

# Integrating migration in national development agendas of Bangladesh: experiences and fundamental principles

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# Context

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Adams and Page (2003) empirically demonstrated that international migration can be positively linked to a decline in the number of people living in poverty. A World Bank report (2007) linked 6 percent poverty cut in Bangladesh in 2006 to migration. During the year 2004, 11 percent poverty reduction in Nepal was attributed to migration (Gurung and Adhikari, 2005)

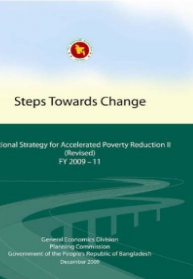
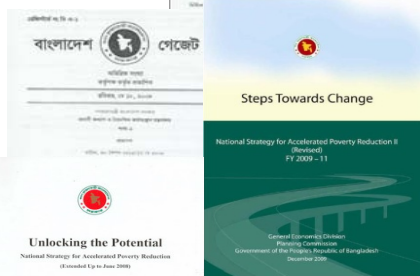
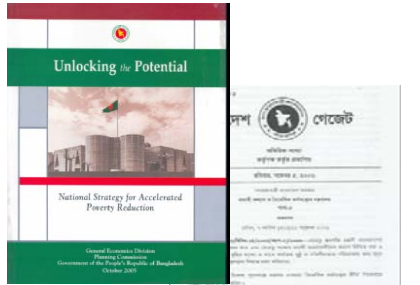
- to reduce poverty migration should be linked to national development planning of different countries.
- should be placed in the global strategic development planning such as Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers of various countries and in the institutional mandate and development agenda of donor organisations.

(Siddiqui, 2010)



# Bangladesh Scenario: National Planning & Policy Documents addressing Migration

- I-PRSP 2003: A National Strategy for Economic Growth, Poverty Reduction and Social Development
- PRSP (2005-07) : Unlocking the potential : National Strategy for Accelerated Poverty Reduction
- PRSP (2007-08) : Unlocking the potential : National Strategy for Accelerated Poverty Reduction
- National Strategy for Accelerated Poverty Reduction II (Revised) – FY 2009-11
- **SIXTH FIVE YEAR PLAN – FY2011-FY2015: Accelerating Growth and Reducing Poverty**
- Overseas Employment Policy 2006
- Female Migration Policy 2003
- Policy of Providing Privileged Citizen Services for the Non-Resident Bangladeshis (NRB) 2008
- Policy of Selecting Commercially NRB Importance Persons 2006
- Emigration Ordinance 1982
- Prevention of Money Laundering Act 2002
- Anti trafficking Act (Proposed) 2011
- Government Circulars





## PRSPs : 2003 – 2011

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“to avail the opportunity of exporting skilled manpower to meet the demand in developed countries”

- emphasis on employment generation
- importance on market exploration
- highlighted the importance of remittance in ensuring macro economic balances
- encouragement to use formal remittance sending channels
- fostering human resource development
- promoting good governance



### Sixth Five Year Plan : FY 2011–2015

*Acknowledging the wider contribution in development and setting as a priority/ thrust sector*

- In acceleration of economic growth
- Source of employment – skilled and unskilled
- Helping to reduce poverty

“Remittance is now contributing 11.15% to the GDP which is 6 times higher than the ODA and 13 times higher than the FDI”

### Foreign Employment and Remittances

Year	Number of migrants	Remittance in million US\$
1999-2000	222686	1949.32
2000-2001	188965	1882.10
2001-2002	225256	2501.13
2002-2003	254190	3061.97
2003-2004	272958	3371.97
2004-2005	252702	3848.29
2005-2006	381516	4802.41
2006-2007	832609	5998.47
2007-2008	875055	7914.78
2008-2009	465351	9689.26
2009-2010	383150	10987.40

Source: Bangladesh Bank



## Sixth Five Year Plan : FY 2011–2015

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- spurring the expansion of construction, especially housing, and other service-oriented commercial enterprises
- role in the growth of national savings
- offsetting the wider trade account, services account and income account deficits
- Financing the development budget

### Strategy

- Market exploration
- Higher value added jobs
- Skill development through training programmes
- Financing of migration
- Reducing transaction cost of remittance
- Ensuring migration with dignity
- Promoting E-governance



## Sixth Five Year Plan : FY 2011–2015

Identifies lagging regions in international migration



**Division Wise Distribution of Expatriate Workers 1976-2007**

Division	No. of Expatriates	As Per Cent of Population	As Per Cent of total expatriates
Barisal	193,510	2.06	4.0
Chittagong	2,135,498	7.70	42.2
Dhaka	1,806,593	4.04	35.7
Khulna	235,546	1.41	4.7
Rajshahi	316,300	0.91	6.3
Sylhet	391,087	4.28	7.7
Total	5,078,534	3.57	

*Source: Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment.*



## Sixth Five Year Plan : FY 2011–2015

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### Strategies/measures to create equal opportunities for international migration/to promote labor migration from lagging regions

- establishment of technical and vocational training institutions for specific skills in the lagging regions based on a careful review of the external demand for skills
- arranging special financing scheme to support prospective migrants from lagging regions
- paying special attention to export manpower on a large scale from relatively and other under-privileged areas
- providing logistic support and technical advice to potential migrant workers through establishment of foreign employment exchanges in the lagging districts in cooperation with private sector





## Overseas Employment Policy

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### Nine point strategies

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



## For the Bangladeshi Diasporas

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- Policy of Providing Privileged Citizen Services for the Non-Resident Bangladeshis (NRB) 2008
- Policy of Selecting Commercially NRB Importance Persons 2006

▪ Providing privileged citizen services (like, separate immigration facilities, medical, educational facilities etc.) for remitting at least US\$5000 in a financial year

▪ Selecting as a CIP-NRB for investing certain amount of foreign exchange in the country, importing Bangladeshi goods and enjoying privileged citizen services (like, separate immigration facilities, medical, educational facilities etc.)



## *Some Good Practices*

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- An exclusive Ministry dedicated to promote, control and monitor the overseas employment of Bangladeshi workers and their welfare
- One Stop Service centre is to provide all types of service relating to migration from a single place
- A dedicated Wage Earners' Welfare fund for the welfare of Bangladeshi migrant workers
- Assistance in reintegration of the returnee migrants
- Updating the acts; introducing robust monitoring system to oversee the activities of recruiting agencies and removing the fraudulent practices
- An 'Expatriates Welfare Bank' for providing soft term loan to the aspirant workers going abroad and providing financial assistance to the returnee migrants to invest in productive activities



## *Some Good Practices*

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- An endowment fund of US\$ 20.0m called 'Skill Development Fund' to develop the skill level of the aspirant migrant workers.
- Enhanced training capacity with establishing 35 more Technical Training Centres (TTC) in different districts that capable to produce 50,000 trained workers annually on different trades.
- An inter-ministerial Vigilance Task Force (VTF), to check labour trafficking, ensure accountability and transparency of the recruiting agencies and agreed standards of the medical diagnostic centres that are designated to carry out the health check of the outgoing migrants.
- GO-NGO collaboration in launching campaigns to create awareness at mass level about all elements of migration process



## *Some Good Practices*

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- Establishment of 'Migrant Welfare Desk' at District level and to built awareness and provide counseling services to the aspirant migrants.
- Launched on line registration for overseas employment
- A 21-day in-house pre-departure training for the female workers going abroad
- 'Smart Card' with 32 kb computer chip containing biometric features of every migrant workers to identify the employers information as well as worker's personal information
- Formulating an anti-trafficking act to prevent illegal migration
- Extending regional and bilateral cooperation in promoting safe migration



## *Challenges Ahead*

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- High cost of migration
- Issues related to easier and simplified visa regime
- Ensuring minimum wages and acceptable working conditions, lack of health insurance and social security coverage, and recruitment related malpractices [“trade in visa”]
- Availing the opportunities ahead
- Impact of climate change
- Crisis/Emergency management





*Thank you*