected, analysed and presented in the report.

Study methodology included review of project documents and reports, conducting questionnaire survey and information collection by applying Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) techniques, especially conducting Focus Group Discussion (FGD) meetings and indepth interviews with return migrant women and their families. The study would include some interesting case study based analysis on two particular areas where in spite of DCA's intervention, women are reported to take up short term employments in India (Mumbai in particular) which in most or all cases through irregular means. Case studies were conducted with full confidentiality. Individual interviews and group interviews would be conducted for different primary and tertiary groups to evaluate the project implementation. Sampling was determined by consulting with sampling expert and shared with funding partners for this study before initiating the study.

FGDs were set in discussion with the two implementing agencies of the project with adequate emphasis given to the FGD participants to express their views and opinions about project activities.

Leading questions were formulated for each interest group such as migrant women, migrant women's children and their families.

Consultation and discussion was continuously maintained with the implementing agencies and focal point in the donor agency.

#### Sampling distribution:

District	respondents to be covered	Number
Dhaka	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Returnee women</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>50</li> </ul>
Manikganj (Sadar)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Returnee women</li> <li>Migrant's family</li> <li>Migrant's children</li> <li>Deportee worker</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>50</li> <li>20</li> <li>10</li> <li>10</li> </ul>
Manikganj (Shingair)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Returnee women</li> <li>Migrant's family</li> <li>Migrant's children</li> <li>Deportee worker</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>50</li> <li>20</li> <li>20</li> <li>10</li> </ul>
Jessore (Sadar)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Returnee women</li> <li>Migrant's family</li> <li>Migrant's children</li> <li>Deportee worker</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>50</li> <li>20</li> <li>20</li> <li>10</li> </ul>
Jessore (Sharsha)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Returnee women</li> <li>Migrant's family</li> <li>Migrant's children</li> <li>Deportee worker</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>50</li> <li>20</li> <li>20</li> <li>10</li> </ul>

#### FGDs

Dhaka	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 FGD (returnee women + current migrants' family)</li> </ul>
Manikganj	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3 FGD (returnee women + boy children of current migrant women + girl and boy children of current migrant women )</li> </ul>
Jessore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3 FGD (returnee women + community members + girl children of current migrant women)</li> </ul>
Brahmanbaria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 FGD (returnee women)</li> <li>1 FGD (migrants children)</li> </ul>

FGDs were conducted to complement the findings from the quantitative survey. It also provided an opportunity to cross check many evidential fact from migrants (returnee) on one hand and migrants' families on the other hand. The FGDs that were conducted with the children of the women migrant workers helped the study team in a great way to understand the difficulties they face in everyday life in absence of their mothers.

#### **Limitation of the evaluation:**

- Due to the limited time given for this study, not all DCA implemented 16 districts could be covered. Not all 16 districts where DCA were implemented could be covered.

## Chapter two: Situation Analysis

Women workforce constitutes half of the population of the country with a huge potential to contribute towards the economic development of the country. Although the sphere of labour migration has traditionally been a male dominated industry in Bangladesh, an increasing need in the service sector industries in many wealthy countries encouraged Bangladeshi women to join the force along with women migrants from other labour sending countries. For example, in the Middle East, women migrants from Bangladesh continue to occupy a major share of the domestic service sector. Official figures show that more than 1, 83,789 Bangladeshi women travelled abroad in search of employment from the period 1991 to 2011 (source: BMET). However, this figure does not reflect the overall number of undocumented women migrants working in South Asia and the Middle East which is believed to be much higher. Due to lack of information in every stage of migration, regardless of sex, both men and women migrants are exploited by middle men/*dalals* and recruiting agencies every moment. When discussing about women migrants, due to gender discrimination, their sufferings double or more. Several studies on migration reveal that economy is the main reason for women to migrate. Yet, the social factor of women's empowerment plays a significant role in making the migration decision. In other words, migration can result from poverty, but it is not always the poorest who migrate, as the costs and opportunities are also involved<sup>3</sup> (World Bank, 2005). There are cases evident where women migrate to escape unhappy social situations, including bad marriages; harassment, violence etc. All these make the women a socially disadvantaged group who saw migration primarily as a quest for independence and a means of realizing self reliance ideally<sup>4</sup>. There are many underlying factors that force people to stay away from their homes in search of a better life.

Individual remittance transfers continue to be an important source of income for many families in developing countries. Although it is hard to assess the financial impact of migration on sending countries, this might be even harder in the context of their social impact. But it can be admitted that remittances (both social and economic remittances) bring about significant changes in social relations within communities and families. Remittance from the women workers constitute 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. The analysis of remittance behavior also reveals that women migrant workers use a safer and secured remittance channel compared to men migrants. Their earnings are utilized more seriously at household levels, mostly on food, education for the children and health care of their family members (Nationwide household remittance survey, IOM Dhaka) which in the long term helps in poverty reduction. With lower wage of women migrants, they tend to send less money home, on average (USD 974) and the household of the women migrants have remittance dependency of about 45%.

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<sup>3</sup> Although the GoB is trying hard to reduce the migration cost at a reach of the poorer population, often aspirant migrants end up spending two three or even four times higher at different stages of migration process.

<sup>4</sup> 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.

Regardless of sex, migrant workers build more assets than the non migrants (Migration remittances and assets in Bangladesh, IOM 2010)<sup>5</sup>. However, with these success stories, there lies the reality where women migrants face additional challenges in sending remittance home especially from the Middle Eastern countries. As they are confined in a household territory with restricted mobility, often they face problem in sending money on a regular basis to their family members at origin.

Due to lack of education and required communication skills Bangladeshi women migrants are less paid compared to other migrant women from other countries such as Philippines, Indonesia, Sri Lanka etc. The average wages of Bangladeshi women workers range from US \$ 100.00 to US \$ 200.00 in the house keeping service sector. For cleaning workers, this amount varies from US \$ 100.00 to US \$ 150.00. If properly skilled and trained in other sectors like Ready Made Garment (RMG), nurses and some other categories of employment the wages are as good as the male workers.

Migration cost is one of the concerning issues in current migration discourse. The women interviewed individually and through FGDs reported paying migration cost within the range between 50,000.00 to 80,000.00 BDT and in some cases as high as 100,000 BDT. These are mostly cases of collection of visa through their close relations staying abroad. But, the official service charge is only 10,000 BDT.

#### **Women in domestic sector:**

There were several bans on women migration from Bangladesh on the lower level of jobs in different years which prevailed up to 2001. Although migration has increased and changed the scenario of national economy in last two decades, we still have 1982 Emigration Ordinance as our major, if not the only one (there is an Overseas Employment Policy existing) document to uphold migrants' right. The 1990 UN Convention was also ratified by the Government on 24 August 2011<sup>6</sup>. The Overseas Employment Policy was enacted on 2006 which recognized women's right to migrate and commit state to facilitate such migration. The new migration Act has been approved by the inter-ministerial meeting and is waiting for vetting in the Cabinet and finally in the Parliament.

Women migrate from different areas of Bangladesh. Even then few districts have been identified as migrant prone areas for women. Community and family play a major role as "safety net". Many reported to be more confident and secured to arrange migration than the middle man/dalal or centre based (district base) recruiting agencies. Once they migrate they try to help other family

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<sup>5</sup> Please see Table 1 in Annex 2.

<sup>6</sup> The ratification of the 1990 UN convention for Protection of the Rights of All Migrants and members of their families is a big step and commitment of GoB.

members/friends to migrate. A study on remittances shows that 9% of the women who remit money home spend the money to send another person abroad<sup>7</sup>.

As indicated, domestic work and care in households constitute together with manufacturing work and nursing are the most female dominated areas in the migration sectors for Bangladeshi women. Despite, many limitations and discomfort a group of women (mostly economically and socially vulnerable to various discriminations) are eager to migrate for a better living and life. Although there is no comprehensive official data base on migration, many short scaled surveys and studies initiated by different agencies/NGOs indicated that most of the Bangladeshi migrant women were married at the first time of their migration. Leaving families behind and coping up in a new destination in a completely new environment and culture was not easy for these women. The most common problem with domestic work is the low pay and long working hours. This sector does not give enough legal protection for the women workers to uphold their rights. The positions of domestic workers are influenced by highly personalized relationship with employers in a particular household which in most cases make it difficult for workers to receive their agreed pay or get time off. The issue is more complicated when another worker with different nationality works in the same household and gets more pay as they are more communicative compared to Bangladeshi workers. In addition the health and safety situation in the home is not satisfactory and were reported to be dangerous some times; hence psychological, physical and sexual abuses are commonly and regularly reported<sup>8</sup>. There are a number of runaway cases especially in the Gulf region.

With regard to acquiring skills while working overseas, the situation is less optimistic for those in the category of ‘unskilled migrant workers’ particularly when they have temporary or short contract in hand. Only a few of the women workers return to national labour force after their return. In the context of our socio-cultural values, a woman would not like to be called a housekeeper or housemaid again when they return. Apart from some social gain<sup>9</sup> in terms of women empowerment, they usually do not have additional marketable skills to offer that could be used to generate an income upon return in the country of origin.

### **Vulnerabilities:**

Women face various kinds of vulnerabilities as far as migration process is concerned. In many cases women do not take the decision by themselves. Someone from the family or perhaps

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<sup>7</sup> Migration remittances and assets in Bangladesh, IOM Dhaka 2010

<sup>8</sup> Gender and Migration: Nicola Piper, Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore, 2005

<sup>9</sup> Empowerment of the women migrant workers may be possible ensuring social and economic re-integration through some 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 . Islam N.

relatives influence them to take decision. In many cases whoever influences for migration decision has a close link with the dalal to process documentation.

#### *Decision for migration:*

Women migrate for various reasons. In most cases regardless of their marital status there is someone else from the family who influences them to migrate. Also the briefing session and training for them take place in such a hurry that sometimes they realize only after migration that they are in a new world of work.

#### *Hours of Work*

Women during the individual interview and FGDs for this study complained about long hours of work and workload. Sometime there is only one maid for a family of 20-30 members in some cases. Average working hours vary but in most cases women work for about 13-14 hours a day and hence they have no leisure time for their own. Some of the women also reported working during the weekends.

#### *Freedom of movement*

As most of the women are confined within the house, they are not allowed to move outside or talk to anyone. "This creates mental stress when you are not allowed to talk to anyone in the house and just obey the order and serve them"- said Honufa (27), returnee housemaid from Dubai.

#### *Abuse:*

There are incidents of abuses where women migrants are more vulnerable than any male. As they cannot move out of the house most are unreported. There are various types of abuses including accusation of stealing, confinement, food withheld, overwork, payment withheld, physical, sexual and verbal abuse.

#### *Migrants' personal hardship:*

Although less discussed or unnoticed, migrants themselves go through a personal hardship during the whole migration phase. As most of them migrate at a high migration cost, in many cases they try to tolerate exploitation<sup>10</sup> as they do not see any option other than recovering the high interest loan they took and the social cost of their migration.

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<sup>10</sup> exploitation in any or various forms

**Children of migrants:**

This is another area less researched in Bangladesh. When one of the parents migrate mostly for a better cause, the children are left behind for a better living. They go through a critical phase because in most cases migrants leave them at their childhood. When the migrating parent is the mother, the situation gets more difficult to manage from both the mother and children's side. Migrant women's children have many difficulties resulting from mother's absence. Their strengths to face life's challenges seems minimal compared to non migrant's children. Some research shows that these children performed poor in academic activities, lacked concentration in studies and often failed to improve performance due to lack of additional help from the family (which is often in terms of moral support and encouragement from the mother). Studies also show that they did not participate in extra curricular activities due to poor moral support and sometimes face behavioural problems such as aggression, cruelty, stealing, hyperactivity etc.

## Chapter Three: National Statistics and analysis of preliminary findings:

Before going into findings from the primary data an attempt was made to analyse the official national data available at BMET<sup>11</sup> which would at a later part of the report help in analysis of the primary data varification.

### A. National statistics on migration

**Table 1. Country-wise Women migration in 2007-2011 (top ten countries)**

	Country	Total number of women migrants	Total number of male migrants	Total	% of women migrants
1.	Bahrain	523	93188	93711	0.55
2.	Jordan	7119	2355	9474	75.14
3.	Kuwait	61	4470	4531	1.34
4.	Lebanon	54935	7385	62320	88.
5.	Libya	468	41034	41502	1.12
6.	Malaysia	1712	416815	418527	0.40
7.	Mauritius	7757	9850	17607	44.05
8.	Oman	2652	287288	289940	0.91
9.	Saudi Arabia	13592	358765	372357	3.65
10.	United Arab Emirates	31363	1357097	1388460	2.25
	Total	120,182	2578247	2698429	

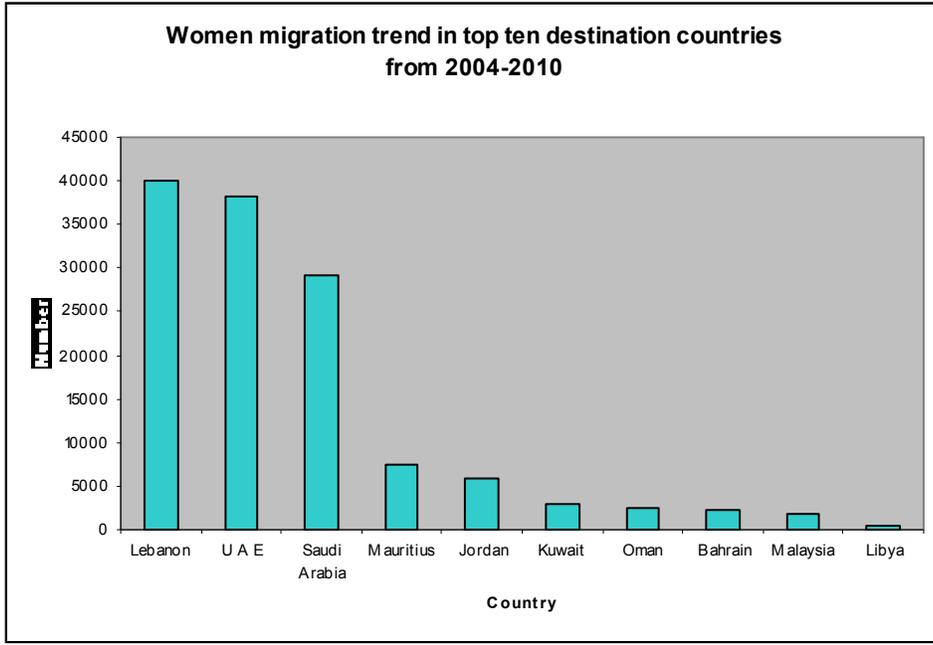
Source: BMET data base

There is no single formula that can be used to explain the trend of women labour migration by time or destination. For many years Saudi Arabia with UAE, Lebanon and some other Gulf countries in the Middle East were at the high rank for receiving Bangladeshi women migrant workers. Ever since new migration to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) is at a pause there has been a drastic fall in the overall flow of migration in KSA and Kuwait. Similarly significant rise in migration in Lebanon was also noticed in last few years. Foreign housemaid became popular in Lebanon after civil war where maids from the Philippines and Sri Lanka ranked top in their female labour market. Gradually women domestic workers from other nationals enter into the market and lately Bangladeshi women's high flow is noticed in Lebanese domestic

<sup>11</sup> Currently the only official source of data on migration

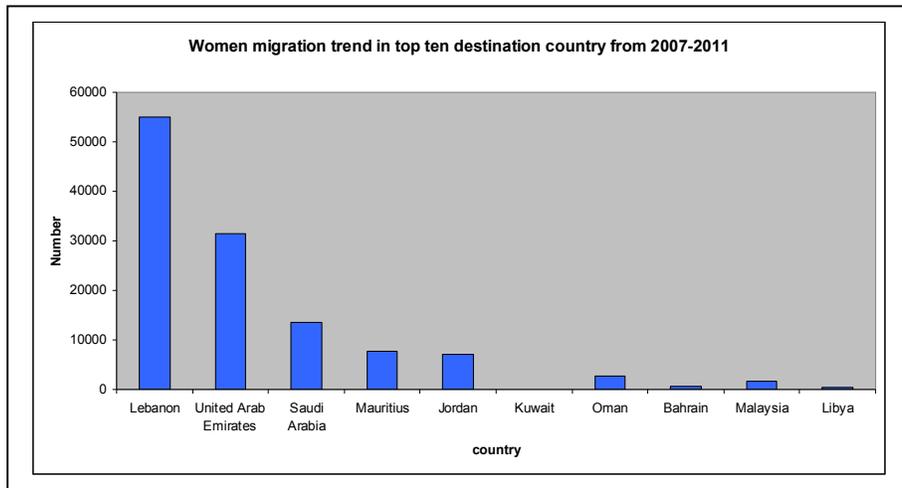
employment service sector and it is continuing as a popular destination for women workers especially those who are taking up job as housemaids (please see Table 1, Chart 1 & 2).

**Chart 1. Women migration trend in top 10 destination countries from 2004-2010**



Source: BMET

**Chart 2. Women migration trend in top destination countries in last five years**



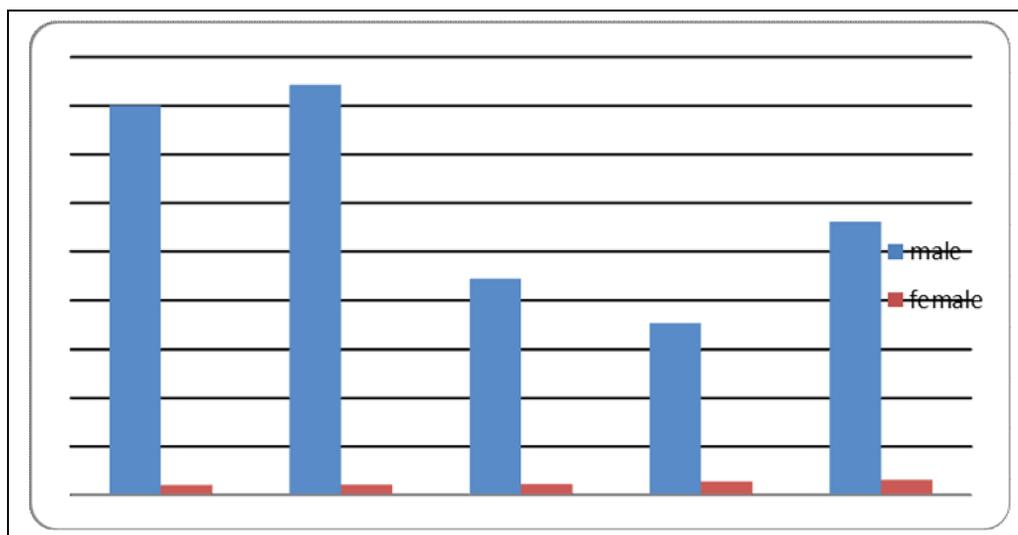
Source: BMET

**Table 2: Flow of Bangladeshi women migrants in last five years (2007-2011)**

Year	Total number of migrants	Total number of women migrant	Percentage
2007	800,16	20,343	2.47
2008	842,662	20,827	2.41
2009	443,141	22,224	4.77
2010	355,449	27,706	7.23
2011	562,313	30,576	5.45
2012	607,870		5.00

Source: BMET

**Chart 3. Migration by sex in last five years (2007-2011)**



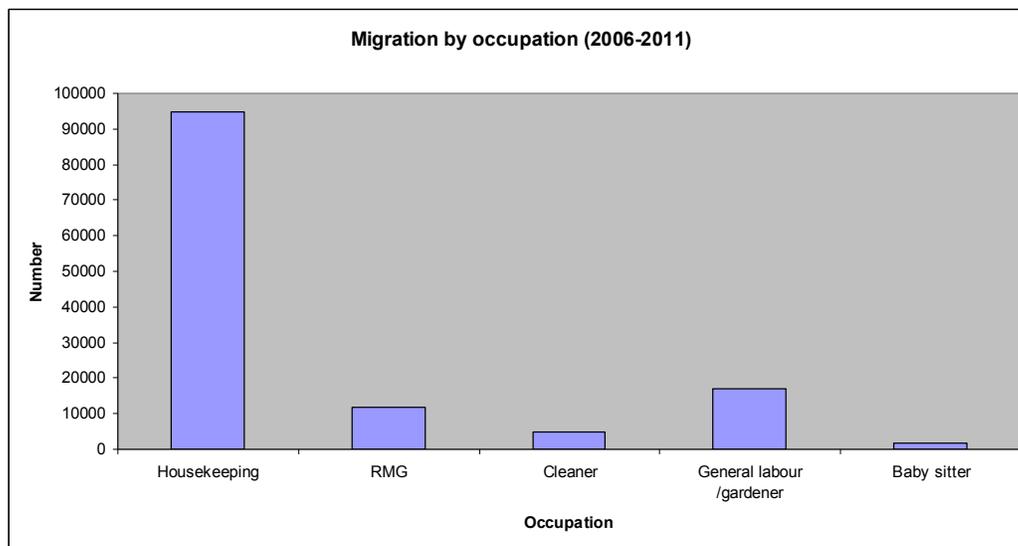
Regardless of destined countries, women tend to migrate as housemaids or housekeepers. Categorized as low-skilled labour, women from Bangladesh with no or low literacy level found this as the most suitable overseas job/employment that can be manageable from both supply and receiving point of view. Today, according to BMET data source out of the 5% (Table 2 and Chart 3) women who are migrating in the overseas job market, 98% of them are migrating as domestic aides.

**Table 3 : Women migration by major occupation from 2006-2011**

Sl. No.	Occupation	Number of workers
1.	Housemaids/Housekeeping	94,623
2.	Readymade Garment Industry (RMG)	11827
3.	Cleaner	4749
4.	General labour/gardener	16,941
5.	Baby sitter	1893
	Total	130,033

Source: BMET database

**Chart 4. Migration trend by occupation**



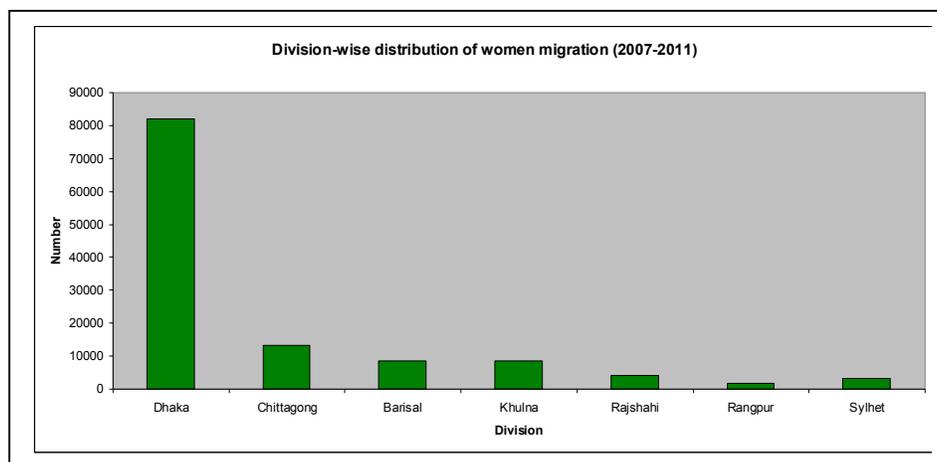
Source: BMET database

Table 3 above explains the occupational information of women migrants. Although women are migrating in various categories of employment, in reality majority of them (almost 98%) are taking up jobs in the domestic sector. This table also gives a hint of errors in recording information at BMET which is made through a form (mostly filled out by dalals) and later inserted in the database as input by BMET assigned person (this issue is further discussed in the recommendation section in detail).

However, Migration from Bangladesh is not equitably distributed in all the divisions and districts. Most of the documentation preparation and process take place in Dhaka division due to various reasons. As resources are easily accessible, women prefer to come to Dhaka and stay until their departure. Many tend to hide the nature of work they have been selected from their families and relatives. Community's perception about housemaid/household aide as an occupation is still a question of status. Women who are migrating are also not comfortable to

disclose their occupation easily. The FGD findings re-established this fact once more during the study period. However, although it is stated in many research and publications that "the poorest of the poor" do not migrate due to high migration cost, if so, the better off community (compared with the poorest) although migrating, tend not to disclose their occupation as housemaids. There are few districts identified as women migrant prone districts in Bangladesh. Family, social and "safety net" work actively for migrants. In most cases of relatively successful migration, it was seen that close relatives and friends as migrant workers are dependable source for potential workers. Some districts are prominent in this regard. Dhaka, Manikganj, Faridpur, Narayanganj, Gazipur are the dominating districts from where women migration is taking place significantly. These districts are not only identified as top ranked in divisional distribution, but also highest among other districts and divisions.

**Chart 5. Trend in women migration in last five years (by divisions)**



Source: BMET

Migration from Bangladesh is not equitably distributed in all the division and districts. Most of the documentation preparation and process take place in Dhaka division due to various reasons. As resources are easily accessible, women prefer to come to Dhaka and stay until their departure. Many tend to hide the nature of work they have selected from their families and relatives. Community's perception about housemaid/household aide as an occupation is still a question of status. Women who are migrating are also not comfortable to disclose their occupation easily. The FGD findings re-established this fact once more during the study period. However, although it is stated in many research and publications that "the poorest of the poor" do not migrate due to high migration cost, if so, the better off community (compared with the poorest) although migrating, tend not to disclose their occupation as housemaids. There are few districts identified as women migrant prone districts in Bangladesh. Family, social and "safety net" work actively

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### **Box: A close look into Manikganj district**

#### **Manikganj: The district with highest percentage of women migrants**

Family network works the best for migrant women in Manikganj. Being closest to Dhaka district, women have been migrating from Manikganj for years now. Women migrants rank this district the top most among all other district. Official records reveal that 21.42% women migrated in various labor receiving countries in last 5 years. Unofficial record would certainly be much higher if considered. Women of Manikganj district along with some other districts of the country have been well exposed to development initiatives. As a result, women of this place are more aware and outbound to different socio economic activities. Yet, the reach-poor gap exists like any other rural areas of Bangladesh, and women from poor and marginalized families become inspired to adopt migration as an alternative to poverty reduction and livelihood option. As the migration cost is less than male migrants, more women are leaving the country as migrant workers.

Ever since NGOs and civil society took over migration issue and started actively working on it, many of the NGOs for various convenient reasons intervene in Manikganj districts. The years of intervention activities and effective communications have made people more informed and conscious. Organizations like Bangladesh Mohila Sromik Association (BOMSA) have been working with women migrants in the district for last nine years and trying to reach as many women as possible through various intervention activities including community development, awareness raising (through information and communication campaigns) for the migrant community, Case management, advocacy for migrants' rights with local government etc. BOMSA today is a well reputed migration organization in the district. The organization's goodwill and working relation with the local government and elite group as well as the migrant community has helped them to take measures against the exploitation by dalals and sub agents successfully. The regular local level meetings such as courtyard meeting, bazar meetings, and policy advocacy meetings

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 who are already staying abroad. Eventually migration from these districts is increasing. Although migration is at a raise, many of the community members and women (potential migrants) are not that aware about the procedures

of migration. Although some NGOs and activist groups are working in some locality, the information they are disseminating is not adequate in terms of the number of interested women in a respective area. Therefore, this group is often cheated by known and unknown people who are "helping" them for migration. Aspirant migrants from some districts are not even aware about the legal channels of migration.

**Table 4: District-wise percentage of women migration in last five years (2007-2011)**

Division	Districts	% of women migrants (N)
Dhaka	Dhaka	14.29 (138,259)
	Faridpur	13.97 (59,343)
	Gazipur	9.74 (69,324)
	Manikganj	21.41 (61,168)
	Narayanganj	11.14 (76,246)
Chittagong	Chittagong	0.22 (324,111)
	Bandarban	3.53 (1,047)
	Brahmanbaria	2.66 (154,414)
	Chadpur	1.44 (128,586)
	Comilla	1.40 (335,977)
	Rangamati	3.11 (1,477)
Barisal	Barisal	8.58 (42,766)
	Barguna	9.14 (10,372)
	Jhalokathi	8.38 (10,718)
	Patuakhali	11.07 (11,398)
	Pirojpur	6.34 (17,134)
Khulna	Khulna	7.31 (12,736)
	Bagerhat	6.66 (12,811)
	Jessore	5.19 (43,656)
	Satkhira	6.24 (13,074)
Rajshahi	Rajshahi	3.05 (14,447)
	Jaipurhat	3.24 (6,743)
	Naogaon	3.46 (20,556)
Rangpur	Rangpur	3.05 (11,527)
	Dinajpur	4.18 (7,248)
	Nilphamari	5.75 (4,480)
Sylhet	Panchagarh	6.38 (1,426)
	Habiganj	3.54 (49,074)
	Moulvibazar	4.56 (12,811)

Source BMET data base

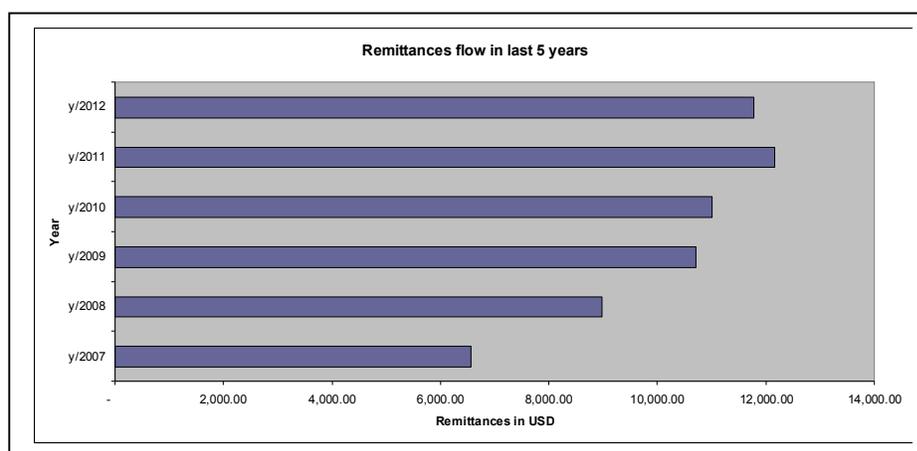
N= total number of migrant workers in the district

### Remittances:

Remittances sent by the migrants of Bangladesh contribute to the country's economy. The increasing trend in remittance flow over the period (see Chart 6 below) established this fact.

Major share of the country’s remittances comes from the Gulf region. Although, globally there are ups and downs in the overall flow of migration due to political and economic reasons, as most of the women migrants are into informal/domestic sphere, and some in other non-import/export bound employment (such as cleaning job, general labour etc.), the remittances inflow hold an upraising trend. Although the sex disaggregated remittance data was not available in Bangladesh Bank database, the overall trend shows the same assumption.

**Chart 7. Remittances flow in last 6 years (2007-2012)**



Source: Bangladesh Bank

## B. Findings from Primary Data

**Table 5. Profile of the respondents (returnee)**

Average Age	32 years (n=200)
Marital status	Married 96% Widow 2% Divorce 1% Unmarried 1%
Literacy/education status	no schooling 9% upto grade V 70% upt to grade VIII 19% uptp S.S.C 2%
Average year of last migration	2.6 years
Occupation	Houseaide 97% Care giver 2% Other 1%

**Table 6. Reasons for migration**

<b>Reasons</b>	<b>% (number)</b>
Poverty	95%
Increase/change status in the family/community	4%
Other	1%

n=200

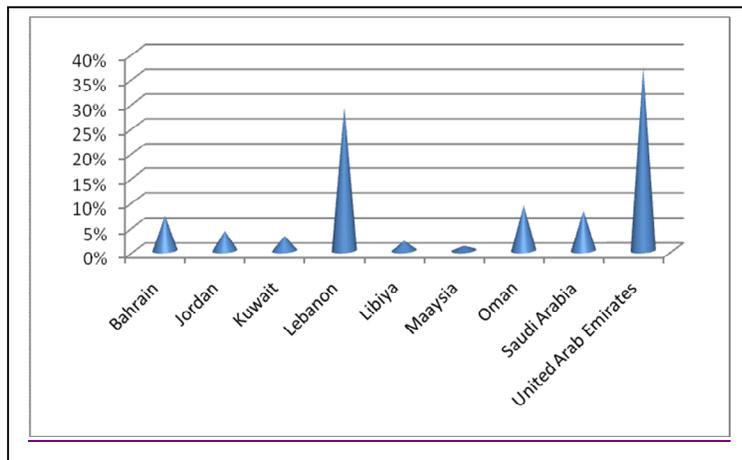
Respondents were asked about their primary reason for migration decision. As high as 95% women reported that poverty was the main reason for them to take migration decision. Interestingly 4% reported that they migrated to increase their status in the family and community. Previous research and studies show that status is an important factor in women's empowerment. In the case of migration,

**Table 7. Source of migration information**

<b>Information source</b>	<b>% (number)</b>
Brother sisters	18%
Father/mother/ inlaws	10%
Neighbours / community people	30%
Relatives	16%
Self	10%
Middle man/Dalal	8%
Spouse	4%
Other	4%
Total respondents	200

Respondants were asked about their source of migration information which had made an influence on them to take migration decision ultimately. As rightly discussed in the context of this study, neighbours and community play an important role and even worked as a “safety/trusted network system” in migration decision as 30% of the total respondents reported that neighbours /community people were their primary source of information. Families also play an important role as a source. Dalals although very active in the migration processing phase, only 4% respondents reported that dalas were their source of migration information. The 4% who reported other sources mainly referred to the local media activities/ campaign and NGO activities on migration as their source of information.

**Chart 8. Major destination country of returnee of four upazials**



**Table 8. Major destination country**

Major destination* country	Manikganj District		Jessore District	
	% Sadar	% Shingair	% Sadar	% Sharsha
Bahrain	12	14	0	2
Jordan	0	8	6	2
Kuwait	8	2	2	0
Lebanon	24	56	26	10
Libiya	0	0	6	0
Maaysia	2	0	0	0
Oman	0	0	28	8
Saudi Arabia	18	2	12	4
United Arab Emirates	36	18	20	74

n= 200

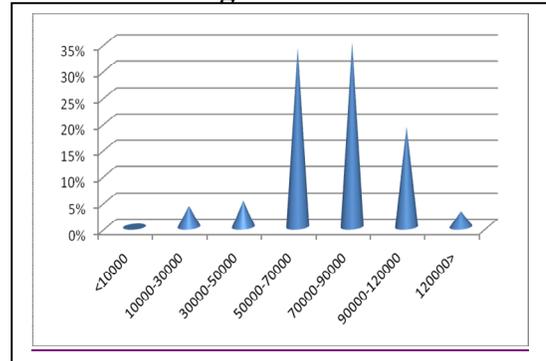
\* Last destination country

The data from the sample area also represented similar pattern regarding migrants destination country (please see Chart 2). Respondents (returnee women) were asked about their last country of migration at the time of interview and it was found that 37% and 29% women reported United Arab Emirates and Lebanon as their last country of migration consecutively (Chart 8). As discussed in the earlier section about an informal dependency on safety network system, interestingly same was observed in the sample upazilas within the respondents. For example, as shown in Table 8 returnees from Oman was significantly high in percentage (28%) in Jessore sadar and similarly Bahrain was a popular destination for women in Manikganj (26%).

**Table 9. Migration Cost**

Migration cost	
Average migration cost (BDT)	70,737 (USD 884)
<10,000	0%
10,000-30,000	4%
30,000-50,000	5%
50,000-70,000	34%
70,000-90,000	35%
90,000-120,000	19%
>120,000	3%

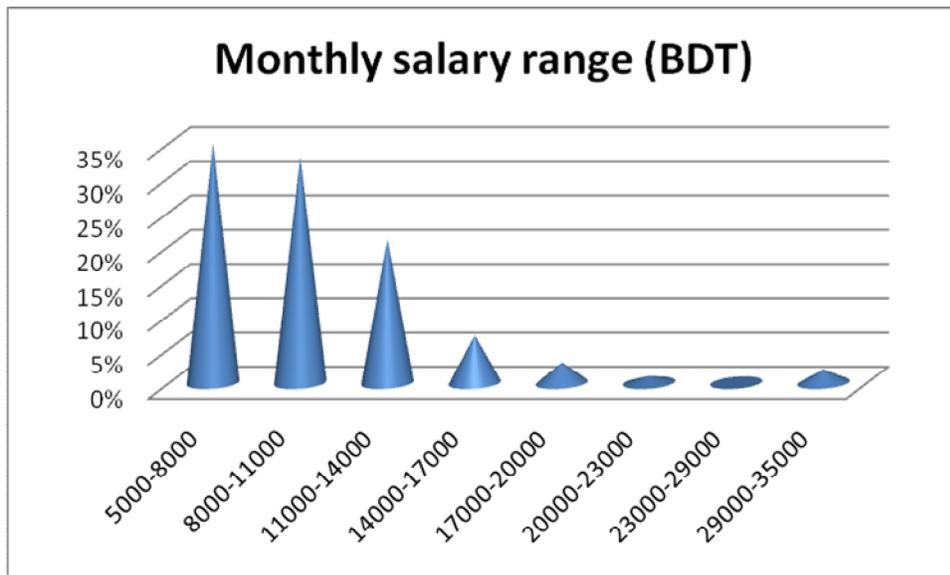
**Chart 9: Migration Cost**



N=80

Respondents (family members of the migrant women) were asked how much the migrant have spent as their net (excluding passpost cost, training cost etc) cost for migration. On an average about 70,737 \*USD 884) were spent as migration cost. There is no regional pattern in migration cost i.e. cost did not vary from region to region as it can be assumed that dalals/middleman takes money as much as they can get as a deal regardless of region or area from a potential migrant.

**Chart 10. Salary of respondents in four**



**Table 10. Migrants' salary**

<b>Salary</b>				
Average salary earned (BDT monthly)		10,713 (USD 133)		
	Manikganj Sadar (%)	Manikganj Shingair (%)	Jessore Sadar (%)	Jessore Sharsha (%)
5,000-8,000	58	50	10	22
8,000-11,000	24	28	38	40
11,000-14,000	14	20	34	16
14,000-17,000	2	2	14	8
17,000-20,000	2	0	4	6
20,000-23,000	0	0	0	2
23,000-29,000	0	0	0	0
29,000-35,000	0	0	0	6

n= 200

With the dream of having a better life, women migrate abroad mostly in the low skilled service sector. Often not offered even the salary they were promised. However, the average salary a woman migrant worker gets once she is placed in a house at the destined country (as housemaid or hosuekeeper) is BDT 10,713 only (USD 133) . Almost 35% returnee women re reported to receive the salary between 5,000 to 8,000 Taka and 30% received between 8,000 to 12,000 Taka per month. Most of the respondents reported that they recieved salary irregularly; even their salaries were withheld for 2-4 months without any valid reason. Overall salary tended to be slightly high among women from Jessore region. although the reason remained unclear, an assumption can be made that salary and benefit is being compromised in Manikganj region as most women are easily migrating from the area frequently.

**Table 11. Information of savings**

<b>savings utlized for</b>	
House repair	70%
Children's education	11%
Purchase food	19%

Respondents were asked about their savings habit. As high as 70% returnee women reported that the amount was utlized for house repair and re-consturction. About 19% returned reported to use the savings for food consumption and only 11% reported to spent the money directly for their children's education.

**Table 12. Information on remittances**

<b>Remittances (in BDT)</b>	
Average remitted amount in last one year	85,378 (USD 1,067)
<b>Whether sent any money home in last one year</b>	
Yes	97%
No	3%

n=200

**Table 14. Receiving remittances**

<b>Remittance receiver</b>	
Spouse	42%
Parents (mother/father)	30%
Siblings (sister/brother)	14%
Children (son/daughter)	7%
Other (in-laws, relatives etc)	7%

n=194

<p>“Sisters are more trusted”- said Jahanara (50) from Jessore</p>
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Almost 97% returnee reported to send remittance home. About 42% of them sent money to their spouse. 30% reported that they have sent money to their parents (mother 20% and father 10%), while 14% women reported that they have sent money in the name of either their brothers or sisters. About 14% women sent money in the name of their children or to in-laws and relatives.

**Table 15. Remittance Channel**

<b>Media for sending remittances</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Through banking channel/money exchange	96%
<i>Hundi</i> <sup>12</sup>	1%
Relatives	3%

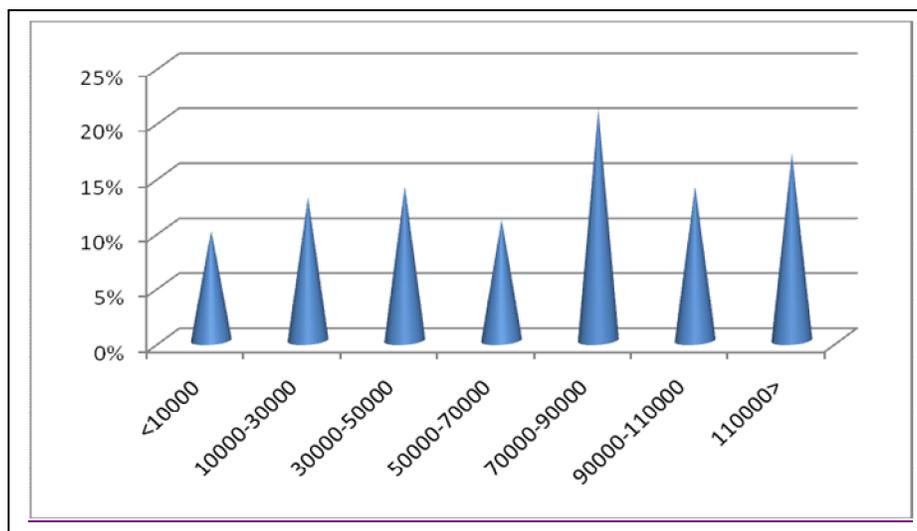
n= 194

Banking channel has been the most popular and preferred channel to send money home. 96% of the returnee women who has sent money home reported to send through banking channel or money exchange offices. Only 1% reported to used *hundi* as a medium of money transfer.

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Informal and risk involved channel

**Chart 11. Remittance information of four upazilas**



**Table 16. Remittance sent home in last one year**

Remittances (BDT)	Manikganj Sadar (%)	Manikganj Shingair (%)	Jessore Sadar (%)	Jessore Sharsha (%)
<10,000	10	15	10	5
10,000-30,000	10	5	20	15
30,000-50,000	35	5	10	5
50,000-70,000	15	10	15	5
70,000-90,000	15	45	15	10
90,000-110,000	5	15	25	10
110,000>	10	5	5	50

n=80

Again, there is no single pattern or general distribution of remittances sent home. Family members of women migrants were asked about the amount they received as remittance from the migrant women in last one year.

**Table 17. Reasons for return**

<b>Reasons</b>	<b>% (number)</b>
Expiration of visa/ contract	45%
Illegal/irregular status	14%
Leave	1%
Irregular or no payment of salary	3%
Personal illness	4%
Physical and mental torture	7%
For children	8%
Irregular food	2%
Mal treatment/abuse	2%
Other*	14%

\* other reasons included purchase of assets, death of a family member, marriage etc.

n=200

Returnee women were further asked about the reasons of their return. About 45% women reported visa or contract expiration as the main reason for their return, while 14% reported the irregular status led them return eventually. There were other reasons for their return such as mental and physical torture by the employer, return for children, personal illness etc.

**Table 18. Information on Training**

<b>Training</b>	<b>% (number)</b>
<b>Knowledge on training</b>	
knows about facilities of trainig	66%
Do not know	34%
<b>received any relevant training before migration</b>	
Yes	46%
No	54%

n=200

Returnee women were asked if they know about training facilities for migrant women and 66% reported that they were informed that training is being provided to the women who wants to go abroad. Returnee women were asked whether they received any training or not. About 46% of the women said that they received some training (which was mainly communication and language based) before migrating. The rest reported they did not have any training before migration. Women who live near Dhaka have more knowledge on training facilities than remote areas. Such as women from Manikganj has better knowledge than women from Rangpur (only 20% women in Rangpur said that they know about such facilities)

**Table 19. Communication with family**

Communication	
Average interval of phone calls (in days)	15 days

I was fortunate to have adequate mobility while I was abroad. Although my status was irregular in Jordan, I could communicate with my family members whenever I wanted. –Shiwly Begum (35), Returnee from Jordan, Dhaka

Although communication has been much easier in the world today, the Bangladesh migrant women work in a relatively conservative environment particularly those who live in the Saudi Arabia and other conservative Islamic countries. Their mobility restriction and irregular wage payments often restrict them to make frequent communication with families

at origin. “I could only call my children when my *Malik* (owner) was kind enough. There were incidents where I was not allowed to make phone calls to my family. After requesting a number of times, they only allow a phone call for few minutes”- said Farida (28), Shingair, Manikganj. Again the whole situation cannot be generalized, rather it should be analyzed as case basis.

**Table 20. Communication with Bangladesh Mission abroad**

Ever communicated (directly or with other people’s support)	% (number)
Yes	1%
No	99%

n= 200

The role of Bangladesh Mission is highly discussed in the migration management issue. Respondents were asked if they have tried to contact directly or indirectly with the representatives of the concerned officials of Bangladesh Mission in their respective areas. Almost all (99%) said that they never tried to contact them for any reason. The reasons behind such reluctance were mainly due to “non-helping attitude” and “non-cooperation” from the officials – many reported.

When I was in most need to be in contact with Bangladesh Mission, I did not have their contact information. The Bangladeshi driver in the same house told me not to waste time on them. Rather I should try to get help from other Bangladeshi workers to send me home – A victim of torture and abuse (returnee from Lebanon)

## Situation of the deportee/ forced returnee women workers

An attempt was made to know the situation of the deportee women workers under this study. A total of 45 women who had to return forcefully were interviewed through a structured questionnaire and 1 FGD was conducted to understand their situation.

**Table 21. Reason for return**

Reasons	
Homesickness	27%
Flase salary commitment by the dalal	11%
None to look after the children	5%
Irregular or no salary	45%
Physical and/or mental abuse/ maltreatment by the owner	9%
Other	3%

n=40

Irregular payment of salary was the main reason for women to return (45%). Or they were forced to return. In most cases women reported that when they repeatedly asked for their salary to the owner, eventually they were forced to come back. A few women reported that they escaped from the house they were placed for work due to mal treatment (including mental and physical torture) and irregular or non payment of salary; most of them found other Bangladeshi workers to help them find another job (mostly outside house such as madras or hospitals/clinics) as cleaners. When they were caught by the immigration authority during random check, they were jailed for few weeks/months and then they were send off to Bangladesh. About 27% of women reported to be extremely homesick after landing at the destination country and chose to be back. Those who reported to be victim of mental or physical abuse (9%), said that abuse occured due to many reasons but lack of communication skill was one of the major reasons for physical and mental abuse by the owner or family members of the owner. The other category mainly included physical illness, expiration of visa, irregular work status, problem in food habit, etc.

“I worked in that house for 11 months in total. I remember that I received salary twice in 7 months and when I asked for rest of my salary the owner was very angry at me. One day they took me out with the children and suddenly dropped me off at the airport and handed over to the police at the airport reporting that I tried to escape from their house several times. Eventually I was sent off to my country empty hand. I still remember the children were crying when they handed me over to the police”- Asia Akter (35) Jessore

Forced returnee (due to false commitment by the dalals) were further asked if they have taken any measure against the dalals after their return and interestingly 99% of women reported that they could

“what measure can you take against dalal when he is from your family or from your own community? We are helpless. I wish I could teach him a good lesson, but I do not have any way to punish him.”Shamila Begum (32), Manikganj Sadar

not get hold of dalals or even if they had, could not take any measure against them. The rest 1% reported that they tried to take action against them but all of them failed to do so for various reasons.

### **Box B. Women workers in Mumbai: Irregular status Vs. Economic return**

Remotely placed in the Narail district, Kalia is a relatively small upazila with 15 unions. One of the unique characteristics of this upazila is that most of the male workforce in India migrates with short term employment. And the women from their families also accompany them. Mumbai is a popular destination for the population of this upazila. Although no common border is shared with this upazila or district in India, most of the people use Benapol border as their route where a very few obtain visa for crossing the border; the rest manage by giving bribe to the border guards. Men and women migrate irregularly without any employment permit. Men mostly work as construction workers and women (their wives mostly) work as assistant to them or work as housemaid in cosmopolitan Mumbai. “We have good reputation as housemaids and they pay high if they are happy”- said Faria Khatun (29) from Kalia.

“This has been a tradition in migration in this village now and we prefer to be nearby so that we can return whenever we wish” – said Shahnaz Parveen (27). Dalals are active in this area and most people are reluctant to talk about them. Usually they pay Taka 5,000-7,000 to dalals to place them in Mumbai in the construction industry. Police in Mumbai is also active and if they are caught anyhow, they are sent off to Bangladesh immediately. It’s easy to get back there in few weeks” said an interviewee (anonymous).

During the FGD and individual discussion, it was found that sometimes men in the village act as dalals and take women as their wives. Although the general population denied it, the local administrative authority reveals the fact.

Most of the women reported to help their husbands in repairing and reconstructing houses with the money they earn. Women work in Mumbai about 2 years on an average. Although another source reported that a few women work in night clubs and bars in Mumbai, but the group denied that they do not know anything about this profession and also cannot report anyone who is doing this from their village.

NGO activities are limited in Kalia, specially a very few activities are held on safe migration. BOMSA has been working in the area for last few months (about 2 years) and the village where the study team was visiting, showed enormous interest to know the legal channels of safe migration.

*The study team faced difficulties in arranging this meeting as villagers thought that this may hamper their work in Mumbai. However, the team thank BOMSA to arrange such meeting in full confidentiality.*

### Perspective of family members of the women migrants

The study team tried to investigate the perspective of the family members of the women migrant workers. Few questions were asked to know their knowledge about the migrant workers and to understand the situation. A total of 95 family members were interviewed who have female family members working abroad as migrant workers.

**Table 22. Perspective of the family member about migration**

Do you know what type of work she is doing abroad?	
yes	99%
No	1%
Whether appreciate her work?	
Yes	91%
No	4%
No comment	5%
Total respondents	95

Almost all of the respondents (99%) informed that they know the type of work the woman worker is doing abroad. When they were asked whether they appreciate their work abroad, almost 91% family members said that they appreciate their work and 5% of the respondents did not want to comment on that.

**Table 23. Utilization of remitted money**

How was the money (sent by migrant worker) spent in last one year	
House repair/reconstruction	87%
Land purchase	9%
Loan repayment	31%
Food consumption	74%
Education of children	12%
Health care	7%
Purchase assets (non land)	3%
purchase agricultural product	4%
Others	2%

n=80

Most of the money was spent on house repair or re-construction. Food consumption was the second highest expenditure for the family members of the migrant workers. A significant amount (12%) was reported to be spent on children's education. About 31% was spent on loan repayment (most on migration loan). Only 9% reported that some money was spent to purchase land and 3% for purchase other assets for the family such as furniture, utensils etc.). It re-established the fact that most of the remitted money is spent on house repair, food consumption

and loan repair. A household cannot build up assets unless it experiences second or third cycle of migration.

**Table 24. Savings of remitted money**

Average amount saved in last one year (remitted money)	BDT 55,000
Has the family able to save money remitted in last one year	
Yes	9%
No	91%

Family members were further asked about the saving behaviour. About 91% respondents reported that they could not save any money sent by the migrant family members. One of the main cause for not saving according to them was irregular transfer of money which could not help plan ahead. Another main reason for not saving money was the low amount (wage) women workers get overseas that cannot cover savings after household expenses. *“ My sister works hard and long hour to send money home. But we could not save anything as the condition of the family is not good. We face scarcity everywhere in the family. How can we save?”*- Salma (35), Jessore Sadar.

It’s been almost 2 years now my sister took up a job as garment worker in Mauritius. First we were not in support of such decision. But a poor family like us had no other option. She has some schooling and received training as machine operator from Dhaka. She has worked in a garment factory in Dhaka for 2 years. They paid her very low salary. She could not save anything for her 2 children. Her husband left her when the children were young. She took shelter with my family with two children. I could not support her financially that much. She has sent some amount home and told me that she is also saving some amount for future in her own account. I spend the money for her children and for my family too. Her children go to school and I look after them. But it is always better that the mother takes care of her own children. If she wants to stay few more years abroad I will look after the children. Afterall she is taking all the trouble for her children’s better living and we all should give her any support that is needed – Rezia Khaton, (29), Manikganj.

**Situation of the children of the migrant workers:**

A group that is often ignored or not discussed in the migration discourse is the children of the migrant workers. An attempt was made to know the situation of the children of the migrant

workers. Separate FGDs were conducted for girl and boy children. Various aspects were discussed with the children of women migrant workers.

Girl children of women workers reported to face more vulnerable situation than boy children. sometimes, As growing up, children, their friends and neighbours talk bad about their mother . Close family members take care of them. “Absence of mother cannot be fulfilled by anything else. We eagerly wait for her call”- Moushumi Khatoon (15), Sharsha, Jessore. Sometimes eve teasers disturb the young girl children of the women migrants on their way to school or home saying bad things about their mother. children reported to feel sad when neighbors or villagers talk bad about their mother. Sometimes girl children were reported to take extra burden in the family in absence of their mothers such as taking care of younger siblings, help in household work etc.

“My mother would bring me a nice make up kit once she is back, as promised. Whenever she calls me I remind her that. That would be the best gift for sacrificing a life without my mother”. – Sabina Yesmin (14), Manikganj

Boy children as more outbound, enjoy freedom in absence of mother more than the girl children of migrant women. “we can play as long as we can with friends. Boy children also reported to take extra work in the household in absence of their mothers such as taking care of younger siblings etc.

Both girl and boy children of women migrant workers siad that they eagerly wait for a phone call from their mothers (a call in every 15 days on average). Although all of the young children said that they enjoy the freedom to play and spend time with friends, but all of them wanted their mothers’ physical presence at home. For teenagers, Especially for girl children, social protection is an issue as most of the young girls go to schools and some of them reported to feel unsafe sometimes particualrly those who has absence of adult responsible male in the family.

While discussing with a class teacher of such a child, the teacher reported that the child lacks concentration in the class and often says he misses his mother all the time. Although, this cannot be generalized, but it should be considered as an important aspect of children’s life which may impact in the long run. It was revealed from the study that there are some children with strong coping up talent in this situation. But it is obvious that all children of migrants need extra support from school, family and community as a whole.

“Being his teacher, I try to be extra caring for Latif (13) who is living a life temporarily without a mother in the family. I know other class mates may look down upto him as his mother has taken up a job abroad to support the family. All I want him is to grow up in an supportive and healthy atmosphere. His academic performance has been affected for last one year ever since her mother has left the country. We are trying to help him from school. Rest of his wellbeing depends on the family support system. – Hosne Ara (32) school tacher, Manikganj

### Box C. Women migrant's children

#### Look through the eyes of a teenager girl of a women migrant worker

At the age of 16, now I understand it was not easy for my mother to run the family with single earning. My father was a rickshaw puller and he died of an accident 3 years back. Ever since my mother had a hardship with 4 children (including me, the eldest). My parents owned a small piece of land in the village which was sold to arrange money for her migration. She took up a job as a cleaner in Saudi Arabia. I do not know how much she required that time to get visa, ticket etc. She left us with my grand mother. Three of us are going to school and the youngest is preparing for school next year. My grandmother is aged and sick. So I am the only one to look after many things in the family. My younger brother takes care of the *bazar* (grocery) and I cook for all after school. My mother send money bi-monthly. The amount varies time to time. But the amount she sends covers the basic expenses. “We bought a mobile phone just to receive her phone calls and eagerly wait every week. She tells us about how beautiful is the country she lives in and wish to take all of us one day to visit. I know it’s just a dream but that keeps us alive. She has not come on vacation once. I wish I could see her. She sent her picture in front of a big mall. She promised to bring lots of presents for us on her return. I am waiting for the day.

Our neighbours are cooperative. Sometimes the *khala* (aunty) next door help me in cooking, specially during my exams. But some friends in school says my mother is living in Bidesh (foregin land) and is doing indecent work there; that makes me feel really sad. But I know my mother is working hard for us. She told me after 5 years she would not do this work anymore and would stay with us forever.

Like any other teenage girl, sometimes I feel scared to live without father or mother. My grand mother is too old to look after us. The only uncle we have comes to visit us once in a month from Dhaka. It’s not easy to live like this. Protection is a big concern for me and my younger sister. Young boys follow me on my way to school sometimes. But now I know how to protect myself. I never walk alone. I always go to school in a group. I wish my mother comes back soon and I will be relieved from this stress. – Ria Akter (16), Shingair, Manikganj

## Chapter four: Policy Recommendation

The analysis in chapter three identifies some issues and concerns for women migrant workers. As there is no nationally representative migration data available for migration research, the study depended on BMET data base to some extent but found it difficult to get a gender disaggregated data for all variables. The BMET database on workers do not cover socio-demographic information. However, the field investigation helped the team to understand the depth of persisting problems in migration from different perspectives. The policy recommendations presented in these sections are summarized from the analysis of findings in the previous section.

### Recommendation 1:

Updating and redesigning of BMET data base on women migrants is a long waited demand from migration stakeholders. Although BMET has been maintaining a wide range of database on migration, there are further scope for redesigning the database and collecting more information on the demographic detail for future research. It is often claimed by researchers that BMET data is not compiled properly. Basic data on migration and skill levels are compiled essentially from workers' registration form and emigration clearance forms which is often filled by dalals (if not migrants themselves). Often misinterpretation of occupation has severe reflection on data base which have high risk of misinterpreted data for advance analysis.

DEMOS at the district level can be utilized to collect information on returnee migrants that can be directly linked with BMET database.

No structured data is available on returnee women workers at any level. If BMET data base is redesigned a sub- section

### Recommendation 2.

Counselling programme for children of migrants through schools or community support.

Children play an important role in migrant women's lives. Leaving small children behind for overseas job is not an easy decision as both the parties suffer a lot and often fall into critical situation of trauma. Many of these children (specially the teenagers) go through a difficult time in life in absence of their mothers. A well planned counselling programme can help them maintain a healthy mental and physical condition.

### Recommendation 3.

Comprehensive awareness programme is required to address various phases of migration. Often women are found not to know anything about how and where to utilize their remitted money or savings after return. Small and Medium Entrepreneurship (SME) guidance and training can be provided to the returnee women migrants.

**Conclusion:**

For migrants it is important to have adequate access to all information regarding migration, covering all phases of migration. More particularly, pre-migration phase which covers decision making stage along with other important activities and initiative on migration, it is crucial for a woman to understand and analyze the cost and benefit of it. Development initiatives should target this phase of pre-migration more seriously. A lot of sufferings can be reduced/avoided if addressed properly at this stage. Secondly, since women who are migrating as majority are with almost no or little literacy, vocational training is the most important area for their survival in a foreign land as a migrant worker. Trained human resources always deserve better demand and acquaint with fewer problems. Training on skill and language may increase the wage level and enhance their employability. Its ultimate effect will result in higher level of earnings of remittance and ensure better standard of living and livelihood. With longstanding, planner and efficient administration of migration management, the GoB can shift to a better position with a trained group of labour migrants in the coming years. The growing evidence of remittance's impact on household of the migrants re-affirms the need for better migration management plan. Women should be specially focused in the process. Women migrants unlike men can enjoy the benefit of migration by earning and sending remittances with better ensured protection if they are more skilled and efficient to take up job with confidence which will ensure their empowerment.