



# Ensuring Active Inclusion of Diaspora in Bangladesh's National Development



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Publisher: International Organization for Migration  
House # 13A, Road # 136, Gulshan-1  
Dhaka 1212  
Bangladesh  
Tel.: +88 02 5504 4811 to 13  
Fax: +88 02 5504 4818, +88 02 5504 4819  
Email: IOMDhaka@iom.int  
Website: <http://bangladesh.iom.int>

*Researchers:*

Prof Abul Barkat, PhD, Honorary Chief Adviser, Human Development Research Centre (HDRC)  
Professor, University of Dhaka

Asmar Osman  
SK Ali Ahmed  
HDRC

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# Ensuring Active Inclusion of Diaspora in Bangladesh's National Development

Abul Barkat<sup>1</sup>  
Asmar Osman<sup>2</sup>  
Md Fazle Rabby<sup>3</sup>  
Sk Ali Ahmed<sup>4</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Study Team Leader: Professor of Economics and Founder Chairman of Department of Japanese Studies, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh; President, Bangladesh Economic Association; and Chief Advisor, Human Development Research Centre

<sup>2</sup> Research Consultant, Human Development Research Centre

<sup>3</sup> Research Consultant and Deputy Director (Research), Human Development Research Centre

<sup>4</sup> Research Consultant and Deputy Director (Field, Coordination and Media), Human Development Research Centre



## Foreword

There is increasing recognition of the role of diaspora groups in the socio-economic development of Bangladesh. Diaspora can act as catalysts for development by facilitating the transfer of funds, resources, technology, skills, knowledge and ideas and thereby contributing to both economic and social development.

The Government of Bangladesh has prioritized diaspora engagement for national development through various evidence-based policy interventions. The Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Policy 2016 focuses on the vital role diaspora and migrant workers play in sustainable national development. The 8th Five Year Plan reiterates the necessity of designing innovative tools to explore the resources for diaspora communities. Given this policy context, the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment (MoEWOE) initiated this research on Ensuring Active Inclusion of Diaspora in Bangladesh's National Development. Based on the study, the Ministry has also initiated the development of a "Diaspora Engagement Strategy" and is committed to further incorporation of some of the recommendations delineated in the research for optimizing diaspora's contribution to national development.

The MoEWOE acknowledges the role of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in leading the research with financial support from the European Union (EU). The Ministry also acknowledges the efforts of the research team-Human Research Development Centre (HDRC) under the guidance of Dr. Abul Barkat.

This study provides a roadmap for engaging diasporas for national development and I reassure the support from the Ministry to encourage the productive contributions of diasporas through various actions.



**Dr Ahmed Munir Saleheen**  
Secretary  
Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare  
and Overseas Employment



## Foreword

In policy circles around the globe there is an increasing recognition of the essential role diaspora groups play in the socio-economic development in their countries of origin and destination. Diaspora act as catalysts for development by facilitating the transfer of funds, resources, technology, skills, knowledge, and ideas, thereby contributing to economic and social development.

Development frameworks such as the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) have recognized the need to engage diaspora in the development process. In the case of the GCM this is through “Objective 19: Create conditions for migrants and diasporas to fully contribute to sustainable development in all countries”. At the national level, the Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Policy of Bangladesh 2016 and its Action Plan focus on the vital role diaspora and migrant workers play in sustainable national growth and development. The 8th Five Year Plan reiterates the need to design innovative tools for development financing by tapping into the wealth of the diaspora population. However, to date there has been limited engagement of diaspora communities in national development due to a lack of data, assessments and comprehensively designed interventions and tools.

In 2020, IOM Bangladesh undertook the study “Ensuring Active Inclusion of Diaspora in Bangladesh's National Development,” under the project Bangladesh: Sustainable Reintegration and Improved Migration Governance (Prottasha). The study looks into assessing current state of diaspora communities and outlining recommendations for potential economic and non-economic contributions from these communities.

We are grateful to the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment (MoEWOE) and its esteemed officials for guiding this study. We particularly appreciate the valuable guidance of Dr. Ahmed Munir Saleheen, Honorable Secretary, MoEWOE. We are thankful to all the key stakeholders who provided pertinent information as part of the data collection and analysis process. We also appreciate the support of the European Union's (EU) financial support for the study. We also acknowledge the extensive efforts of the team at Human Development Research Centre (HDRC) in particularly the valuable guidance of HDRC's Chief Advisor, Professor Abul Barkat.

We hope the interventions proposed in the study provide a pathway for sustainable inclusion of diaspora in national development. IOM Bangladesh reiterates its commitment to provide support to the Government of Bangladesh and key stakeholders to ensure that the developmental benefits of migration are maximized for the country.



**Fathima Nusrath Ghazzali**  
Deputy Chief of Mission  
International Organization for Migration  
Bangladesh

December 2021

## Abbreviations

a2i	Access to Information
ACFROC	All-China Federation of Returned Overseas Chinese
ACIS	Association of Colombian Researchers in Switzerland
BAB	Bangladesh Association of Banks
BA	Business Associations
BASIS	Bangladesh Association of Software and Information Services
BB	Bangladesh Bank
BBCC	British Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce
BBCCI	British Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry
BCCIJ	Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Japan
BDS	Bangladesh Dental Society
BDT	Bangladesh Taka
BEA	Bangladesh Economic Association
BEC	Bangladesh Election Commission
BEPZA	Bangladesh Export Processing Zone Authority
BEZA	Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority
BGN	Brain Gain Network
BHTPA	Bangladesh Hi-Tech Park Authority
BIDA	Bangladesh Investment Development Authority
BIRA	Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agencies
BMANA	Bangladesh Medical Association of North America
BMET	Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training
BOESL	Bangladesh Overseas Employment and Services Limited
BP	Bangladesh Parliament
BPC	Bangladesh <i>Parjatan</i> Corporation
BSEC	Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission
BTB	Bangladesh Tourism Board
BUET	Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology
CE	Civil Engineering
CFO	Commission on Filipinos Overseas
CGT	Capital Gain Tax
CII	Confederation of Indian Industries
CIP	Commercially Important Person
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
CSO	Civil Society Organisations
D2D	Diaspora to Development
DA	Diaspora Association
DCCI	Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry
DEFRA	Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs
DEMO	District Employment and Manpower Office
DESAT	Diaspora Engagement Self-Assessment Tool
DIA	Diaspora Investment Alliance
DIRI	Diaspora Investment Readiness Index
DISYS	Digital Intelligence Systems
DKN	Diaspora Knowledge Network
DP	Development Partner

DST	Department of Science and Technology
DV	Diversity Visa
DW	Deutsche Welle
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ECR	Emigration Check Required
EEE	Electrical and Electric Engineering
EMIX	Emigrant Policies Index
ENAHPA	Ethiopian North American Health Professionals Association
EPBB	Export Promotion Bureau of Bangladesh
EPFL	École Polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FISD	Forum for Indian Science Diplomacy
FY	Financial Year
GCM	Global Compact for Safe Orderly and Regular Migration
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
GDND	Global Database of Nigerians in the Diaspora
GDP	Gross Domestic Products
GoB	Government of Bangladesh
GSU	George Mason University
HDRC	Human Development Research Centre
HTA	Hometown Association
ICB	Investment Corporation of Bangladesh
ICM	India Centre for Migration
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDF-OI	India Development Foundation of Overseas Indians
ILO	International Labour Organization
IME	Institute for Mexicans Abroad
IMSCM&D	Interministerial Steering Committee Steering Committee on Migration and Development
INGO	International Non-Government Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IPO	Initial Public Offering
ISCB	Indo-Swiss Collaboration in Biotechnology
IMSCOE	Interministerial Steering Committee on Overseas Employment
ISPAB	Internet Service Providers Association of Bangladesh
KIP	Know India Programme
LBN	Lebanon Business Network
LDC	Least Developed Country
LGI	Local Government Institution
MEA	Ministry of External Affairs
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MiGOF	Migration Governance Framework
MMS	Multimedia Messaging Service
MoC	Ministry of Commerce
MoCA	Ministry of Cultural Affairs
MoCAT	Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoEWOE	Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MoHA	Ministry of Home Affairs
MoHFW	Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
MoLGRDC	Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Co-operatives

MoP	Ministry of Planning
MoSW	Ministry of Social Welfare
MoWCA	Ministry of Women and Children Affairs
MSUK	<i>Manob Sakti Unnayan Kendro</i>
MYS	Ministry of Youth and Sports
NAE	National Academy of Engineering
NBR	National Board of Revenue
NFCD	Non-Resident Foreign Currency Deposit
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NHS	National Health Service
NID	National Identity Card
NIDW	National Identity Wing, Bangladesh Election Commission
NIRW	National Identity Registration Wing, Bangladesh Election Commission
NITA	Non-Resident Investor's Taka Account
NRB	Non-Resident Bangladeshi
NRI	Non-Resident Indian
NSDC	National Skills Development Authority
OCI	Overseas Citizen of India
OIFC	Overseas Indian Facilitation Centre
ONS	Office of National Statistics
OOCA	Office of Overseas Chinese Affairs
OWRC	Overseas Workers Resource Centre
PDIA	Problem-Driven Iterative Adaptation
PIO	Person of Indian Origin
PKB	Probashi Kallyan Bank
PMO	Prime Minister's Office
R&D	Research and Development
RO	Research Organisation
RPBD	Regional Pravas Bharatiya Divas Conferences
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SEZ	Special Economic Zone
SMS	Short Messaging Service
SPDC	Scholarship Program for Diaspora Children
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Medicine
STI	Science, Technology, and Innovation
TOAB	Tour Operators Association of Bangladesh
UDPB	US Dollar Premium Bond
UGC	University Grants Commission
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
USA	United States of America
USD	United States of America Dollar
USDIB	United States of America Dollar Investment Bond
WEDB	Wage Earner Development Bond
WEWB	Wage Earners' Welfare Board

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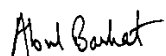
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Prof Abul Barkat, *PhD*

Study Team Leader; and

Chief Advisor, Human Development Research Centre

November 2021



# Contents

<i>Foreword</i>	
<i>Abbreviations</i>	
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	
<i>Executive Summary</i>	<i>i-v</i>
<b>Chapter 1: Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Study Background	1
1.2 Study Objectives	3
1.3 Methodology	4
<b>Chapter 2 Bangladeshi Diaspora in the Global Arena</b>	<b>11</b>
2.1 The Pattern of Diaspora Spread	11
2.2 Position in the Host Countries	15
2.2.1 Economic Positioning	15
2.2.2 Social Positioning	18
2.2.3 Political Positioning	22
2.3 Diaspora Organisations	24
<b>Chapter 3: Policy Regime, Institutional Arrangement, and Adaptability of the International Tools and Practices</b>	<b>26</b>
3.1 Policy Regime	30
3.2 Institutional Arrangement	30
3.3 Adaptability Scenario of the International Instruments	33
3.4 International Information and Communication Platforms	39
3.5 Scenario of the International Practices	41
<b>Chapter 4: Promoting Bangladesh's Image</b>	<b>49</b>
4.1 Country Branding	50
4.2 Diaspora Diplomacy	55
4.3 Nostalgic Trade	59
4.4 Diaspora Tourism	64
4.5 Diaspora Network	67
<b>Chapter 5: Economic Tribute</b>	<b>71</b>
5.1 Remittance	71
5.2 Investment	75
<b>Chapter 6: Social Tribute</b>	<b>84</b>
6.1 Social Remittances: A Civic Tribute	84
6.2 Knowledge and Skills Sharing: An Intellectual Tribute	89
6.3 Extending Hands: A Philanthropic Tribute	95
<b>Chapter 7: Conclusion and Recommendations</b>	<b>100</b>
References	108

## **List of Table**

Table 1.3.1:	The issues covered under the study by broad component .....	7
Table 2.1.1:	Estimates on the number of Bangladeshi diaspora members, 2020.....	12
Table 2.2.1:	Estimates on the potential diaspora investment in Bangladesh .....	17
Table 2.2.2:	Estimates on the potential diaspora members endowed with specialised human capital and mapping of their expertise and interest .....	20
Table 3.1.1:	Analysis outcomes of the existing Policy and legal framework applicable to the Bangladeshi diaspora through the lens of the "5-R Approach.....	29
Table 3.2.1:	Analysis outcomes of the concerned institutions applicable to the Bangladeshi diaspora through the lens of the "5-R Approach .....	32
Table 3.3.1:	Broad issues under diaspora strategies toolkit and their adaptability in Bangladesh	34
Table 3.3.3:	Comparative Chart* (not exclusive) on Indian diaspora Categories .....	42
Table 4.1.1:	Country branding engaging the diaspora: Status and responsiveness.....	52
Table 4.2.1:	Diaspora diplomacy: Status and responsiveness.....	57
Table 4.3.1:	Nostalgia trade with the diaspora: Status and responsiveness.....	60
Table 4.4.1:	Mapping diaspora's causal attribution in diaspora tourism .....	65
Table 4.5.1:	Mapping latitudes of diaspora networking .....	68
Table 5.1.1:	Official remittance flow scenario from the top three host countries of the Bangladeshi diaspora .....	72
Table 5.1.2:	The remittance inflow from the key host countries of the Bangladeshi diaspora .....	73
Table 5.1.3:	The researchers-estimated remittance inflow from the major host countries of the Bangladeshi diaspora in FY 2020 .....	75
Table 5.2.1:	FDI inflow to Bangladesh .....	80
Table 7.1:	Recommendations to ensure inclusion of diaspora in the national development ..	101

## **List of Diagram**

Diagram 1.1.1:	5-R approach followed to analyse the diaspora inclusion issue.....	5
Diagram 3.3.2:	Key diaspora engagement strategies recommended in United Nations, African Union and ECOWAS policies.....	38
Diagram 4.1:	Diaspora's role in developing and projecting the country of origin's image to international audiences.....	49
Diagram 4.1.1:	Country brand image development process .....	51
Diagram 4.3.1:	Role of the diaspora in nostalgic trade .....	60
Diagram 4.4.1:	Diaspora role in diaspora tourism .....	64
Diagram 5.2.1:	Sale amount of NRB bonds (in billion BDT).....	76
Diagram 5.2.2:	Composition of the type of NRB bonds by sales amount in the last five FYs (2015-16 to 2019-20) (%).....	77
Diagram 6.1.1:	Diaspora's articulation of social remittances.....	85
Diagram 6.2.1:	Diaspora's knowledge and skills articulation: Drain-Gain-Circulation.....	89
Diagram 6.3.1:	Diaspora's charity articulation: In-Back-Out.....	96

## **List of Box**

Box 1.1.1:	The operational definition used .....	2
Box 1.3.1:	Operational definition for the diaspora generations .....	5
Box 1.3.2:	Setting the broad aspects for analysis.....	6
Box 2.2.1:	Mahfuz Ahmed, a Bangladeshi American role model entrepreneur .....	16
Box 2.2.2:	Dr Farzana Hussain, a Bangladeshi British doctor at a public health service in the UK ....	19
Box 2.2.3:	Tulip Rizwana Siddiq, an aspiring new generation Bangladeshi British Politician .....	23

Box 2.2.4:	Sheikh Mujahudur Rahman Chandan, a journey of a Bangladeshi in US politics .....	23
Box 3.3.1:	Pillars, indicators, and respective weightage for DESA .....	36
Box 4.1.1:	Country branding: The operational understanding .....	50
Box 4.1.2:	Addressing the young diaspora .....	54
Box 4.1.3:	describes one of the occasions related to the country branding of Bangladesh .....	54
Box 4.1.3:	An initiative of trading products with the fragrance of the root .....	54
Box 4.2.1:	Diaspora diplomacy: The operational understanding .....	55
Box 4.2.2:	Diaspora diplomacy: The operational understanding .....	59
Box 4.3.1:	Nostalgia trade: An operational understanding .....	59
Box 4.3.2:	A story of a nostalgic product trader .....	63
Box 4.3.3:	An initiative of trading products with the fragrance of the root .....	64
Box 4.5.1:	Diaspora diplomacy: The operational understanding .....	69
Box 5.2.1:	Money-depositing mechanisms for the NRBs .....	79
Box 5.2.2:	A British-Bangladeshi's Investment .....	80
Box 5.2.3:	Government acknowledging the diaspora contribution .....	83
Box 6.1.1:	British Bangladeshi youth changing career and lifestyle from interaction with social media friends from Bangladesh .....	88
Box 6.2.1:	A diagnostic examination of brain drain in Bangladesh: Case of BUET .....	91
Box 6.2.2:	Few brain-gain examples of Bangladeshi Americans .....	93
Box 6.2.3:	Bibi Russel, circulating knowledge of fashion from Dhaka to London to Dhaka .....	94

### **List of Map**

Map 2.2.1:	Major host countries for the Bangladeshi diaspora .....	13
------------	---	----

### **Annexes**

Annexe A:	Diaspora Organisations .....	127-145
Annexe B:	Data Collection Instruments .....	146-188
Annexe C:	Data Collection Schema by Respondent Category .....	189-191
Annexe D:	Relevant Details about Selected International Instruments .....	192-199
Annexe E:	HDRC Team .....	200-201

## Executive Summary

### Background and objective

There is no universal definition of diaspora, but no one can deny their existence and importance. "Bangladeshi diaspora" in this study refers to Bangladeshi persons who have:

- taken citizenship of another country or are in the process of doing so;
- are living there permanently; or
- were born or raised in another country as a Bangladeshi-descendant.

Bangladesh recognises the significance of diaspora inclusion in national development. In this respect, the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) identified the need to study this relatively unexplored topic. In response, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) – under the project *Bangladesh: Sustainable Reintegration and Improved Migration Governance* (Prottasha), which is funded by the European Union and led by the Government of Bangladesh – commissioned the Human Development Research Centre (HDRC) to conduct a study on this issue. The Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment (MoEWOE) directly guided and supervised the study.

The study identifies policies, institutional challenges and possible measures to ensure the active inclusion of the Bangladeshi diaspora in the national development of Bangladesh. It applies a national lens to evaluate international instruments, mechanisms, and practices. Also, it identifies some of the key active diaspora organisations that can contribute to the process of linking diaspora and development.

### Methodology

The study adopted a mixed-method approach (quantitative and qualitative) with different diagnostic tools. This study collected primary data through semi-structured interviews, discussions and consultations with target groups. Secondary information was acquired through an extensive literature review. The primary and secondary data collected has been triangulated for the purposes of analysis. The study uses primary data – primarily qualitative – collected from 48 diaspora members, eight diaspora organisations, and two diaspora-invested business entities to understand the demand-side.

Conversely, to understand the supply-side, the study conducted 25 key informant interviews with concerned persons from relevant government organisations, business associations, development partners, diplomatic missions, civil society, media, and academia. The study maps the current locations of the diaspora communities and estimates their numbers. It maps the resources and interests of the Bangladeshi diaspora. It assesses the diaspora's existing and potential economic contribution.

The team used email, telephone, internet-based communication platforms, and some in-person discussions maintaining COVID-19 safety measures available in Dhaka for the interviews. Table 1.3.2 summarises the details.

For analysis, the study devises and uses a 5-R approach: *Recognition, Respect, Return and Reintegration, Rights, and Resource Endowments* (human and financial resources) for analysis. The study followed three systematic steps: (i) Analyse the current state, (ii) Identify the ideal future state, and (iii) Recommend bridging the gap between (i) and (ii). In its analysis, this study broadly considers economic, social, and political aspects of each situation. The study also identifies global and regional tools, policy guidelines, existing data platforms and assesses their adaptability in the local context. It

identifies the pertinent challenges, namely in the three fronts: (i) General, (ii) Policy, and (iii) Institutional. Finally, the study considers the differences among the diaspora communities across the regions of the world.

Despite the current COVID-19 pandemic-induced challenges, the recommendations forwarded in this study remain valid in principle.

### **Diaspora mapping**

There are no official data on the size of the Bangladeshi diaspora. According to the research, the estimated number of Bangladeshi diaspora members is approximately 2.4 million. The United Kingdom (UK) and the United States of America (USA) are the two key host countries where many Bangladeshi expatriates stay permanently. A large group of Bangladeshi diaspora reside in Italy too. Additionally, significant numbers of the Bangladeshi diaspora live in Japan, Australia, Greece, Canada, Spain, Germany, South Africa, France, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Switzerland.

Based on discussions with diaspora business association representatives and diaspora members, the study estimates that 70,000 to 80,000 diaspora members are potential investors in productive sectors in Bangladesh. Current research estimates that the number of potential investors in the financial sector (e.g., bond, share) ranges between USD 125,000 to 140,000. It also estimates that the total potential diaspora investment ranges between USD 9.9 and 11 billion. In the fiscal year (FY) 2019-20, Bangladesh's total inflow of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) was only USD 2.37 billion. Apart from financial resources, diaspora members can contribute through their human resources—specialised skills, knowledge and technologies. The study estimates that 21,000 to 30,000 members of the diaspora could contribute to Bangladesh through their technical knowledge, skills, and interests. However, there is no inventory of this information.

Discussions with the diaspora members reveal that, in general, the Bangladeshi diaspora lives in a better economic state compared to their social position in the host countries—in terms of cultural assimilation. Nonetheless, the assimilation of younger generations into host countries has accelerated in recent years. Members of the Bangladeshi diaspora in the UK, USA, and Canada are generally concentrated in certain geographical pockets of those countries and are becoming collectively strong in the host country's politics—in terms of both local to central governments.

### **Policy and institutional recognition**

According to the Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Policy 2016 of Bangladesh:

Diaspora are the expatriates who are staying abroad for a longer period and have taken nationality of the host country or willing to take the nationality but at the same time willing to keep relation with Bangladesh and want to contribute to this country's socio-economic development.

However, the descendants of diaspora members are not recognized in policy, and no framework covers the much-needed categorisation of the diaspora. There is a lack of a specific strategy or framework, plan or programme in place to facilitate diaspora inclusion. Few awards and facilities that recognise their financial and economic contributions. However, no policy framework addresses their non-economic contributions, leaving diaspora associations' efforts unacknowledged. The concerned government authorities inform that there has been some progress in ensuring diaspora members' rights to citizenship, voting rights, and national identity cards. Nonetheless, there are significant legal and implementation gaps between the diaspora members' demand and the supply-side response.



In Bangladesh's Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Policy 2016, the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment (MoEWOE) recognises diaspora members.. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) and Bangladesh Missions maintain functional ties with the diaspora in host countries. However, the mechanism remains unstructured, with no central database. Bangladesh Bank facilitates provisions for the financial inclusion of the diaspora. However, other relevant governmental and non-governmental organisations lack the required policy support to address the needs of diaspora members and ensure their integration into national development. Due to a lack of comprehensive policy guidelines and institutional frameworks, the inclusion of diaspora members in national development receives scant attention from relevant authorities in terms of programmes and activities. In general, institutional mechanisms do not permit diaspora participation in the planning and implementation phases of development activities'. No institutional mechanism in place to deals with the issue of the return and reintegration of the diaspora. There are some diplomatic efforts to protect the rights of the diaspora members in the host countries, but these remain sporadic. Resource constraints are not a significant issue; instead, the lack of holistic strategic planning with distinct responsibilities for each entity weakens the institutionalisation process.

Still, the mechanism is customised by missions and does not adhere any set of specific guidelines or framework. The Missions also attempt to maintain a diaspora database, but there is no central database to facilitate their efforts.

### **Role of the diaspora members in promoting Bangladesh's image**

Many efforts can be made to support establish or re-establish the country's image on a global scale. Diaspora members, may contribute in a variety of ways, and diaspora groups can simultaneously act as investors, consumers, tourists, public diplomats, and spokespersons. As a result,, they can enhance the country image. The five broad areas in which they can contribute to promoting this image are— *Country Branding, Diaspora Diplomacy, Nostalgia Trade, Diaspora Tourism, and Diaspora Network*.

Many view *country branding* as a mere marketing strategy. In contrast, marketing is only a tiny part of it. It is a process in which intangible attributes and efforts are more crucial than only tangible ones. Bangladeshi diaspora members attempt to play their respective roles in branding their origin country by showcasing the culture and heritage. *Diaspora diplomacy* refers to soft power-driven diplomatic endeavours carried out by the diaspora on behalf of the origin country. Bangladeshi diaspora members, with their growing social and political foothold in the host countries, could play their respective roles if the origin country provided better support.. *Nostalgia Trade* is referred to as the trading of nostalgia-inducing and preferred products from the origin country. Nostalgic products contribute to the strengthening of cultural diplomacy in host countries. *Diaspora Tourism* also serves as a means of promoting country branding. Simultaneously, country branding boosts diaspora tourism. Additionally, such tourism has a positive effect on the residents of the host country. *Diaspora Tourism, however, is an untapped area for the Bangladeshi diaspora. "Diaspora Network"-* formally and informally formed inter- intra and external networking among diaspora associations and other associations or networks. Strict political and regional divides impede the creation of a united and robust forum among the numerous Bangladeshi diaspora associations.

Bangladeshi diaspora groups contribute to the country's image-building efforts in various ways and varying degrees. The difficulty arises from the absence of a guiding, facilitative, and responsive state mechanism in these efforts, which is supported by a formal system of regular and output-driven communications with diaspora networks.

## Economic contribution

Diaspora members, like the short-term migrant workers, send a significant amount of remittance on a regular basis to Bangladesh. The analysis of remittance-sending from two of the largest host countries for the Bangladeshi diaspora —the USA and UK—clearly shows that they send a notable amount of remittance. In the fiscal year 2019-20, approximately 13 per cent of total Bangladeshi expatriates (including short-term migrants and diaspora) living in these two countries send 20.7 per cent of total remittances to Bangladesh. It is mention-worthy that this pattern of sending remittances has remained similar over the years. Also, during the grave crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic, the diaspora members continued their financial contribution. Some diaspora members informed, the GoB decision announcement in mid-2019 of a 2 per cent cash incentive on encouraged remittance flows through official channels.

The concerned authorities in Bangladesh confirm that the Government's Savings Bonds for Non-resident Bangladeshis (NRB) could not become popular; the relevant sales data even shows a decline in sales. The discussion with diaspora members reveals that the bonds are not well-known among them, and it suggests that additional promotional activities be planned. Conversations with diaspora members and the concerned authorities of Bangladesh confirm that other financial instruments could not effectively engage the diaspora. Their presence in the country's capital market is negligible. Diaspora-financed NRB banks are unable to meet the needs of the diaspora members. Probashi Kallyan Bank (PKB), which was established by the GoB, also lack diaspora-focused financial products.

There is no accurate disaggregated data on diaspora Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). The relevant diaspora associations and Bangladeshi business communities have informed that only a tiny portion of the Bangladeshi diaspora directly invests in Bangladesh's productive sectors and sub-sectors. It is notable that, in comparison to the GDP size, the FDI inflow amount is low. In FY 2019-20, the net FDI inflow was 0.72 per cent of the country's GDP, while it was 1.8 per cent in India. The concerned representatives of the diaspora associations reported that Bangladesh could not attract foreign investors, including diaspora members, due to a lack of bureaucratic accountability and transparency demonstrated by corruption and red-tape culture.

## Social contribution

Social contributions from the diaspora members have three main aspects: *civic*, *intellectual* and *philanthropic*. Members of the diaspora also get social remittances from the host countries. Transferring social remittances is challenging due to the political and socio-cultural differences between the host and origin countries, as well as domestic political polarisation. Bangladeshi diaspora interlocutors and concerned government agencies need an institutional platform at the local level to facilitate and oversee the transfer of social remittances to their ancestral families. Despite various efforts, the most recent planning document of the country—the 8<sup>th</sup> Five-Year Plan—identifies that the skills level and productivity of the country's workforce have not been increased sufficiently. As a result, it faces an obstacle in its development voyage due to a lack of skilled professionals. The intellectual contribution of the diaspora happens through knowledge and skill transfer to the origin country. Brain drain is the negative aspect of the professionals' permanent migration abroad, replaced by brain gain and brain circulation. Brain drain is not entirely preventable. Instead, focusing on brain gain by engaging Bangladeshi diaspora professional's paramount will be helpful. Diaspora associations suggested developing an online-based professional network. Philanthropic attributes of the diaspora are expressed by extending hands with aid in different forms: social, economic, political. The diaspora members propose to form a fund with the philanthropic contribution of the Bangladeshi expatriates, including the diaspora, for the welfare of the bereaved expatriates and their families.

## Conclusion and recommendations

A *whole-of-government approach* that ensures horizontal and vertical policy coherence across all sectors and levels of government, as well as broad multi-stakeholder engagement through a *whole-of-society approach* is crucial, to ensuring active inclusion of the Bangladeshi diaspora in national development. It requires a formal institutional mechanism to ensure the diaspora's active participation in policymaking in order to re-establish ownership in the country's development. A well-coordinated long-term strategic vision that includes formal recognition of the diaspora will lay the groundwork for successful diaspora inclusion in the country's development. Harnessing this potential requires incorporating the "5-R approach" into national policies and strategies. The first 4-Rs (*Recognition, Respect, Rights, and Return and Re-integration*) are the responsibility of the Government and other relevant stakeholders in Bangladesh to ensure the 5<sup>th</sup> "R" (*Resources—financial and human*) from the diaspora members to the country's development.

The study proposes establishing (or renaming the Interministerial Steering Committee on Overseas Employment) a "Interministerial Steering Committee on Migration and Development (IMSCM&D)" chaired by the Honourable Prime Minister with a mandate to address diaspora issues. The proposed IMSCM&D could take responsibility as the highest level of authority for policy guidance, coordination, and follow-up, covering all aspects of migration and development. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) and the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment (MoEWOE) — would act as key agencies of the IMSCM&D. "Coordination" among the stakeholders will be a critical factor in its success. The implementation machinery needs to accommodate inclusive public monitoring and oversight mechanism.

A "*Diaspora Engagement Strategy*" (including a *re-integration mechanism*) could play a pivotal role in embarking on the pathway to include Bangladeshi diaspora in national development. Amendments to the "Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Policy 2016" are also required. Through a consultative process, the *Diaspora Engagement Strategy* should define the diaspora by categories of generations. The proposed IMSCM&D could assign a relevant agency to develop this strategy, which would be backed up by systematic research.

The study includes 49 specific recommendations organised into 13 broad categories, indicating the lead and partner implementing agencies, along with a time frame. It consists of recommendations in an action plan to support in the development of a comprehensive strategy to fit the Annual Development Programmes and national policy and planning documents.

No intervention will produce significant results without a strong political commitment. Members of the Bangladeshi diaspora can only make a meaningful contribution to national development if a culture of "decent politics" is established at every level.

## Chapter I Introduction

### I.1 Study Background

There is no universal definition of a diaspora or who constitutes a diaspora member. The pertinent ILO instruments, in general, do not distinguish between workers who have migrated for permanent settlement and those who have migrated for short-term or even seasonal work.

The provisions of the ILO Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 97), ILO Recommendation No. 86, ILO Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143) and Recommendation No. 151 state issues related to the length of stay of migrant workers. Therefore, all migrant workers qualify as individual members of the conceptual "communities" abroad, or diaspora, because they are held together by a shared identity derived from their Bangladeshi origin and a shared collective social or cultural relationship with Bangladesh, regardless of how long they have been away from their country of origin (Barkat, Osman and Ahmed, 2020).

The term "diaspora" refers to global populations who live in one place but maintain ties to their homelands (Ionescu, 2006). Long-term Bangladeshi migrants and people of Bangladeshi descent born abroad are referred to as "diaspora" in Bangladesh.

The IOM defines diaspora as the "migrants or descendants of migrants whose identity and sense of belonging, either real or symbolic, have been shaped by their migration experience and background. They maintain links with their homelands, and to each other, based on a shared sense of history, identity, or mutual experiences in the destination country" (IOM, 2019). In many instances, the term "diaspora" refers to people living outside of their country of origin, and it encompasses a wide range of diverse groups such as political refugees, migrant workers, ethnic and racial minorities and overseas communities (Wickramasekara, 2009).

The Government of India apprehends a broader sentiment about diaspora members, which implies that the "persons of Indian origin" are members of the Indian diaspora, which spans the globe and stretches across all the oceans and continents and who speak different languages and are engaged in different vocations but share a common identity derived from their Indian origin, cultural awareness, and deep attachment to India (Indian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2001 as cited in Wickramasekara, 2009). The African Union Executive Council puts forward the concept of a Supra-diaspora or a diaspora that derives identity from the continent instead of a particular country: "The African diaspora consists of peoples of African origin living outside the continent, irrespective of their citizenship and nationality and who are willing to contribute to the development of the continent and the building of the African Union" (Wickramasekara, 2009, p. 3).

The distinction between "diaspora" and "migrant worker or economic migrant remains difficult. As "willingness to stay abroad and remain connected to the homeland"—a very abstract connotation—is associated with it, there is still a grey area and differences of opinion in defining the term "diaspora". Countries with significant out-migration, such as Bangladesh, demonstrate a range of approaches to dealing with diaspora members, "from warmly embracing to coolly instrumental, from active engagement to indifference, from mobilisation to hostility" (Newland & Patrick, 2004, p. 3). The policies and practices of the origin countries reflect these divergent perspectives. However, a study needs an operational definition, and Box 2.1.1 contains it.

**Box 1.1.1: The operational definition used**

According to the Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Policy 2016 of Bangladesh, "*Diaspora are the expatriates who are staying abroad for a longer period and have taken nationality of the host country or willing to take the nationality but at the same time willing to keep relation with Bangladesh and want to contribute to this country's socio-economic development*". **The current study uses the term "Bangladeshi diaspora" to refer to the Bangladeshi persons who have taken citizenship of another country or are the process of getting it or living there permanently or was born or raised in another country as a Bangladeshi-descendant.** It does not refute the conceptual framework of a community comprising of all persons abroad held together by a common identity derived from their Bangladeshi origin and a collective social or cultural relationship with Bangladesh, irrespective of the time they have been away from their country of origin (Barkat, Osman and Gupta, 2014).

The "Global frameworks such as the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM)" explicitly emphasises the need to engage the diaspora in sustainable development<sup>1</sup>, with Bangladesh acted as a pioneering party in developing the framework itself. Accordingly, diaspora members are recognised in the relevant national policies of Bangladesh.

In its scope, The Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Policy 2016 of Bangladesh explicitly includes the Bangladeshi diaspora along with the migrant workers for sustainable national growth and development. Section 2.5.6 of this policy guides stakeholders to provide financial incentives for Bangladeshi diaspora investment. Section 2.5.8 suggests utilizing the Bangladeshi diaspora's social network to leverage their technical skills and specialised knowledge. Appendix 1 of the Policy among other responsibilities, the "Inter-ministerial Steering Committee on Overseas Employment", headed by the Honourable Prime Minister, will support in creating a linkage between the diaspora societies (GoB, 2016). The "Action Plan for the Implementation of the Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Policy 2016" of the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment (MoEWOE), Government of Bangladesh (GoB), proposes a number of specific activities/ interventions focusing on the diaspora communities against set targets. This Action Plan displays the baseline situation, verification methods, implementing partners and implementation period for each activity (GoB, 2019). The current national mother planning instrument, the 8<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan July 2020—June 2025, emphasizes the development of innovative tools for development financing by leveraging the wealth of the diaspora population (GoB, 2020). However, in the previous plan, the 7<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan FY 2016—FY 2020, the country specifically recognised the diaspora as agents and beneficiaries of the country's development. Also, it suggested that they be included in various development activities through effective measures that acknowledge their contributions (GoB, 2015). The GoB, inspired by the principle to "leave no one behind" in the 2030 Agenda<sup>2</sup>, attempts to integrate diaspora communities in the development process.

A recent study concentrates on demonstrating the benefits of diaspora engagement and identifying ways to engage the Non-Resident Bangladeshi (NRB) in the development process in Bangladesh. It conducted its analysis using the PIE Framework (Philanthropy, Investment, and Expert Affiliation) (Monem, 2018). A national strategy and action plan were also developed to accelerate the diaspora's contribution to the country's development through appropriate and effective recognition (Barkat et al., 2017). Another study attempted to identify the factors responsible for enhancing contributions from Bangladeshi diaspora members (Barkat, Osman and Gupta, 2014). Simultaneously, the

<sup>1</sup> Objective 19 of the GCM reads as: "*Create conditions for migrants and diasporas to fully contribute to sustainable development in all countries.*"

<sup>2</sup> "Leave no one behind" is the central, transformative promise of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



Bangladesh Migration Governance Framework (MiGOF), which was recently published in 2020, and is the first framework of a similar type globally, suggests possible ways to facilitate diaspora engagement in the development process. It implies formal recognition through policy and legal amendments, stimulating investment and business pathways, fostering knowledge and skills sharing networks and promoting philanthropic activities (Barkat, Osman and Ahmed, 2020). According to key informants informed that the government is considering the suggested points, but there is still a gap in initiating relevant time-bound and specific actions.

Diaspora remains one of the least talked discussed in the migration discourse of Bangladesh. The subject has yet to receive adequate and practical attention in national development planning. The country's current international migration management mechanism prioritises short-term worker migration. The reasons are mainly two folds: (1) Due to a regular outflow of a large number of short-term migrant workers; the priority remains on them.; (2) It is relatively a new phenomenon that the Bangladeshi diaspora communities are achieving a notable economic and social position in the host countries, resulting in not receiving immediate attention with similar priority as given to the short-term migrant workers. For these reasons, a comprehensive approach or specific institutional mechanism is yet to be activated to ensure that the diaspora community actively participates in national development. The process of compiling accurate diaspora statistics is not fully operational. The operational procedure continues to be less appealing in terms of attracting investment (*financial and business investments* and knowledge and skills transfers) from the Bangladeshi diaspora. Furthermore, the country's prevailing legal frameworks are incapable of adequately addressing the needs of the diaspora (Barkat, Osman and Ahmed, 2020).

Despite the Government's attempts to integrate the diaspora population into national development, a concrete way is required to ensure the active engagement of these specific groups of people in national development. The GoB is implementing short and long-term initiatives to integrate the diaspora population into national development. Nonetheless, such endeavours require a powerful endorsement, comprehensive mechanism, and specific institutional structure to ensure their active engagement in national development. Against this backdrop, the UN agency for migration – the International Organization for Migration (IOM) – supports the GoB and facilitates related efforts. In this context, the GoB acknowledges the need for a study to identify a set of concrete measures to engage the diaspora in the socio-economic development of Bangladesh. To that end, IOM, Bangladesh –under the project "Bangladesh: Sustainable Reintegration and Improved Migration Governance" funded by the European Union (EU) commissioned Human Development Research Centre (HDRC) to support GoB to conduct a pertinent study. This report is an outcome of that study.

## 1.2 Study Objectives

The **overall objective** of this study is to identify measures to ensure the active inclusion of the Bangladesh diaspora in the national development of Bangladesh.

The *specific objectives* of the study are to:

- 1) Evaluate adaptability of global and regional tools and policy guidelines and existing data platforms to national context;
- 2) Identify general, policy and institutional challenges for engaging diaspora for development;
- 3) Suggest measures to engage the diaspora in socio-economic development through concrete approaches;
- 4) Forward policy guidelines to strengthen institutional mechanisms to create opportunities for linking diaspora with Bangladeshi society and economy; and

- 5) Identify information on leading Bangladeshi diaspora associations and community structures to access information in host countries and the origin country.

### 1.3 Methodology

The study is based on an extensive literature review and develops various diagnostic tools and methods for acquiring primary data and information.. Though interviews and discussion, it collected data and information from the respondents of various categories.

As per the needs of the research objectives, it triangulates the quantitative data and qualitative information. During primary data collection, the research strictly ensured to both research ethics and the anonymity of respondents and participants.

The research team focused primarily on the UK and the USA. These are the two key host countries for this study, where many Bangladeshi expatriates ("expatriate" refers to short-term migrants and diaspora) live permanently. However, it also covers aspects of the overall global scenario that are applicable to the Bangladeshi diaspora.

### Concepts and Analytical Framework

The study examines all of the critical issues facing the Bangladeshi diaspora through the lens of "*a mutually beneficial structure*." It analysed the institutional capabilities of the related organisations using the "*Problem Driven Iterative Adaptation (PDIA) Framework* (Andrews, Pritchett and Woolcock, 2017)

In the analysis, the concept of "*Triple-A Change Space*"<sup>3</sup> was used, where the "A" s are: (1) Authority to engage, (2) Acceptance, and (3) Ability. The research enquired about the different approaches in supporting diaspora investments, including the "*Diaspora Investment Assessment Template*," "*Diaspora Investment Readiness Index*," and "*Diaspora Investment Frameworks*."

The research conducted three types of mapping<sup>4</sup>: (i) *Diaspora mapping*: Mapping region-wise number of diaspora, knowledge-skill-resources mix, intention towards inclusion; (ii) *Interest mapping*: Reasons for low interest or lack of interest in actively participating in the process of development; and (iii) *Inclusion mapping*: The mapping exercise aimed at devising incentives and disincentives, institutional mechanisms, legal and procedural mechanics to mitigate the reasons for the lack of interest.

For analysing the areas mentioned above, the study develops and uses a *5-R approach: Recognition, Respect, Return and Reintegration*<sup>5</sup>, *Rights, and Resource Endowments* (human and financial capital).

<sup>3</sup> According to Andrews et al. (2015) in many developing countries the capability of the state to implement its policies and programmes is a key constraint to improving human development and there are no quick-fix solutions. An alternative approach, called Problem-Driven Iterative Adaptation (PDIA), offers a framework and a method for the development community to do things differently; where the frameworks is built on four principles: (1) Local solutions for local problems; (2) Pushing problem-driven positive deviance; (3) Try, learn, iterate, adapt; and (4) Scale through diffusion.

<sup>4</sup> IOM Diaspora Mapping Toolkit (pilot phase—draft) (July 2021) currently attempts in setting a methodology to map the diaspora. The core module sections and sample indicators of the draft include: Screening the diaspora; Demographic & socio-economic characteristics; Migration experience; Identity and belonging; Financial and knowledge contributions to country of origin; Civic involvement and Citizenship; and Organizational information. This document, when finalised, could be a good guideline in diaspora mapping.

<sup>5</sup> The study perceives that it is necessary to create an enabling environment for diaspora return and reintegration. Facilitating permanent return (along with appropriate socioeconomic reintegration efforts) is just as important providing reintegration support for their short-term stay and virtual connections at the origins. According to IOM (2013), a conducive environment for return and reintegration is required. This report points out that the engagement of the diaspora with their countries of

Diagram 1.1.1: 5-R approach followed to analyse the diaspora inclusion issue



Source: Developed by the authors

The study followed three systematic steps: (i) Analyse the current state, (ii) Identify the ideal future state, and (iii) Recommend bridging that gap. It considered the differences across the diaspora communities. It has covered the perspectives of the first-generation diaspora members and the aspects relevant to the second/third-generation diaspora (details are in Box 1.3.1).

**Box 1.3.1: Operational definition for the diaspora generations**

The study uses operational definitions for the generations of the diaspora. The first-generation diaspora members are individuals who come to live permanently in a foreign country. In the host country context, first-generation diaspora members are foreign-born immigrants living in a country, not their country of origin (CoO). Second-generation diaspora members are born, raised, and living in a country that is not their CoO. The third-and-subsequent generations include the native people, whose parents are descendants of second-generation diaspora and their descendants.

In analysing, this study considers three broad aspects in the applicable cases:

- (i) Economic;
- (ii) Social; and
- (iii) Political.

origin or heritage is based on trust, opportunities, incentives, and capacities. The primary impediments are restrictive or non-existent policies that impede or prevent diaspora members from mobility, asset transfer, business investments, or any other entrepreneurial ventures.

**Box 1.3.2: Setting the broad aspects for analysis**

In setting the three aspects for analysis—*Economic, Social, and Political*—the research team, among other documents, consulted the IOM's *Strategy to Enable, Engage and Empower Diaspora*<sup>6</sup> to identify variant aspects of diaspora positioning connected with role-playing in the host, global community and origin country. The IOM's strategy incorporates human and social capital, economic capital, and cultural capital as domains to measure diaspora enrolment and position vis-à-vis driving development. The research team considers low-to-high (economic, social and political) enrolment and development of diaspora people, particularly in the host country. Besides, the cultural domain is considered as an embedded feature of the social and political domain (capital). In this study, human capital is regarded as a carrier and mobilised positioning that is connected and melted with economic, social and political positioning. Human capital carries economic, social and political-related driving resources/forces, which essentially change/modify and/or evolve as a result of interactions with economic, social and political variables.

It is mention-worthy that another document—IOM Diaspora Mapping Toolkit<sup>7</sup>—identifies four broad components as four different modules of the toolkit: Economic Capital (i.e., remittances, savings, capital flows, trade, private capital flows and direct investments in business activities); Human Capital (i.e., skills and knowledge, and the extended networks); Social Capital (i.e., political and civic participation in both country of origin and residence); and Cultural Capital (i.e., exchange and acquisition of new values and ideas). The current research also considered these aspects in applicable instances during the analysis.

The study considers global and regional tools, policy guidelines and existing data platforms, and assesses their adaptability in the local context. It identified the pertinent challenges in three fronts: (i) General, (ii) Policy, and (iii) Institutional. It has devised a concrete approach to engage the Bangladeshi diaspora in Bangladesh's socio-economic development. It collects information on active Bangladeshi diaspora associations and community structures in major countries. The study has made recommendations to strengthen organisational capacity to create opportunities for linking diaspora with Bangladeshi society and the economy based on the inferences and after a rigorous analysis. The subjects' interconnectedness and coordination among the stakeholders and institutions act as a critical factor. It scrutinised the nature of the interconnectedness –direct or indirect – between stakeholders from both government and non-government sectors.

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused significant economic, social, cultural, and, most of all, many political changes in the short, medium, and long term throughout the globe. Bangladeshi diaspora members living in various parts of the world regions are facing many consequences, and there will be more in the future<sup>8</sup>. Europe and North America are among the most affected continents, where most Bangladeshi diaspora members reside. As a result, the negative effects of COVID-19 may have a disproportionately higher impact on the Bangladeshi diaspora community at large. However, the

<sup>6</sup> IOM's Strategy to Enable, Engage and Empower Diaspora.

Accessed from <https://diaspora.iom.int/ioms-strategy-enable-engage-and-empower-diaspora>

<sup>7</sup> IOM Diaspora Mapping Toolkit (pilot phase—draft) (July 2021): International Organization for Migration.

<sup>8</sup> There will be a possible worldwide shift in the socio-economic class-ladders in almost all societies, to a different extent and nature due to this Pandemic. Details can be found at: Barkat, A. (2020). In Search of a Transition from the Virus-driven Great Disaster to a Decent Bangladesh: On the Larger Canvas of Society-Economy-State (in Bangla *Boro Pordai Shomaj-Orthoniti-Rashtri: Viruser Mohabiporjoy theke Shovon Bangladesher Shondhane*. Bangladesh Economic Association and MuktoBuddhi Publishers. Dhaka.

research considered the COVID-19 pandemic as an exogenous factor. Therefore, the analysis focuses primarily on the typical scenario in order to make policy recommendations applicable over a broader period applying the 5-R approach.<sup>9</sup> Given the uncertainties and global economic depression associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, it will be necessary to conduct "new need-based studies" to account for the host countries' changing circumstances. Nonetheless, the recommendations made in this study would remain valid in principle.

### **Components and Issues used in Analysis**

The study aimed to design an effective mechanism for the active inclusion of the Bangladeshi diaspora in the country's national development by analysing the following issues in Table 1.3.1.

Table 1.3.1: The issues covered under the study by broad component

Broad component	Issues covered
Knowing the situation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Platform and system for dynamic information gathering</li> <li>Diaspora spread and resource</li> <li>Key diaspora organisations</li> <li>Sense of belonging</li> <li>Diaspora resource-mobilisation status in Bangladesh</li> </ul>
Policy structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policy and legal framework</li> <li>Inclusive measures in line with overall national development planning</li> <li>Reflection of the international framework, policy guidelines, good practices</li> </ul>
Setting goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Matching the resources with the goals from the policy directions</li> <li>Mapping scope of engagement with formal and informal development sectors</li> </ul>
Organisational capacities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Institutions' readiness to render expected services</li> <li>Diaspora-related institutions and programmes</li> <li>Need for creation of institutions, if any</li> </ul>
Trust building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Services to diaspora (legal position, documents, classes/privilege, social services, recognition)</li> <li>Dual citizenship</li> <li>Voting rights</li> <li>Safeguarding capital investment</li> <li>Intervention with the host governments</li> <li>Intervention with the host communities</li> </ul>
Mobilisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use of the media platform</li> <li>Socio-cultural, business, knowledge events</li> <li>Diaspora community-level communication</li> <li>Nostalgic-trade</li> <li>Diaspora-tourism</li> </ul>
Effective engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business and trade networks</li> <li>Expand and strengthen formal and informal communication channels</li> <li>Engaging in economic diplomacy</li> <li>Knowledge and skills networks</li> <li>Joint initiatives: Productive and others</li> <li>Financial inclusion</li> <li>Scope of participation in national development initiatives</li> </ul>

<sup>9</sup> Recognition, Respect, Return and Reintegration, Rights, and Resource Endowments (human capital and financial)



## Study Implementation

The researchers progressed the study in close consultation with GoB and IOM. Furthermore, all tools and techniques were approved by GoB. GoB, in particular the MoEWOE, shouldered the work within a systematic framework. The MoEWOE nominated a focal point who guided meetings and discussions. The study followed the basic principle of a mutually respectful collaboration between MoEWOE, IOM, and HDRC.

The study relied on secondary information review. The secondary review included pertinent reports, literature, policies, acts, rules, national plans and programme documents, media reports, global and regional tools, existing data platforms, and social media platforms. The research team collected primary data from the key stakeholder groups. It collected primary information for two reasons: (1) Despite many policies, institutions, and frameworks- implementation remains challenging. The primary data and information supported understanding the ground-level realities and identifying the problems in practice. It helped make specific practical, concrete measures to fill in those gaps and (2) complement and validate the information collected through secondary review. The research team collected primary information from both the "Demand" (diaspora members) and the "Supply Side" (Government and other relevant stakeholders in Bangladesh).

The research team conducted 48 in-depth interviews with the Bangladeshi diaspora members (34 first-generation: 28 male, six female; and 14 second-generation: 9 male, five female)<sup>10</sup> living in 11 countries<sup>11</sup> in different parts of the world to assess the *demand-side* perspective. In the first phase, the team selected the respondents through personal and professional contacts. In the second phase, it used snow-bowling techniques<sup>12</sup> to locate other better-informed diaspora representatives. In addition, the team interviewed eight diaspora organisations, involved in business networking with Bangladesh and social activities. The team also discussed with a couple of diaspora-invested business entities.

The research team conducted 25 key informant interviews (KIIs) with relevant representatives from government organisations (12 KIIs), Ambassadors (2 KIIs), business associations (3 KIIs), development partners (4 KIIs), civil society, media, and academia (4 KIIs) to understand the supply-side scenario. With an official forwarding from the MoEWOE, the study formally approached the institutions. The institution selected a representative to discuss with the research team. The opinions of the respondents' are solely their personal judgment based on their knowledge. These viewpoints do not reflect the organisational stand. In line with research ethics and as per the commitment stated towards the respondent in the data collection instruments, the study does not disclose the names of the respondents and key informants to keep their identity anonymous.

For the interviews, the team used email, telephone, internet-based communication platforms, and a few in-person discussions while maintaining COVID-19 safety measures in Dhaka. In many cases, the research team relied on the online platform instead of in-person meetings due to the COVID-19 pandemic-related health issues and movement restrictions. However, this did not degrade data quality; rather, it occasionally provided opportunities for long interviews/discussions at the

<sup>10</sup> In selecting the respondents it considered those diaspora members who are staying abroad permanently for a long duration, maintain regular communication with the origin country, and interested to contribute in the national development. The sample diaspora members included professionals, business persons, and service holders. For the first-generation diaspora respondents, the average length of stay overseas as permanent citizens is 16 years, ranging between 6 and 42. The age of the second-generation diaspora respondents ranges between 18 and 32 years.

<sup>11</sup> These sample countries include the major host of the diaspora communities in terms of number (i.e., UK, USA, Italy). Also, it considers some countries, which do not host large number of Bangladeshi diaspora; but, has long relationship with Bangladesh in many fronts (e.g., Russia, Japan). The countries from where the diaspora members were consulted are as follows: Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, Spain, the Netherlands, the UK, and the USA.

<sup>12</sup> This is a sampling technique, in which existing subjects provide referrals to suitable samples required for a study.

respondent's convenience. In addition, it allowed for re-interviews/discussions if needed, which is uncommon in in-person interviews/discussions.

The nature of the study and its objective(s) demanded a qualitative approach to analyse primary and secondary data and information, both unilaterally and through triangulation. The HDRC research team espoused a qualitative analysis framework to bring key findings from multidimensional data/information. Many nuanced narratives (micro and macro) required data and information segregation and disaggregation based on rational justification and relative connotation (coining the essence of the context). HDRC researchers used informatics, content analysis, narrative analysis, policy analysis, institutional assessment. To perform those analyses in this study, data/information gathered from primary and secondary sources is analysed in ten steps:

- Step-I: Mapping and building patterns/themes and concerns/issues
- Step-II: Set interpretative dimensions (connotation)
- Step-III: Record raw data/information from interview/document
- Step-IV: Search for patterns and interconnection in collected data/information
- Step-V: Categorisation of collected data/information as per patterns/themes/concerns/issues
- Step-VI: Cross-check and align similar collected data/information
- Step-VII: Connect dots between collected data/information
- Step-VIII: Described triangulated data/information (primary-secondary)
- Step-IX: Extract results/findings/decisions
- Step-X: Articulate results/findings/decisions for findings within findings

Primary data and information were collected through formatted interviews between December 2020 and May 2021. However, informal discussions with the key stakeholders, including the diaspora community members, continued between August and November 2020.

Annexe B contains The Data Collection Instruments, six in number having different modules by type of respondents. Annexe C contains the details on the number KIs and organisations consulted.

## **Limitations**

- 1) Due to the absence of a diaspora database, the study could not attempt any random selection of the respondents—such random sampling with a sample size enough to make credible estimates on many quantitative indicators would have been beneficial.. Instead, the research team relied upon qualitative information using a limited number of in-depth interviews. The respondents were chosen through personal and professional contacts. It then used snow-bowling techniques— in which existing subjects were referred to appropriate suitable samples required for the study.
- 2) The research team could not visit any host country due to budget constraints. However, the research team overcame this limitation by drawing on their previous experience visiting key host countries and discussing the diaspora. Visits to those countries could aid in a more in-depth analysis of the pertinent issues.

- 3) While reviewing some relevant publicly available interactions of the diaspora members in digital social media and communication, the study did not utilise the "*netnography*" method<sup>13</sup> in particular. There is scope to conduct a separate study using this method, focusing on the "next-generation diaspora" specifically, to learn more about their mindset about the inclination to Bangladesh.
- 4) The primary destinations of the short-term migrant workers from Bangladesh are the world's middle-eastern region. In most cases, those countries' existing policies and legal regimes do not allow those workers to stay in those countries permanently. Therefore, as per the operational definition set for this study, migrant workers living in the middle-eastern countries are not included. However, many migrant workers have lived in those countries for decades. They are commonly termed to as "short-term migrant workers" but they often live in those countries for many years, if not their entire lives. A separate study could be initiated to better understand their status and needs, as well as how to include them as a more active agent to the origin country's development.
- 5) This research does not divide the diaspora by regions/cities, urban/rural in the host countries. There is no concrete data on the areas/districts in Bangladesh from which diaspora members originate. However, the pertinent discussion reveals that the majority of the Bangladeshi diaspora comes from particular regions/areas of the country. Many geo-economical and historical factors contribute to a large number of diaspora coming from those districts. It suggests further in-depth exploration and research on the subject, which will serve as a tool to designing a practical local/regional approach for facilitating the diaspora contribution to their ancestral area, which increases their emotional attachment.
- 6) For operational purposes, this study considers three aspects of economic tribute from the Bangladeshi diaspora to their country of origin: *Remittance*, *Investment in financial sectors/instruments*, and *Investment in productive sectors*. However, there is scope for in-depth study to assess the amount of economic contribution in the form of "Other investment (e.g., real estate)", Tourism-related expenditure, Philanthropy (with monetary involvement), and Employee compensation. Further studies could be initiated on these issues.

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<sup>13</sup> Netnography is a relatively new qualitative research method that adapts traditional ethnographic techniques to the study subjects using the internet. In this era of social media and digital communication, this is an interesting tool to use. It is an interpretive research method that adapts anthropology's traditional, in-person participant observation techniques to the study of interactions and experiences manifesting through digital communications (Kozinets, 1998).

## Chapter 2

# Bangladeshi Diaspora in the Global Arena

**B**angladeshi diaspora members are primarily concentrated in the North American, European and Australian regions. Those who reside in those countries permanently are the core groups of the Bangladeshi diaspora. It does not consider people living in Asian and Middle East countries as long-term employees. This chapter focuses on where and how the Bangladeshi diaspora members live (economic, social and political life).

### 2.1 The Pattern of Diaspora Spread

There is no accurate data on the number and destination of the Bangladeshi diaspora population residing in many global countries. A debate has also erupted over the definition of diaspora. Therefore, theoretically and practically, distinguishing between the diaspora and short-term migrant workers remains challenging. The Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training (BMET) has information about short-term migration. Still, it does not have the mechanism to keep records of long-term migrants or diaspora members. However, the major destinations of the short-term migrant workers from Bangladesh are the world's middle-eastern region. In most cases, those countries' existing policies and legal regimes do not allow those workers to stay in those countries permanently. Therefore, the study does not consider the migrant workers living in the middle-eastern countries in estimating the Bangladeshi diaspora population.

Based on the informed judgment of the concerned experts, the significant portion of the Bangladeshi diaspora is residing in the developed and industrial nations such as the United Kingdom (UK), the United States of America (USA), Italy, Japan, Australia, Greece, Canada, Spain, Germany, South Africa, France, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Switzerland.

In 2004, a report attempted to collate information about the Bangladeshi diaspora. According to that report (Siddiqui, 2004), as of 2004, the diaspora population was approximately 1.18 million. Based on those numbers, in consultation with the informed diaspora members and relevant GoB officials, the current study has an updated range of the Bangladeshi diaspora population. The estimates show that the number of Bangladeshi diaspora worldwide ranges between 2.1 and 2.4 million. The specific number is difficult to assess, but evidence suggests that the total number lies within this range. The key informants also point out that the chances are high that the actual number will lean towards the upper limits in most countries. The probability is very high that the **total number of Bangladeshi diaspora will be around 2.4 million**, about 20 per cent of the total Bangladeshi expatriates<sup>14</sup>. It is also notable that another estimate made three years back came up to a figure of 2,367,000, which also supports the current assessment (Monem, 2018). Table 2.1.1 summarises the information.

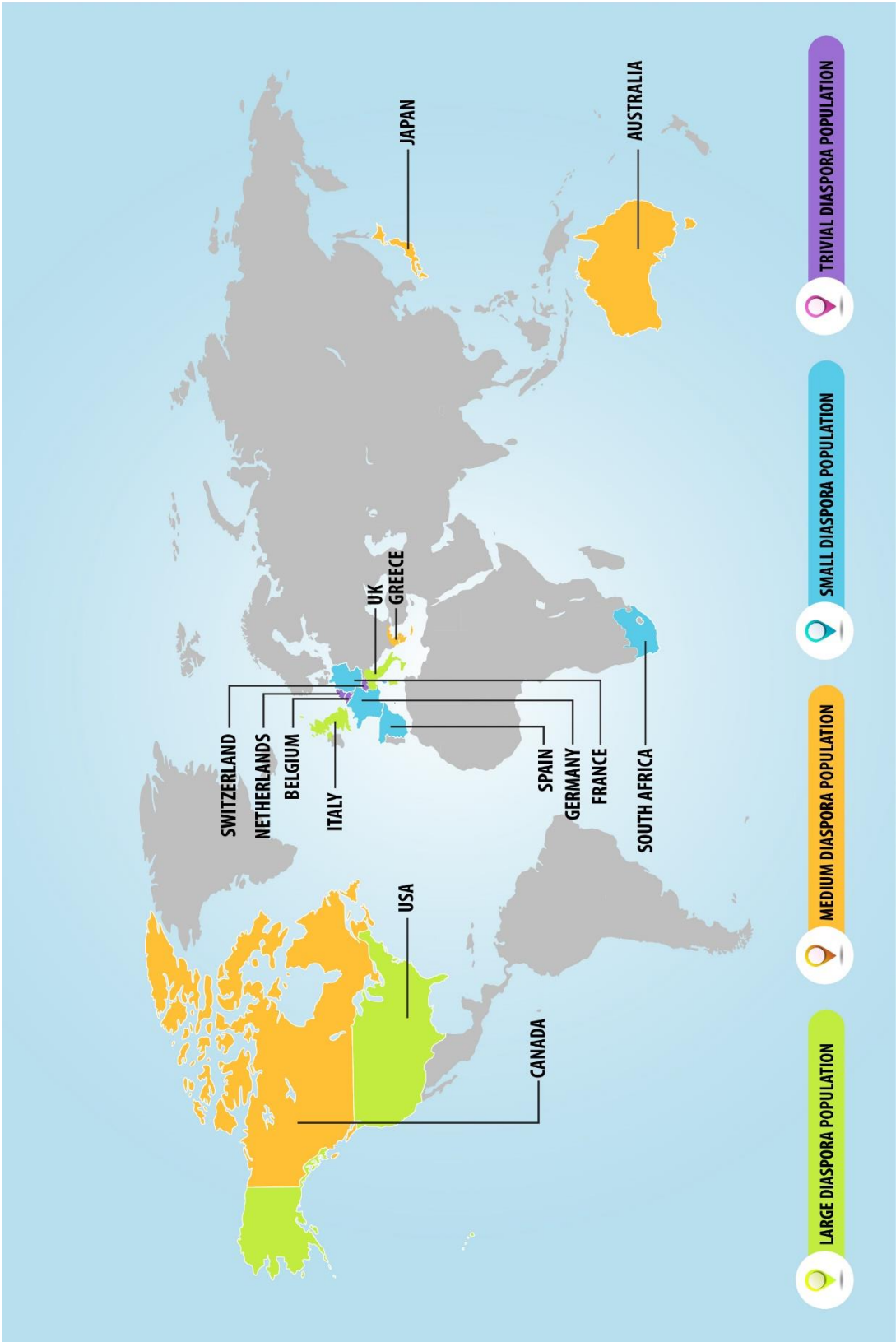
<sup>14</sup> According to the Annual Report 2019-20 of Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment (p. 21), the total number of the expatriate Bangladeshis is more than 120 million, living in 174 countries.

Table 2.1.1: Estimates on the number of Bangladeshi diaspora members, 2020

Host country	Range of number of the Bangladeshi diaspora
United Kingdom	700,000 – 800,000
United States of America	700,000 – 750,000
Italy	400,000 – 500,000
Greece	85,000 – 90,000
Canada	70,000 – 75,000
Japan	40,000 – 45,000
Australia	30,000 – 35,000
Spain	20,000 – 22,000
South Africa	12,000 – 14,000
Germany	10,000 – 12,000
France	8,000 – 9,000
Belgium	5,000 – 6,000
Netherlands	5,500 – 6,000
Switzerland	2,000 – 2,500
Other countries	10,000–20,000
Total	2,097,500 – 2,386,500

Source: Consultations with the informed Bangladeshi diaspora members

Map 2.2.1: Major host countries for the Bangladeshi diaspora



1.4 to 1.55 million diaspora members (two-thirds of the total diaspora population) live in the UK and the USA. Italy and Greece are the other two countries where a large portion of the Bangladeshi diaspora lives. In Canada, Japan, and Australia, primarily professionals from Bangladesh live permanently, not very large in number. A small number of Bangladeshi diaspora living in Germany, France, Belgium, Netherlands, and Switzerland<sup>15</sup>.

Bangladesh Missions, led by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, collect information on the diaspora in all host countries. They cooperate with concerned associations to compile a list of diaspora members. Also, during the festivals and programmes organised on various national days and events, they provide forms to the diaspora members to fill in their information. However, there is no comprehensive and up to date database. Many Bangladeshi diasporas are unwilling to contribute because they do not consider it will result in any benefits for them, and they also expressed their uncertainty to this data information collection. Furthermore, a group of Bangladeshis who do not have the necessary legal documents to remain in the host country hesitates to divulge the information. In addition, a small portion of Bangladeshis seeking political asylum avoids the Missions and do not provide input, and when Bangladeshis move to another country in Europe, they frequently do not provide updates.

The registration process with the Wage Earners' Welfare Board (WEWB) of the MoEWOE and Bangladesh Bank is still unable to entice Bangladeshi diaspora members to provide their information. Most of them are unaware of such a database, and many do not feel the necessity of providing the information. The WEWB launched the enlistment programme for the Bangladeshi diaspora in June 2017 in order to bring them into the government database. However, the WEWB with the support of the Bangladesh Missions, was only able to register 60,665 diaspora members (out of around 2.4 million) between June 2017 and May 2021. More importantly, 76 per cent of the registered members live in Jeddah and Riyadh (WEWB, 2021). It is mention worthy that in most cases, these countries' existing policies and legal regimes do not allow the migrant workers to stay in those countries permanently; so, a significant portion of the registered members is not the diaspora in the operational sense. A considerable part of them would return to the country. In addition, no diaspora member registers from the USA or UK under this initiative.

On the other hand, the initiative of the Bangladesh Bank' to create a diaspora database focuses primarily on the remittance senders and investors<sup>16</sup>. The pertinent initiatives from the concerned institutions lack coordination and remain unable to develop a diaspora database. The authority has yet to centralize database management.. Therefore, it requires creating an online platform where diaspora members can enter and update their information through a centrally managed registration process. Nevertheless, there is no joint technical group working or coordinating efforts. Also, a significant portion of the diaspora members is unaware of the initiatives.

<sup>15</sup> This research does not break down the diaspora spread by region/cities, urban/rural in the host countries. Also, there is no concrete data about the areas/districts in Bangladesh from where the diaspora members come. However, the pertinent discussion reveals that most of the Bangladeshi diaspora come from a couple of districts in particular; the districts are Sylhet, Dhaka, Brahmanbaria, Chattogram, Cumilla, Noakhali, Madaripur, and Faridpur. Many geo-economical and historical factors contribute to a large number of diaspora coming from those districts. It suggests scope for further in-depth exploration and research on the subject, which will serve as a tool to design a practical local/regional approach for facilitating the diaspora to contribute to their own ancestral area, which adds to their emotional attachment.

<sup>16</sup> Diaspora Database Page of Bangladesh Bank can be accessed from <https://www.bb.org.bd/nrb/index.php>



## 2.2 Position in the Host Countries

### 2.2.1 Economic Positioning

The interviews and discussions with the diaspora members reveal that, in general, the Bangladeshi diaspora perceives their economic situation to be satisfactory. The majority of Bangladeshi diaspora are concentrated in the United Kingdom (UK), United States of America (USA), and Italy. However, the number of Bangladeshi diaspora in Australia and Canada is scaling up rapidly. Understandably, exposure to economic security in the five host countries mentioned above drew the most interest from the Bangladeshi diaspora. Nonetheless, the recent COVID-19 pandemic has created a crisis and fear of economic security, including among diaspora communities.

The majority of the Bangladeshi diaspora members are from Sylhet, which outnumbers Bangladeshis from other regions of Bangladesh living in the UK. Bangladeshis worked in the textile and steel industries from the 1960s to 1970s. The catering industry, which has a high demand for job placement, took the lead. The Bangladeshi diaspora owns more than 90 per cent of the curry houses in the UK (Wigmore, 2016). Engagement of Bangladeshi diaspora members in other professions in the UK has been steadily growing, but it falls far behind in terms of human resources deployed in the catering industry. More than 85,000 Bangladeshi diaspora members are employed in the catering industry. Around 65 per cent of the Bangladeshi diaspora in the UK are working in the catering industry. However, a segment of the Bangladeshi diaspora continues working in the apparel sector. Reportedly, only a meagre portion of the Bangladeshi diaspora in the UK are involved in higher managerial professions (Bangla Stories, n.d.). According to interviews with the Bangladeshi diaspora members in the United Kingdom, the spread of higher education among the diaspora families contributed to the development of interest among new generations in developing careers in the ICT sector, engineering, and medicine. The youth unemployment rate has decreased among the Bangladeshi diaspora. According to the most recent data from the Office of National Statistics (2020), Bangladeshi diaspora members earn nearly 17 per cent less per hour than other British. The Office of National Statistics (ONS) mentions that the second generation of Bangladeshi diaspora outperforms their first-generation pay and earnings progression. Between 2001-2003 and 2014-2016, the real-term income of Bangladeshi diaspora members increased 38 per cent (O'Connor, 2017). The rapid growth of educational attainment among the second and third generations of Bangladeshi diaspora contributes to the occupational diversification and income growth. Bangladeshi diaspora students have advanced by more than 20 percentage points on the benchmark five GCSE measure since 2006, faster than any other ethnic group in the UK (Kirby and Cullinane, 2016).

Though it is difficult to generalise the economic inclination of the British-Bangladeshis in relation to their geographical position, discussions with diaspora communities reveal a pattern of difference between the Bangladeshis living in East and West London. According to the interviews with the diaspora members conducted for this study, the Bangladeshi diaspora members residing in East London are primarily engaged in informal economic activities. They have a decent income from those sources, and many do not want to change their work pattern even if the alternatives pay better. Furthermore, a sizable proportion of the second-generation Bangladeshi diaspora with tertiary education is not working in the professions in line with their education. Instead, they prefer to carry on their family businesses. Some West London-based Bangladeshi diaspora, who have joined the community from other European countries in the last decade or so, have informed that majority of second-generation members are pursuing higher education. The chance are high that they will tend to join the country's formal labour force.

Bangladeshis come to the USA from various regions of Bangladesh for livelihood development; the majority are career professionals and relatively higher-paid workers. About 95 percent of Bangladeshi diaspora members (among the population which is aged above 16 years and potential labour force)

are employed. Thirty-one percent of the Bangladeshi diaspora members work in the professional field of engineering, science, law, and managerial positions in finance and human resources. Bangladeshi diaspora households have a yearly median income of USD 59,500, which is significantly lower than the median household income of all Asians in the USA, which is USD 85,000 (Budiman, 2021). Interviews with the Bangladeshi diaspora in the USA revealed that the COVID-19 pandemic had some negative economic impacts. However, in general, they were able to cope with the shocks.

Meanwhile, they are more concerned about the overall downfall of the US economy's in the last couple of years. However, in discussions with the American-Bangladeshis, the research team discovered that diaspora members' have a relatively more robust inclusion in the host country's mainstream economy when compared to the other major host countries of the Bangladeshi diaspora. Though the Bangladeshis have their style of living and usually live in the same community, this hasn't stopped them from participating in mainstream economic activities. Furthermore, the United States' long history of in-migration from all the world aided Bangladeshis in quickly assimilating into the country's society and labour force. Additionally, the Bangladeshi diaspora's average high level of formal education in the USA assisted them in economic inclusion. Box 2.2.1 has a success story of a Bangladeshi Diaspora in the USA.

#### Box 2.2.1: Mahfuz Ahmed, a Bangladeshi American role model entrepreneur

Mahfuz Ahmed **founded and owns** 80 per cent of Digital Intelligence Systems (DISYS), a McLean-based technology services company. He moved to the USA at the age of 18. He studied at George Mason University before working at Mobil and started his own business later on. His company's nets about USD 18 million in profit. DISYS has more than four thousand staff. Ahmed's company is recognised as one of the heavyweight hi-tech companies in the USA. He and his three friends started the company in 1994. Two of the four partners left within two years due to the company's low revenue (USD 4,500). Ahmed and his company got their well-deserving big break for their determination in 1996 when Mobil awarded them a service contract worth USD 200,000. He was in a disastrous face in his business life when his partners left after being awarded a contract from Virginia, and revenue hit USD 4 billion. He restarts his journey and re-establishes his business entity by buying DISYS from his former partners. Mahfuz Ahmed is also the youngest member of the Board of Trustees of George Mason University (GSU).

*Source: (The Daily Star, 2013, July 14; Businesswire, 2021 and DISYS, n.d.)*

Bangladeshi' migration to Italy started to grow in the 1980s with the same objective— better income and a better life. In their study, Morad and Gobač (2018) showed that Bangladeshi diaspora members in Italy believe they are paid better than in Bangladesh. Among the Bangladeshi diaspora population, entrepreneurs' income (Euro 3,000 to 4,000/month) is more than the other Bangladeshis in Italy engaged in other professions. Those working in the commercial industries earn between Euro 1,500 and 2,500 per month.<sup>17</sup>

, Primarily professionals from Bangladesh live permanently in Canada, Japan and Australia. A small number of Bangladeshi diaspora live in Germany, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Switzerland. Diaspora members residing in these countries are, in general, well-off financially

This research estimates the number of diaspora members who are potential investors in the productive (i.e., business, industry) and/or financial sector (i.e., bond, share) to Bangladesh. According to a discussion with the diaspora business association representatives, the study estimates that 70,000 to 80,000 diaspora members are potential investors in the productive sector. 125,000 to 140,000

<sup>17</sup> The interviews held with the Bangladeshis in Italy reveal that the minimum monthly cost of living of a family is around 2,000. However, the living expenditure in the northern part of the country is notably higher than the south. However, we do not have the relevant geographically disaggregated data applicable to the Bangladeshi diaspora.

diaspora members are potential investors in the financial arena. As investing in the financial market (e.g., bond, share) does not directly require entrepreneurial capability, more diaspora could invest in the financial sector rather than the productive sector. The pertinent information can be found in Table 2.2.1. Assume a potential diaspora investor invests BDT 10 lac (equivalent to around USD 11,820) in the financial sector. In that case, a total of USD 1.48 to 1.65 billion could be invested in the economic arena.

On the other hand, if 100 lac BDT (equivalent to around USD 118,200) comes from a single potential investor in the productive sector, the total investment becomes between USD 8.40 and 9.35 billion<sup>18</sup>.

**That is, the potential diaspora investment ranges between 9.9 and 11 billion USD.** Notably, the investment amount used in the estimates is provided by the diaspora businesspersons indicating the usual minimum amount of investment from a diaspora investor. Section 5.2 of Chapter Five in this report describes the investment scenario from the diaspora members in detail.

Table 2.2.1: Estimates on the potential diaspora investment in Bangladesh

Host country	Range of number of the Bangladeshi diaspora	Potential investors in the productive sector		Potential investors in the financial sector	
		Percentage of the diaspora population	Range of number	Percentage of the diaspora population	Range of number
UK	700,000 – 800,000	4	28,000 – 32,000	5	35,000 – 40,000
USA	700,000 – 750,000	5	35,000 – 37,500	10	70,000 – 75,000
Italy	400,000 – 500,000	1	4,000 – 5,000	3	12,000 – 15,000
Greece	85,000 – 90,000	1	850 – 900	2	1,700 – 1,800
Canada	70,000 – 75,000	2	1,400 – 1,500	4	2,800 – 3,000
Japan	40,000 – 45,000	1	400 – 450	3	1,200 – 1,350
Australia	30,000 – 35,000	2	600 – 700	3	900 – 1,050
Spain	20,000 – 22,000	1	200 – 220	2	400 – 440
South Africa	12,000 – 14,000	1	120 – 140	3	360 – 420
Germany	10,000 – 12,000	1	100 – 120	2	200 – 240
France	8,000 – 9,000	2	160 – 180	3	240 – 270
Belgium	5,000 – 6,000	2	100 – 120	4	200 – 240
Netherlands	5,500 – 6,000	1	55 – 60	2	110 – 120
Switzerland	2,000 – 2,500	1	20 – 25	2	40 – 50
Other countries	10,000–20,000	1	100 – 200	2	200 – 400
Total	2,097,500 – 2,386,500		71,105 – 79,115		125,350 – 139,164

Source: Discussion with the diaspora business association and the informed persons

<sup>18</sup> Where in the Fiscal year 2019-20, total inflow of Foreign Direct investment (FDI) was only 2.37 billion USD.

### 2.2.2 Social Positioning

As previously stated, the UK and USA continue to be the top two host countries for the Bangladeshi diaspora. Between 1951 and 1971, the number of Bangladeshi diaspora members in the UK increased slowly, but it grew much faster after Bangladesh gained independence through the liberation war in 1971. Around 150 years ago, people from this part of the world began to settle permanently in Britain. Despite having lived in Britain for many years, they did not integrate into the host communities. They had no intention of bringing any family members. During the 1970s, the UK passed strict immigration laws. It instigated the Bangladeshis who lived there to bring their families over before the law took effect. It increased the number in a geometric progression, settling primarily in East London. A cultural environment grew, and almost a miniature Bangladesh thrived in London. According to the UK National Census 2011, a total of 447,201 Bangladeshis lived in England and Wales. Historically, people from the Sylhet region of Bangladesh have made up a sizable portion of the British-Bangladeshi community. Brick Lane is transformed into a miniature Sylhet. Some British schools have also made the Sylheti language a distinct subject (Murshid, 2008; Ali, 2019).

In the 1960s, some Bangladeshis—then East Pakistanis—mostly highly skilled personnel and professionals—emigrated to the US in search of a bright future. Many students went to the US for higher studies. They never returned, as they thought they would not be given the same opportunities as West Pakistanis in East-Pakistan. The 'Opportunity Visa' (OP-1 1990-91) and 'Diversity Visa' (DV 1995-96) offered by the USA Government created a path to the country for the less skilled groups. They started to live as a community in specific areas of the country. A sense of community developed over time. Bangladeshis are primarily reside in New York, California, Texas, Florida and other states. New York City and its adjacent areas are the hubs of Bangladeshis. Many Bangladeshis live in Washington DC as well (Siddiqui, 2004 and MPI, 2014).

Italy and Greece are two other countries with a large portion of the Bangladeshi diaspora members. Nonetheless, discussions with the diaspora and concerned experts convey that the diaspora members' legal (i.e., migratory status) and social positions remain inferior to those of the UK and USA. Bangladeshis are relocating to Spain and South Africa.. However, a robust diaspora community has yet to emerge in these countries.

Many examples of Bangladeshis' remarkable social works have been circulated in the media of various host countries. Such social, philanthropic works earned goodwill for the Bangladeshi diaspora in the host countries. Box 2.2.2 reflects the social recognition of a British-Bangladeshi doctor during the COVID-19 Pandemic. However, the Bangladeshi diaspora as a whole struggles to assimilate into host societies. Practices based on the religion of the country of origin as well as, culture-based norms play a role in the struggles to assimilate into host communities. However, discussions with the diaspora reveal that the second and subsequent generations of Bangladeshi diaspora are more accepting of social behaviours and customs in host communities than their first-generation counterparts.

Meanwhile, a sizable portion of the first generation diaspora interviewed for this study warns that in the absence of sustained efforts to connect new generations<sup>19</sup> to ancestral kinship and culture, their connection to hereditary society may be irreversibly lost. The first-generation diaspora in the UK, USA, Italy, Canada and Australia reported that the Bangladeshi community in these countries celebrates national and cultural holidays. Discussions with Bangladeshi diaspora members in both western and eastern countries, for example, confirmed that they spontaneously and regularly celebrate Bengali New Year (*Pahela Boishakh*) and (international) mother language day (*Ekushey* February). Events

<sup>19</sup> Refers to second and consequent generations of the diaspora.

around those days attract both new generations of Bangladeshi diaspora as well as the host community. Bangladeshi Missions take an active role in commemorating Bangladesh's national holidays and events.

### Box 2.2.2: Dr Farzana Hussain, a Bangladeshi British doctor at a public health service in the UK

Dr Farzana Hussain is a general physician and staff of the UK's National Health Service (NHS). She works at The Project Surgery in London's Newham, had won Pulse's General Practitioner of the Year award at the General Practice Awards 2019 in London. She is playing a vital role at the frontline to serve people amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic.

As an honour, she has been portrayed on billboards across London to mark the 72<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of the National Health Service. In addition, the British High Commission in Dhaka, in their verified Facebook page, had a post on her: "*Respect Dr Farzana Hussain, a British-Bangladeshi General Practitioner, who is one of the NHS staff, portrayed on #London billboards to mark the NHS' birthday, and to honour the vital role that frontline staff have played during the COVID-19 Pandemic*".

Source: (The Daily Star, 2020, July 04; The Daily Asian Age, 2020; NHS, n.d. and British Embassy in Dhaka, 2020)



Apart from financial resources, diaspora members could contribute to Bangladesh through their human resources—specialised skills, knowledge and technologies, and networks. Their interest mapping could point to some potential areas for social remittances. The Bangladesh missions in the host countries have some data on the profession of the diaspora. Nonetheless, no additional information on various factors, such as their interest and skills, is available in general. The current research estimates the diaspora with specialised skills and knowledge through the discussion with diaspora organisations and professionals. It estimates that **between 21 and 30 thousand diaspora members could contribute to Bangladesh through their knowledge and skills.**

The study maps the expertise and interest of diasporas and took into account the interest of members of the second generation diaspora. Table 2.2.2 contains relevant details.

Objective 19 of the GCM reads, "*Create conditions for migrants and diasporas to fully contribute to sustainable development in all countries*". To achieve this objective, the GCM suggests investing in research on the impacts of diasporas' non-financial contributions, such as knowledge and skills transfer and social and civic engagement (GCM: 35c). It also suggests providing easily accessible information and guidance for voluntary or philanthropic engagement of the diaspora (GCM: 35f). It entails creating partnerships to promote knowledge and skill transfer between the country of origin and host countries, as well as mapping diasporas and their skills, in order to maintain the link between diasporas and their country of origin (GCM: 35j). The expertise mapping performed in this research will add value to the relevant endeavours.

The interest mapping shows that the diaspora members' interest in contributing to Bangladesh's development is primarily focuses on philanthropic activities (i.e., health, education, and poverty relief) and business development. The interests are directly related to at least eight of the seventeen SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals): Goal 1: No poverty; Goal 2: Zero hunger; Goal 3: Good health and well-being; Goal 4: Quality education; and Goal 8: Decent work and economic growth.

It is worth noting that this mapping exercise is not exhaustive, but rather indicative. It could serve as a starting point for the GoB to initiate an extensive mapping exercise to devise incentives and disincentives, institutional mechanisms, legal and procedural mechanics.

Table 2.2.2: Estimates on the potential diaspora members endowed with specialised human capital and mapping of their expertise and interest

Host country	Range of number of the Bangladeshi diaspora	Potential diaspora with notable experience and expertise with specialised skills and knowledge (Range of number)	Major areas of expertise	Major areas of interest (other than professional expertise, in line with the country of origin's need)	
				First-generation diaspora	Second-generation diaspora
UK	700,000 – 800,000	2,000 – 3,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medical</li> <li>Hospitality management</li> <li>Education</li> <li>Culinary service</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business, including nostalgic trade</li> <li>Philanthropy—assistance to impoverished, building and reconstruction, religion-based activities, community development</li> <li>Heritage promotion</li> <li>Public diplomacy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Philanthropy—voluntary services in education and health</li> <li>Tourism</li> </ul>
USA	700,000 – 750,000	7,000 – 10,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ICT</li> <li>Medical</li> <li>Engineering— Civil, Mechanical, Electrical and Electronics</li> <li>Biotechnology</li> <li>Genetics</li> <li>Physics</li> <li>Education</li> <li>Economic sciences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business</li> <li>Expert affiliation</li> <li>Philanthropy—assistance to impoverished, community development</li> <li>Cultural diplomacy</li> <li>Public diplomacy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outsourcing businesses in the country of origin</li> <li>Tourism</li> <li>Philanthropy—voluntary services education in health</li> </ul>
Italy	400,000 – 500,000	1,500 – 2,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hospitality management</li> <li>Tour operations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business at the country of origin</li> <li>Philanthropy—assistance to impoverished</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Philanthropy—voluntary services in education</li> </ul>
Greece	85,000 – 90,000	1,000 – 1,500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hospitality management</li> <li>Tour operations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business at the country of origin</li> </ul>	–
Canada	70,000 – 75,000	2,000 – 2,500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ICT</li> <li>Medical</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trade promotion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tourism,</li> <li>Philanthropy—voluntary</li> </ul>



Host country	Range of number of the Bangladeshi diaspora	Potential diaspora with notable experience and expertise with specialised skills and knowledge (Range of number)	Major areas of expertise	Major areas of interest (other than professional expertise, in line with the country of origin's need)	
				First-generation diaspora	Second-generation diaspora
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engineering— <i>Civil, Mechanical, Electrical and Electronics</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medical tourism (dental)</li> <li>Philanthropy— <i>institutional voluntary activities</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>services in education and health</i></li> <li>Adventure tourism</li> </ul>
Japan	40,000 – 45,000	1,500 – 2,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>IT engineering</li> <li>Software development</li> <li>AI specialist</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Philanthropy— <i>voluntary institutional activities</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tourism</li> <li>Philanthropy— <i>voluntary services in education</i></li> <li>Children development</li> </ul>
Australia	30,000 – 35,000	2,000 – 2,500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ICT</li> <li>Engineering— <i>Civil, Mechanical, Electrical and Electronics</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Philanthropy— <i>assistance to impoverished, community development</i></li> <li>Facilitating higher education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Philanthropy— <i>voluntary services in education</i></li> <li>Tourism</li> <li>Climate change-related campaigns</li> </ul>
Spain	20,000 – 22,000	1,000 – 1,500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business</li> <li>Hospitality management</li> <li>Tour operations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business in the country of origin</li> <li>Philanthropy— <i>assistance to impoverished</i></li> </ul>	—
South Africa	12,000 – 14,000	500 – 1,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business</li> <li>Hospitality management</li> <li>Agriculturist</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business in the country of origin</li> <li>Philanthropy— <i>assistance to impoverished</i></li> </ul>	—
Germany	10,000 – 12,000	500 – 1,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ICT</li> <li>Engineering— <i>Civil, Mechanical, Electrical and Electronics</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business in the country of origin</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Philanthropy— <i>voluntary services in community development</i></li> </ul>
France	8,000 – 9,000	500 – 1,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business</li> <li>Hospitality management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business in the country of origin</li> <li>Tourism</li> </ul>	—
Belgium	5,000 – 6,000	100 – 150	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business</li> <li>Engineering— <i>Civil, Mechanical,</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business in the country of origin</li> </ul>	—



Host country	Range of number of the Bangladeshi diaspora	Potential diaspora with notable experience and expertise with specialised skills and knowledge (Range of number)	Major areas of expertise	Major areas of interest (other than professional expertise, in line with the country of origin's need)	
				First-generation diaspora	Second-generation diaspora
				▪ Philanthropy—assistance to impoverished	
Netherlands	5,500 – 6,000	100 – 150	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Business</li> <li>▪ Hospitality management</li> <li>▪ Social scientists</li> </ul>	▪ Tourism	▪ Philanthropy—voluntary services in community development
Switzerland	2,000 – 2,500	100 – 150	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Business operations</li> <li>▪ Diplomacy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Philanthropy—voluntary services in community development</li> <li>▪ Public diplomacy</li> </ul>	▪ Philanthropy—voluntary services in education
Other countries	10,000–20,000	1,500 – 2,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Business</li> <li>▪ Engineering— Civil, Mechanical</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Business in the country of origin</li> <li>▪ Philanthropy—assistance to impoverished</li> </ul>	–
Total	2,097,500 – 2,386,500	21,300 – 30,450			

*Note: "–" sign in some cells indicate the areas where researchers could not find adequately evidence-based information*

Source: Discussion with the diaspora organisations and the informed persons

### 2.2.3 Political Positioning

During the discussions held as part of this study, Bangladeshi diaspora members revealed that they are fully aware that their community requires political attention and that they share in the stake of political power at the national level of the host countries. Nonetheless, a notable portion of the Bangladeshi diaspora members interviewed for this study claimed that, in comparison to many other Asian diasporas, they are not adequately informed about the host countries' mainstream politics. However, Bangladeshi diaspora members' participation in the politics of the host countries is increasing.

Bangladeshi diaspora members in the UK, USA and Canada are more politically active compared to Bangladeshi diaspora members in other countries. Bangladeshi diaspora members are conscious of the politics of the UK. Interviews with the diaspora members in the UK reveal that three generations of the Bangladeshi diaspora played different roles in three phases. The First Generation of Bangladeshi diaspora was involved in the anti-racist, anti-apartheid movement between the 1950s and 1970s. During the 1971 liberation war, the first generation of Bangladeshi diaspora actively mobilised public

and political support in the UK and abroad in order to gain recognition for Bangladesh. Members of the first generation Bangladeshi diaspora were involved in the movement against the UK government's enactment of the conservative and controversial Citizenship Act. Members of the second generation Bangladeshi diaspora are involved in politics to combat racist attacks, police harassment and discrimination. Third-generation Bangladeshi diaspora members are involved in the national politics of the UK. More than half of the Tower Hamlets local councillors are of Bangladeshi origin. Tulip Siddiq, Rushanara Ali, Rupa Huq and Apsana Begum are from the new generations of Bangladeshi diaspora politicians in the mainstream politics of the UK. Box 2.2.3 has some more details.

#### **Box 2.2.3: Tulip Rizwana Siddiq, an aspiring new generation Bangladeshi British Politician**

UK's Labour Party lawmaker Tulip Rizwana Siddiq represents the new generation Bangladeshi diaspora. She has been named one of the most influential politicians in London. She joined the Labour Party at the age of 16. She was the first Bangladeshi origin female elected as a councillor of the Camden Council in 2011. Siddiq was first elected as MP from Hampstead and Kilburn seats in 2015 and was re-elected in 2017 and 2019.

Siddiq was Shadow Education Minister on the Labour Party's frontbench in Parliament from 2016 to 2017. She resigned from the Labour Party after around 75 per cent of her Hampstead and Kilburn constituency voted to remain in the European Union. Her maiden speech in Parliament was judged one of the top seven from 2015's intake of MPs by the BBC. She was named in the British Bangladeshi Power & Inspiration 100 in 2013. The Guardian named her as "one to watch" in politics of the UK. She was named as one of the rising stars of the Labour Party by the Sunday Times.

*Source: (PeoplePill, n.d.; Pasha, 2015; Hensher, 2013; and Siddiq 2017)*

Meanwhile, Bangladeshi diaspora members in the USA are not proactive in politics like the Bangladeshi diaspora in the UK. Nonetheless, few politicians from the Bangladeshi diaspora have been elected to US Congress and senate. Box 2.2.4 has a story of a Bangladeshi-American politician.

#### **Box 2.2.4: Sheikh Mujahudur Rahman Chandan, a journey of a Bangladeshi in US politics**

Sheikh Mujahudur Rahman Chandan is the first Bangladeshi origin senator of the USA. He has been a Georgia State Senator since 2018. He was first elected as a senator with a ticket from the Democratic Party in 2018 and re-elected in 2020. Rahman's win from Georgia State is significant because the state has a long history of slavery and the civil rights movement and is once strongly dominated by white supremacy, which still exists. The Georgia state's district five population comprises 38 per cent white, 27 per cent black, 21 per cent Hispanic and 11 per cent Asian.

Rahman is from a well to do family in Bangladesh, but he struggles in life and politics. He worked as a dishwasher at a North Carolina restaurant with a USD 3.35/hour payment when he was in college. He became a US citizen in 1995 and completed his undergraduate degree at the University of Georgia.

Rahman is going to establish a Bangladesh-America Institution in Atlanta to focus on development activities in both countries.

*Source: (Khan, 2019; Jagonews24.com, 2018; Dhaka Tribune, 2018 December 26; The Business Standard, 2020 and Bangladesh Identity, 2019).*

In their discussion with the research team, the diaspora members informed that the Bangladeshi diaspora in Italy, Australia, and Canada has yet to join mainstream politics as a formidable power. However, involvement of Bangladeshi diaspora members' in the local governance and politics at the community or provincial level in Australia, Canada, Italy and the USA appears promising and likely to be role up to the national level.

## 2.3 Diaspora Organisations

There is no list of Bangladeshi diaspora organisations. However, based on the interviews and discussions conducted as part of this study, web research, news items published in various media, social media presence, and socio-cultural events organised in the host countries by diaspora organisations, the existence of numerous Bangladeshi diaspora organisations, both registered or non-registered, in the host countries is confirmed. There are many Bangladeshi diaspora organisations in the UK, USA, Italy and all other host countries. Despite this, no one source can confirm the number of such organisations. Furthermore, not all of these organisations are currently active. Some members of the Bangladeshi diaspora expressed dissatisfaction that, despite the formation of dozens of associations regularly, only a tiny percentage of them could function and sustain due to intense political and regional divisions and intra-member conflict.

The existing Bangladeshi diaspora organisations are diverse and mixed. Some Bangladeshi diaspora associations exist solely for political, economic or social reasons. Some associations have a variety of visions and missions. Some of the Bangladeshi diaspora organisations were formed on a sense of belonging to a region of origin. For example, organisations founded mainly by people from Sylhet, Chattogram, Noakhali, Cumilla or Narsingdi. In general, the challenge lies in the fact that almost no sole organisation represents Bangladesh. Diaspora members have yet to form a real federation or apex-like organisation.

In most cases, the political affiliation of the country of origin creates a sharp divide among the organisations. Bangladeshi diaspora members, like those in other countries, such as the Philippines, have yet to form a "broader" association in the host countries. The lack of such association prevents the Bangladeshi diaspora from working together to achieve something in the host countries.

Nonetheless, the Bangladeshi diaspora's professional and business are more active and united. The role of Bangladeshi diaspora organisations is vital to mobilise and organise the Bangladeshi diaspora to promote and uphold their shared interests, which is still an issue that needs to be nourish further.

They are also involved in a variety of business and philanthropic activities in the country of origin. Furthermore, they share their knowledge and skills with the country of origin in a variety of ways. The majority of them are eager to contribute to the national development of Bangladesh. Bangladeshi Missions in host countries make an effort to maintain a functional relationship with the diaspora associations. However, due to their large number, lack of common-body, and political division among the associations—they do not provide enough room for the Missions to make any formal partnership with the diaspora association. However, some diaspora associations' are listed in the respective Mission office. However, there is no comprehensive list. A system may provide an opportunity to register the associations in a common platform and update information on a regular basis.

The current research prepared a list of relatively prominent and active diaspora organisations. **A list, organised as an outcome of this effort, is given in the report's Annexe A.** The research team has followed a set of criteria to identify the selective Bangladeshi diaspora organisations. The primary criteria are as follows:

- Organisation vision, mission, goal(s), objective(s) directly connecting with interests of Bangladesh both internally and externally
- Organisation vision, mission, aim(s), goal(s), purpose(s), and objective(s) directly connecting with interests of the Bangladeshi diaspora
- Represent at least a particular portion of the Bangladeshi diaspora
- Evidence of activity in the last three years
- Low-political (in nature)

- Official recognition in the host country
- Connection/Network with Bangladeshi organisation and/or community in Bangladesh
- Available online presence: website/Facebook-page/blog (the scope of study not allowed the physical visit of research team abroad)

However, this should not be regarded as exhaustive or representative. Instead, with the proactive efforts of Bangladesh's Foreign Missions, it could be used as a starting point for compiling a comprehensive list of the numerous diaspora organisations.

## Chapter 3

# Policy Regime, Institutional Arrangement, and Adaptability of the International Tools and Practices

### 3.1 Policy Regime

**B**angladesh managed and controlled migration and migrant issues through the Emigration Act of 1922 (VII of 1922). The purpose of this act was to address the skilled and less-skilled workers' migration process. After the independence of Bangladesh in 1982, an ordinance titled 'Emigration Ordinance, 1982' was enacted to repeal the Emigration Act, 1922. After a long time, due to the rapid increase in migration and irregularities, the Overseas Employment and Migrant Act 2013 (Act No. XLVIII of 2013) was enacted in 2013. According to the Act's preamble "...to promote opportunities for overseas employment and establish a safe and fair system of migration *to ensure rights and welfare to migrant workers and members of the families.*" This new law replaced the Emigration Ordinance, 1982. The primary concerns of the statutes are overseas employment, migration processes and actors, labour welfare and rights.

Along with the new law emphasising overseas employment, a new ministry, the 'Ministry of Overseas Employment and Expatriates' Welfare,' was established in 2001. The business allocation for the Ministry also makes explicit the welfare of Bangladeshi expatriates, the protection of their rights, and the facilitation of investment by Bangladeshi expatriates. In general, the term 'expatriates' here translates, by the function of the Ministry and related laws, Policy and plans, as 'economic migrants'—migrant workers living abroad.

In Bangladesh, the terms 'migrant', 'migrant worker' 'expatriate', 'emigrant', 'diaspora', and 'Non-resident Bangladeshi (NRB)' are mostly used to refer to 'economic migrants'—people who migrated to join overseas employment or seek better opportunities for their life and livelihood. However, each of these 'terms' has different characteristics, such as— 1) a person from one country living in another temporarily and with no intention of becoming a citizen of the host country, 2) a person who moved from one country to another with the intention of becoming a resident of the host country, 3) person who migrated for a short term labour contract and intends to return their country of origin after finishing the term; and 4) a person who left their country and spread abroad living with their subsequent generation, and trying to get Citizenship or a naturalised citizen or citizen of the host country. Moreover, some migrants are refugees, while others are asylum seekers.

There is no universal definition of 'diaspora'. According to the Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Policy 2016, Bangladeshi diaspora are permanent Bangladeshi migrants: *Those staying abroad for a longer period have taken nationality of another country or are willing to take the nationality, but willing to keep relation with their country of origin and participate in Bangladesh's socio-economic development.* The Seventh Five Year Plan mentioned delineating '*the strategies of the overseas employment and remittance plan*' that the purview of expatriate welfare must include Bangladeshi diaspora and the migrant workers. The plan also emphasised incorporating diaspora in various development activities and utilising their knowledge and resources by taking adequate measures, facilitating their initiatives, and recognising them (GoB, 2015). In the 8<sup>th</sup> five-year plan (GoB, 2020: 248–253), the diaspora's scope is defined only in terms of *harnessing remittance flows for development*. It is rare to find any public or private institutions with a specific plan or programme to include Bangladeshi diaspora members in the country's development, other than harnessing their financial resources in the form of remittance or investment.

The term 'diaspora' refers to migrants and their subsequent generations who have not yet decided to return to their country of origin. It is necessary to classify the Bangladeshi diaspora. To effectively

include the Bangladeshi diaspora in national development, we need to initiate a holistic approach that includes all society and institutions. Beyond the financial resources of diaspora members, they have many other non-financial resources to offer. Only a holistic approach can ensure security and a favourable environment. Inclusion of diaspora members must be a win-win situation for both the country of origin and the diaspora members themselves. The country of origin must meet the rights-based needs of diaspora members', making them feel at home with the initiatives of their country of origin for their engagement. At present, there are some privileges for the Bangladeshi diaspora, which could uphold some rights of the diaspora members and make scope to include them in the national development. These are as follows:

**Citizenship:** The Citizenship of Bangladesh is initially determined by *jus soli* and *jus sanguinis* – a person who was born in Bangladesh and whose parent(s) are Bangladeshi. Citizenship by birth, naturalisation, marriage, and investment are all options in addition to birth citizenship.<sup>20</sup> A Bangladeshi could maintain dual citizenship because it is legal in Bangladesh under certain conditions. Dual Citizenship could be obtained only if the applicant did not take an oath to discontinue their relationship with the country of origin at the time of accepting the host country's citizenship.

The following Act and rules regulate the citizenship status of the people of Bangladesh and their subsequent descendants—

1. The Citizenship Act, 1951 (ACT NO. II OF 1951)<sup>21</sup>
2. The Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2009<sup>22</sup>
3. The Bangladesh Citizenship (Temporary Provisions) Order, 1972 ( President's order no. 149 OF 1972)<sup>23</sup>
4. The Bangladesh Citizenship (Temporary Provisions) Rules, 1978
5. The Bangladesh Citizenship (Temporary Provisions) Rules, 1978 (Amendment 7 December 2008)
6. The Bangladesh Citizenship (Temporary Provisions) Rules, 1978 (Amendment 16 June 2014)
7. The Bangladesh Citizenship (Temporary Provisions) Rules, 1978 (Amendment 12 March 2015)
8. Naturalization Act, 1926.

**Voting Rights:** According to the 'Ministry of Overseas Employment and Expatriates' Welfare, more than 12 million Bangladeshis live abroad in 174 countries. Almost everyone who lives abroad is a citizen of Bangladesh. Still, they are unable to vote in the national or local government election in Bangladesh. As a matter of policy Bangladesh's current and recent past governments did not deny the rights. Bangladeshi diaspora communities living in the UK have long campaigned for their voting rights, which have been assured by the government representatives. However, to put the name of Bangladeshi expatriates into the electoral roll 'Electoral Rolls Ordinance of 1982' was a barrier. It excluded the Bangladeshi citizens living abroad from enrolling in the electoral roll, even if they visited Bangladesh.. This barrier is also removed by replacing the 1982 Ordinance and enacted Electoral Roll Act, 2009. However, in order to ensure the expatriates' voting rights, the Representation of People Order 1972, which was amended in 2013, needs to be amended. Recently, the Bangladesh government is taking the initiative to provide National Identity Card (NID) based on the Roll Act, 2009, which could enrol expatriates in the electoral roll. However, they were still unable to vote from their host country.

<sup>20</sup> Citizenship by investing a minimum of USD 500,000 or by transferring USD 1,000,000 to any recognised financial institution ( Non-repatriable); Accessed from <https://web.archive.org/web/20170702044642/https://www.bb.org.bd/investfacility/invesfac.php>

<sup>21</sup> Accessed from <http://bdlaws.minlaw.gov.bd/act-242.html>

<sup>22</sup> Accessed from <http://www.parliament.gov.bd/index.php/en/parliamentary-business-3/business-of-the-house/bill-and-legislation/acts-of-parliament/acts-of-parliament-9th-parliament/acts-of-1st-session/1738-17-the-citizenship-amendment-act-2009>

<sup>23</sup> Accessed from <http://bdlaws.minlaw.gov.bd/act-details-423.html>

**National Identity Card:** The Bangladesh government is launching an initiative to issue National Identity Card (NID) to its citizens living abroad. The NID is an important document that could enable citizens to access services provided by the Government. Moreover, NID serves as proof of the legal identity of a citizen. Bangladeshi diaspora who have not renounced their Bangladeshi citizenship needs their NID to deem various purposes, including succession rights. A diaspora member also requires a NID, who is still a Bangladeshi citizen, for the following purpose (including but not limited to):

1. Open a Bank account and make transactions
2. Bank loan support
3. Business Identification Number (BIN) facility
4. Borrow money from any financial institutions
5. Business and trade license
6. Buy a mobile sim card
7. Access citizens' rights and benefits
8. Apply for a driving license
9. E-cash transaction
10. E-governance activities
11. E-passports related services
12. Gas and electricity connections
13. Government financial aid or support
14. Health-related services
15. Hire houses/establishment
16. Insurance schemes
17. Marriage registration
18. Operate any business or institutions
19. Operate any social or personal business
20. Passport related services
21. Pay utility bills
22. Property and land buying and selling
23. Share-BO account maintainers
24. Solve legal issues
25. Solve the problems related to land property in Bangladesh
26. Vehicle registration, and
27. Proof of the legal identity of a citizen.

The **National Identity Card** is a binding identity document issued every 18 years of age and above citizen. It is a biometric, microchip embedded, smart card. The National Identity Wing (NIDW)/National Identity Registration Wing (NIRW) of the Bangladesh Election Commission is the authority to issue NID. Bangladeshi citizens who have frequently lived in an area and are 18 years or above, but not yet registered as a voter, may register for NID. It is an ongoing process. To get a NID, a Bangladeshi citizen needs some document support such as— SSC or equivalent certificate, Birth certificate, Passport, driving license, or TIN certificate (if available), Utility bill copy, house rent receipt, or holding tax receipt (as proof of address), Citizenship certificate (if applicable) and attested photocopy of Father, mother, husband, or wife's NID. A citizen has to be physically present at EC premises for photo and biometric data collection. Recently Election Commission has, in principal, decided to provide NID to Bangladeshi diaspora members living abroad without their physical presence at EC (BEC, 2018:16)

Act and rules related to the electoral roll and registration for National Identity Card (NID) are as follows:

1. The Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
2. Bangladesh Collaborators (Special Tribunals) Order, 1972 (P.O. No. 8 of 1972)
3. International Crimes (Tribunals) Act, 1973 (Act No. XIX of 1973)
4. The Electoral Roll Act, 2009
5. The National Identity Registration Act, 2010
6. The National Identity Registration Rules, 2014, and
7. The National Identity Registration (Amendment) Rules, 2014.

Bangladeshi diaspora members who do not have an NID face difficulties in obtaining assistance from diplomatic missions abroad. The vast majority of Bangladeshis living abroad do not have a NID. One of the primary reasons for the Bangladeshi diaspora not receiving the NID is the requirement for physical presence to provide biometric data in the authority delegated to issuing the NID, which is located in Bangladesh. Most of them are unable to frequently visit Bangladesh. It is also a matter of scope and expenditure to visit Bangladesh to complete formalities for obtaining an NID. Many undocumented Bangladeshi migrants cannot visit their country of origin but have a great need for NID. Against this backdrop, the Bangladesh government takes the initiative to provide NID to the



Bangladeshi diaspora through embassies/high commissions.. It could create a great scope to include them in their home country's national development and ensure their civil rights.

In the context of diaspora inclusion, existing national policies, acts and rules related to Bangladeshi diaspora, along with the acts and rules mentioned above, are as follows:

- Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Policy, 2016
- Labour Policy, 2012
- Labour Law, 2013
- National Skills Development Policy (NSDP), 2011
- Passport Act, 1920
- Passport (Offence) Act, 1952
- Bangladesh Passport Order, 1973
- Bangladesh Passport Rules, 1974
- Wage Earners' Welfare Fund Rules, 2002
- Expatriate Welfare Board Act, 2017
- Travel Agency Registration Act, 2013
- Travel Agency Registration Rules, 2014 S
- Election of Commercially Important Persons (Non-Resident Bangladeshi) Rules, 2015

Bangladesh Bank, through its policies, offers some bonds for the diaspora, as well as options for a bank account. Also, the diaspora members have the legal provision to invest in the capital market. They can also manage their portfolio by the nominated person/dealer. The Import Policy Order 2015–2018 mentioned some facilities concerned to import regulation that diaspora can access. Professional diaspora members can import tools and equipment related to their business with their foreign earnings without pre-approval of import authority. There are some awards for the diaspora based on their investment and remittances. Recognition to some prominent diaspora members is also done, but not in a systematic manner. The report's Chapter 5 goes into greater details about these economic issues.

### ***Policies through the 5-R Approach***

This research analyses the existing Policy and legal framework applicable to the Bangladeshi diaspora through the "5-R Approach" (Recognition, Respect, Return and Reintegration, Rights, and Resource Endowments—human and financial capital). The results do not reveal many positive outcomes. There are some gaps. Table 3.1.1 has the analysis outputs at a glance

Table 3.1.1: Analysis outcomes of the existing Policy and legal framework applicable to the Bangladeshi diaspora through the lens of the "5-R Approach

Aspect	Status
Recognition	The Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Policy, 2016 has an operational definition of the diaspora, but no specific strategy or framework facilities their inclusion. The current mother planning document of the country, that is, the Eighth Five Year Plan, also does not address the diaspora inclusion issue in particular. The second and third generations of diaspora do not come under any explicit policy recognition.
Respect	Some sporadic awards and facilities mainly focus on their financial and economic contribution (Some details are in Section 5.2, Box 4.1.2 and Box 5.2.3). No policy framework respectfully addresses and deal with their non-economic contributions. No framework facilitates or respectfully acknowledge the reasonable efforts of the diaspora associations.
Return and Re-integration	Policy tools are yet to address the return and re-integration issue of the diaspora.
Rights	There are some slow developments on ensuring the rights of the diaspora on the aspects of Citizenship, Voting Rights, and the National Identity Card. Still, there are notable legal and implementation gaps between diaspora members' demand and supply-side response from the concerned authorities.

Aspect	Status
Resource endowments (human capital and financial)	It is visible that most of the related policies and operational frameworks for the diaspora focus on financial resources. No policy aims for the inclusion of the human resource potential of the diaspora.

### 3.2 Institutional Arrangement

Currently, no Ministry or entity is responsible for dealing with the diaspora. As a multidimensional issue, it is natural that many entities are involved in it. However, due to the lack of a diaspora-focused comprehensive policy guideline and institutional framework, their inclusion in the national development gets trivial attention from the concerned authorities' programmes and activities.

At present, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) and the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment (MoEWOE) are the two entities primarily and closely related to the diaspora.

The Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment (MoEWOE) caters to the needs of migrant workers. They are also assisting the diaspora members on a limited scale. By structure, The Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET) of MoEWOE, does not have an adequate arrangement to serve anyone other than the short-term migrant workers. BMET database does not have the statistics of the diaspora. The Wage Earners' Welfare Board (WEWB) of MoEWOE has an initiative in registering the diaspora members, but the progress is slow. Probashi Kallyan Bank, currently only serves the migrant workers, and they have no have products or specific plans targeting the diaspora. MoEWOE officials were assigned to Bangladesh Missions. They are primarily focused on the needs of migrant workers. Their limited resources (human and other resources) prevents them from meeting the diverse requirement of the diaspora members.

On the other hand, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs plays a critical role in the Bangladeshi diaspora issue. They take the lead in diplomatic endeavours to the host countries, and their efforts have potential impacts on the lives of the Bangladeshi diaspora in the host countries. The Ministry's diplomatic efforts are crucial in establishing the rights of the host countries. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is also in charge of the programmes and activities of the Bangladesh Government's Missions in the host countries. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, through its missions abroad, maintains a functional relationship with the diaspora associations (e.g., consular services such as visa and other related documents, observing the national days and event jointly, trade facilitation, database maintenance). Still, the mechanism is customised by missions and does not follow any specific guidelines or framework. The Missions also try to maintain a diaspora database, but no central database facilitates the efforts.

Bangladesh Election Commission (BEC) and its National Identity Wing (NIDW)/National Identity Registration Wing (NIRW) are working over the diaspora members' concern on Citizenship and voting-related issues within their limited capability. Nonetheless, it requires the Government's political commitment to solve the relevant problems.

The Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (BIDA) aims to facilitate all the foreign investment towards Bangladesh, including the diaspora investment. However, it lacks a strategic plan or programmes seeking the diaspora investment. In addition, they are trying to provide one-stop services so that a potential diaspora investor does not need to visit any other offices in order to obtain the intended work. That, however, has yet to happen. Likewise, the Ministry of Commerce (MoC) lack specific strategic planning to include the diaspora in the country's commercial activities.

Bangladesh Bank provides some financial facilities and investment opportunities to the diaspora. However, promotional activities are insufficient to attract the diaspora to a greater extent. The Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission (BSEC) works to protect the interest of investors in the capital market. Still, the capital market is unable to attract many diaspora members due to its highly unpredictable image as a result of alleged market manipulations.

The Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism (MoCAT) can act as a crucial agent in respectfully welcoming the expatriates at the international airports. There have been some initiatives in this area. Still, diaspora members point out numerous inconveniences in airports. The MoCAT and the Bangladesh Tourism Board conduct regular activities in source countries to indirectly promote, popularise and facilitate diaspora tourism in Bangladesh. However, no specific action has been taken to promote the diaspora community's tourism. Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation (BPC) tries to reach out to the diaspora through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs by distributing promotional materials for tourist attractions in Bangladesh. The BPC also attempts to reach out to the diaspora through social media. They also offer some priority services and information to the diaspora to visit their ancestral houses at the airport.

At the same time, according to the new generations of diaspora members interviewed for this study, Bangladesh has yet to activate a responsive service delivery mechanism and appropriate promotional activities. It seems that diaspora tourism is not a focus area to this Ministry at this time. This is not explicitly addressed in the National Tourism Policy 2010.

The ministry of Finance has an important role in economic planning for the country, as well as in engaging the diaspora in development initiatives. The Ministry of Planning (MoP) contributes to the designing of relevant plans. As a cross-cutting subject of the migration issues, the diaspora issue naturally comes to the programmes and actions of these Ministries. Nonetheless, there are potential areas where these two Ministries may work to ensure the diaspora's inclusion in the country's development. These ministries are well-capacitated; a holistic strategy with specific business distribution may ensure their more useful facilitation over the issue.

The security issue, while a diaspora visits the country, remains a concern. In particular, the second and third generation diaspora members have a perception of insecurity. Also, the property-related issues create some security threats to the diaspora. Ministry of Home Affairs deals with such problems as part of their regular duty. However, they still do not have any specific guidelines or protocols to negotiate the issue regarding the particular need of the diaspora.

There are examples of philanthropic and community development activities carried out by the diaspora communities in various parts of Bangladesh. However, no institutional mechanism synchronises the efforts. The Ministries of Social Welfare and Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperative could both benefit from a responsive system, which is still unavailable. These two Ministries have offices up to the local level, which gives them advantage in carrying out the appropriate activities. Also, the District Employment and Manpower Offices (DEMO) of MoEWOE, with necessary strengthening interventions, could establish an institutional mechanism with the diaspora communities in facilitating safe international worker migration— yet to be realised.

Science and technology are two potential areas where diaspora communities' skills and technology can be transferred. Nonetheless, the Ministry of Science and Technology, ICT Division, and Ministry of Education do not have any systematic institutional procedure to ensure skills transfer from the concerned diaspora member. However, experts opine that these Ministries have adequate human and other resources to carry out the relevant efforts.

The private sector, particularly business associations, still does not have diaspora in their primary planning. However, they are open to it and have no reservations about a joint venture or similar actions. Development partners and NGOs have programmes primarily aimed at short-term migrant workers. The diaspora issue is still not a priority for them. Civil societies have had sporadic voices on the diaspora inclusion, which is yet to create significant policy pressure.

It is mentioned-worthy that, following the Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Policy 2016, the government has formed a "Interministerial Steering Committee on Overseas Employment". Honourable Prime Minister leads this committee. Also, the "National Forum on Migration and Development" – a multi-stakeholder forum – has been formed as per the 201 Policy. These initiatives reflect the government's willingness to address the issue. However, in general, these endeavours focus on short-term migrant workers. The Bangladesh Migration Governance Framework 2020 (Barkat, Osman, and Ahmed, 2020) proposes creating the "Interministerial Steering Committee on Migration and Development (IMSCM&D)" with a mandate to cover all migration categories, including the diaspora.

There is a lack of diaspora focused programmes of the concerned institutions and gaps in coordination. To ensure diaspora rights and to include them in the socio-economic development, all related stakeholders' initiatives must be coordinated and synergized. A call for diaspora inclusion must come from the highest authority of the nation. It would create a welcoming and conducive atmosphere for the diaspora.

### ***Institutions through the 5-R Approach***

The "5-R Approach" (Recognition, Respect, Return and Reintegration, Rights, and Resource Endowments—human and financial capital) analyses the existing institutions applicable to the Bangladeshi diaspora. The results do not reveal many positive outcomes. There are gaps. Table 3.2.1 has the analysis outputs at a glance

Table 3.2.1: Analysis outcomes of the concerned institutions applicable to the Bangladeshi diaspora through the lens of the "5-R Approach

Aspect	Status
Recognition	According to the 2016 policy, the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment recognises the diaspora as per their Policy. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Bangladesh Missions in the host countries keep a functional relation with the diaspora members. Bangladesh Bank has some provisions for including diaspora in the financial market. Nonetheless, other relevant Governments and non-government entities do not have adequate policy support to recognise the needs of the diaspora and ensure their inclusion in the national development.
Respect	In general, the institutional mechanisms do not allow their proactive inclusion in any development activities' planning and implementation phases.
Return and e-integration	No institutional mechanism deals with the issue of the return and re-integration of the diaspora.
Rights	There are some diplomatic endeavours to uphold the rights of the diaspora in the host countries
Resource endowments (human capital and financial)	In a broad sense, resource constraint is not a significant problem. Instead, the lack of holistic strategic planning with specific responsibilities for each entity makes the institutionalisation issue challenging.

### 3.3 Adaptability Scenario of the International Instruments<sup>24</sup>

Analysing the adaptability of relevant international tools and techniques will support in the preparing of our strategy and programmes for the diaspora issue. Boyle and Kitchin (2009) define a diaspora strategy as *"an explicit and systematic policy initiative or series of policy initiatives aimed at developing and managing relationships between homelands and diasporic populations. These policy initiatives vary from highly formalised and structured programs to quite light projects in conception and application. A diaspora strategy is perhaps best thought of then as an overarching framework for providing a level of coherence to the range of diaspora policies devised and implemented by various agencies."*

Several developing and developed countries implement diaspora strategies across various social, cultural, political, educational, and financial dimensions, recognising the importance of diaspora inclusion. The countries include New Zealand, Scotland, South Africa, Canada, Australia, Singapore, Israel, Ireland, and India (Aikins and White, 2011). It reveals that any international tool or instrument will require significant country-specific customisation.

Many international instruments (i.e., tool, index, guideline, strategy, policy) exist vis-à-vis to the diaspora and development issue(s) corpus. It was difficult to organise those documents based on the rationale of the study context and objective(s). It is also worth mentioning that accessibility, language, geographical association, focus areas of the instrument likelihood with Bangladeshi diaspora, and development are all well-thought-out. Following a preliminary screening of available international instruments via web surfing, the research team developed a set of criteria for selecting and analysing available international instruments as part of its prior planning. The research team has chosen appropriate tools through rigorous and rationale assessment as per the criteria follows:

- covered issues relations with this study objective(s),
- potentiality of contextualisation (background relativity with Bangladesh),
- scopes of tailored-modelling (customised-framework/remodelling),
- rooms of adaptability (feasible operationalisation), and
- global recognition (institutional and/or societal) and adaptation examples.

The research team selected some international instruments, as per the criteria mentioned above. The following write-up delineates and points out the adaptability scenario of those instruments to Bangladesh.

#### **Global Diaspora Strategies Toolkits**

The Diaspora Matters developed the "Global Diaspora Strategies Toolkit" to coincide with the Hillary Clinton Global Diaspora Forum in Washington. Diaspora Matters (2011) emphasises six broad issues for the diaspora strategies Toolkit. Table 3.3.1 depicts their suggested six topics as well as Bangladesh's adaptability scenario.

Table 3.3.1: Broad issues under diaspora strategies toolkit and their adaptability in Bangladesh

<sup>24</sup> Annexe D has relevant details on these instruments.

The broad issue of diaspora strategies toolkit	Adaptability in Bangladesh <sup>25</sup>
<p><b>Nation Branding:</b> Speak with one voice—all stakeholders should be united by the nation's brand vision and shared values to work together and align their behaviour to a common national strategy; Engage diaspora members as Brand Ambassadors for the country; Host Nation Days; Promote culture and heritage; Branding diaspora organisations.</p>	<p>As many entities are involved with the diaspora issue, it remains difficult to "speak with one voice". However, <i>Engage diaspora members as Brand Ambassadors for the country; Host Bangladesh Day; Promote culture and heritage; Branding diaspora organisations</i>—are readily adaptable, and there are ongoing initiatives</p>
<p><b>Networking:</b> Networks based on country, region, city, profession, expertise, alumni, origin area, sex, and new generations require institutional appreciation through four steps: Research (<i>to have updated information and to determine, evaluate and qualify the individuals who will become leaders within a diaspora network</i>); Cultivation (<i>promotion, awareness-raising and sensitisation activities to moving people from a state of unawareness to informed understanding; sympathetic interest, engagement, commitment and, finally, passionate advocacy</i>); Solicitation (<i>Engage key diaspora members in small groups with specific projects over a limited time frame</i>); and Stewardship (<i>thanking and recognising the contributions made by diaspora members to the homeland; measurement of outputs is also a basic form of stewardship. It is vital to assess the successes and failures of networks and to provide evaluative feedback</i>).</p>	<p>There are many Bangladeshi diaspora organisations registered or non-registered in the host countries. In general, the challenge lies in the fact that almost no sole organisation represents Bangladesh. Diaspora members could not form a real federation or apex-like organisation. In most cases, political affiliation divides the organisations. Lack of such association is a gap that deters the Bangladeshi diaspora from achieving something jointly in the host countries. Against this backdrop, it is difficult for the concerned authorities, particularly the Bangladeshi Missions in the host countries, to identify the key organisations and interlocutors.</p> <p>However, the Bangladesh Government can create an inventory of the diaspora organisations and interlocutors (<i>Research</i>); promote some common messages (<i>Cultivation</i>); design some activities/projects with selected organisations (<i>Solicitation</i>), and monitor the progress of the planned activities/project and mentoring (<i>Stewardship</i>).</p>
<p><b>Explore the role of the Government:</b> Facilitator rather than implementer to ensure diaspora engagement, sustainability, and stake; institutionalisation and strengthening of embassies and consulates in the host countries.</p>	<p>No single entity addresses the diaspora issue in Bangladesh. Many government agencies are involved, each with their own mandate and jurisdiction. So, unless and until a national strategy with entity-wise task distribution is in place, it will be difficult to institutionalise diaspora-centric visions.</p> <p>Apart from government initiatives, it requires active inclusion of the civil society members and private sectors in the whole endeavour to realise the potentials.</p>
<p><b>Tap into technology:</b> Technology is a fundamental way to connect with the next generation of diaspora members. New connectivity afforded by a diaspora has a significant impact on national image building. Nonetheless, technology does not substitute for face-to-face introductions.</p>	<p>Bangladesh has a formidable technological base. In particular, it has good exposure to communication technology. Nonetheless, "appropriate content development" remains an ignored area. "Segmented content" is absent, focusing on the second and third generation of diaspora. Engagement of the civil society networks and the digital social media platform will expedite the process.</p>
<p><b>Run an effective diaspora organisation:</b> Unless an organisation has a clear idea of its strategy and</p>	<p>Analysis results through the "5-R Approach" (Recognition, Respect, Return and Reintegration,</p>

<sup>25</sup> More details are in Chapter 4 of this report.



The broad issue of diaspora strategies toolkit	Adaptability in Bangladesh <sup>25</sup>
<p>direction, it will never reach its full potential. Every diaspora organisation needs a "compass" to steer it through the good and the bad times when building diaspora initiatives to engage with the diaspora. Combining core values and a mission statement is the most important; it requires implementing a workable strategic plan. All diaspora organisations need BHAGs (Build big hairy audacious goals) because diaspora members are motivated by lofty goals. Listen to the diaspora— listening is a most effective and persuasive strategy in diaspora engagement; the organisation needs to have the 'Elevator Speech'— clear answers to the following questions: Why does the organisation exist? What does it do? How does it do it? Where is it going? Why does it deserve support?</p>	<p>Rights, and Resource Endowments—human and financial capital) do not show many positive outcomes. There are gaps (Section 3.2 of this Chapter has details).</p> <p>There is no substantial argument for the creation of a new diaspora-focused organisation in Bangladesh. Instead, the lack of holistic strategic planning with specific responsibilities makes the institutionalisation issue challenging.</p> <p>Also, there is a lack of a respectful attitude and environment at the institutional level for the diaspora. The institutional culture of "Listen to the diaspora" is widely missing; it requires strong political commitment.</p>
<p><b>Learn the fundraising facts of life for non-profit diaspora Organisations:</b> Many diaspora Organisations are run as non-profit Organisations or have a philanthropic arm to their work. However, the strategies that brought diaspora organisations to where they are today will not necessarily get them to where they want to go tomorrow. One of the non-profit sector's main challenges is encouraging givers to be more strategic, focused, and intentional than simply responding to ad hoc requests. In addition, it requires positioning the diaspora organisations to prosper in this era, in which the old relationships between Government, business and non-profits have changed.</p>	<p>In the host countries, many Bangladeshi diaspora organisations are registered or unregistered. However, all these organisations are not active to the same extent. Their focus is different too. Some associations are only political, economic, and social. In terms of vision and Mission, there is also a mixed scenario. Many diaspora organisations in Bangladesh have been created based on the identity associated with the local roots. The general challenge is that Bangladesh represents nearly no single organisation; the diaspora members cannot form a real federation or apex-like organisation. Also, in cases, there are rivalries between the associations. The funding source is still limited, and in most cases, strategic financing is missing. GoB authorities, namely the Foreign Missions, have minimal scope to directly mentor and intervene in their activities.</p>

### The Diaspora Engagement Self-Assessment Tool (DESAT)<sup>26</sup>

The Diaspora Engagement Self-Assessment Tool (DESAT) allows the African Union Member States to systematically review and assess their current diaspora engagement environment. The DESAT allows for the identification of strengths and weaknesses in diaspora engagement environments, as well as the ability to monitor scoring over time, and facilitate Member State comparison and benchmarking. It is built on six pillars that reflect the diaspora engagement. Each pillar comprises some indicators. In addition, the pillars have their weightage. Box 3.3.1 shows the pillars, indicators, and respective weightage within the parenthesis.

Box 3.3.1: Pillars, indicators, and respective weightage for DESA

<sup>26</sup> (African Union, 2019).



<b>P 1: Political will to engage the Diaspora (25%)</b> 1.1: Political commitment (40%) 1.2: Focal Point (20%) 1.3 Capacity (technical) (15%) 1.4 Capacity (financial) (15%) 1.5 Cooperation (10%)	<b>P 2: Diaspora-friendly environment (25%)</b> 2.1 Rights (35%) 2.2 Political representation (30%) 2.3 Incentive framework (20%) 2.4 Pre-departure services (5%) 2.5 Re-integration services (5%) 2.6 Remittances (5%)
<b>P 3: National Diaspora Strategy (10%)</b> 3.1 Strategy (10%) 3.2 Effectiveness (50%) 3.3 Consultation (20%) 3.4 Linkages (10%)	<b>P 4: Diaspora consultation mechanism (15%)</b> 4.1 Formal channels (grassroots) (25%) 4.2 Formal channels (high-level) (25%) 4.3 Consultation (25%) 4.4 Capacity building (25%)
<b>P 5: Outreach Mobilising Strategy (20%)</b> 5.1 Data (20%) 5.2 Collection capacity (20%) 5.3 Visibility (30%) 5.4 Published Diaspora information (20%) 5.5 Published investment information (5%) 5.6 Cultural event support (5%)	<b>P 6: Diaspora-oriented programmes (5%)</b> 6.1 Diaspora programmes (50%) 6.2 Joint programmes (50%)

Note: P= Pillar; I= Indicator

*Score: A score marks between 0 and 4, where 4 is the highest and 0 is the lowest. 0=Nothing has been implemented, and there are no plans to implement; 1=Plans for implementation; 2=Some implementation has taken place; 3=A good level of implementation is ongoing, and 4=Nothing left to do. The scaling of scores standardises across the DESAT. The results also produce an automated set of recommendations.*

This assessment tool is handy. The pillars and indicators relate significantly to the Bangladesh context. Using this as a reference, research groups of Bangladesh, through consultation with the relevant stakeholders, may develop a customised tool for Bangladesh, to assist in prioritising the Government's initiatives.

### Toolkit for Understanding Diaspora Investment<sup>27</sup>

A Toolkit has been designed, primarily for the African governments, to assess the diaspora's viability in their country of origin and determine the best approach for attracting investment. This Toolkit sketches the user's procedure to understand the opportunities for diaspora investment in their country of origin. Theoretically, 'Diaspora Investment' often includes human capital investment – such as knowledge and skills transfer. However, this Toolkit focuses only on financial investments from the diaspora. The Toolkit expects to provide a systematic guide for the Governments to work through. The findings and recommendations could form as the basis for a robust diaspora investment strategy.

Diaspora Investment Readiness Index (DIRI) of this Toolkit comprises indicators from three Pillars: (1) the Government's diaspora engagement strategy; (2) financial environment; and (3) the diaspora's investment readiness.

This Index captures the financial attractiveness of the investment proposition (risk and reward). It overlays the diaspora's craving and willingness to invest. It also captures the country's level of diaspora engagement because it affects the diaspora's desire to invest. It is a tool to guide users to understand weaknesses and strengths concerning potential diaspora investment.

Financial Profile has three sub-indexes: (1) Financial robustness; (2) Financial track record; and (3) Financial attractiveness.

<sup>27</sup> DMA Global, 2019. Toolkit for Understanding Diaspora Investment in Africa.

Accessed from <https://www.mfw4a.org/publication/toolkit-understanding-diaspora-investment>

Diaspora Profile has two sub-indexes: (1) Diaspora investment ability; and (2) Diaspora investment willingness.

The Toolkit also has a user-friendly Assessment Template in the Excel workbook.

Once the information is ready, a consultation expects to engage all the key stakeholders, especially the Government departments. The purpose will be to review the results and develop a plan or roadmap to move ahead.

The *Diaspora Investment Readiness Index (DIRI)* seems a helpful tool for Bangladesh, requiring necessary modifications to become country-specific. It requires a thorough assessment of it through a systematic study engaging the key stakeholders in order to modify or design an index with a similar aim.

### **Road Map for Engaging Diaspora in Development: A Handbook**

The Global Forum on Migration and Development, since its first meeting in 2007, has sought to highlight the policies and programmes that can magnify the resources, both human and financial, that emigrants and their descendants contribute to development. The recognition of diaspora members' role in development has led to an increase in policies and programmes attempting to leverage the goodwill and resources of emigrants and their descendants. However, it remains difficult to track the challenges and the successes. Therefore, there was a need for a handbook to offer policymakers and practitioners with concrete guidelines based on the lessons learned and good practices. International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Migration Policy Institute (MPI) initiated the research. It resulted in a practical handbook that synthesised and analysed the results of Governments' efforts to engage their diaspora.

Agunias and Newland (2012), in this handbook, shows the pathways for engaging the diaspora in development. They have suggested, broadly, five steps—

The first stage will require identifying **goals and capacities** (match goals to diaspora resources-- human and financial, Strengthening and inventory of existing diaspora institutions and programmes).

Then, through a series of consultations and research, it requires **knowing the diaspora** in detail: identification of opinion interlocutors with the diaspora, mapping of diaspora organisations, skills inventory, and listening to the diaspora.

Ensuring coordination among the Government agencies and strengthening their capacity requires **building trust among the diaspora**. This stage, among others, needs the following activities: cultural events; language promotion; explanation of and feedback on Government's diaspora policy; interventions with host Governments; flexibility in project implementation; services to the diaspora—documents, classes, social services; privileges for non-resident expatriates and descendants; active consular networks; dual Citizenship.

The fourth stage is to **mobilise the stakeholders**—Government, diaspora, and civil society. Pilot projects and capacity-strengthening efforts will be helpful at this stage. The probable activities for this stage include high-profile events; diaspora spokespersons; sponsored travel for opinion leaders, youth; promoting partnership; creation/adaption of Government institutions (consular networks, ministries, centres); integrating diaspora into development planning and policy implementation; volunteer corporations. This stage will require a relatively long time to realise.

The fifth stage is "Effective engagement of diaspora in development". The success of this stage will largely depend on a timely adaptation of the changes and conducting responsive evaluation regularly.

On the bright side, the handbook, which was published in 2012, remains relevant primarily to date. Thus, in principle, Bangladesh may consider these five broad steps in its policy planning.

### Emigrant Policies Index (EMIX)

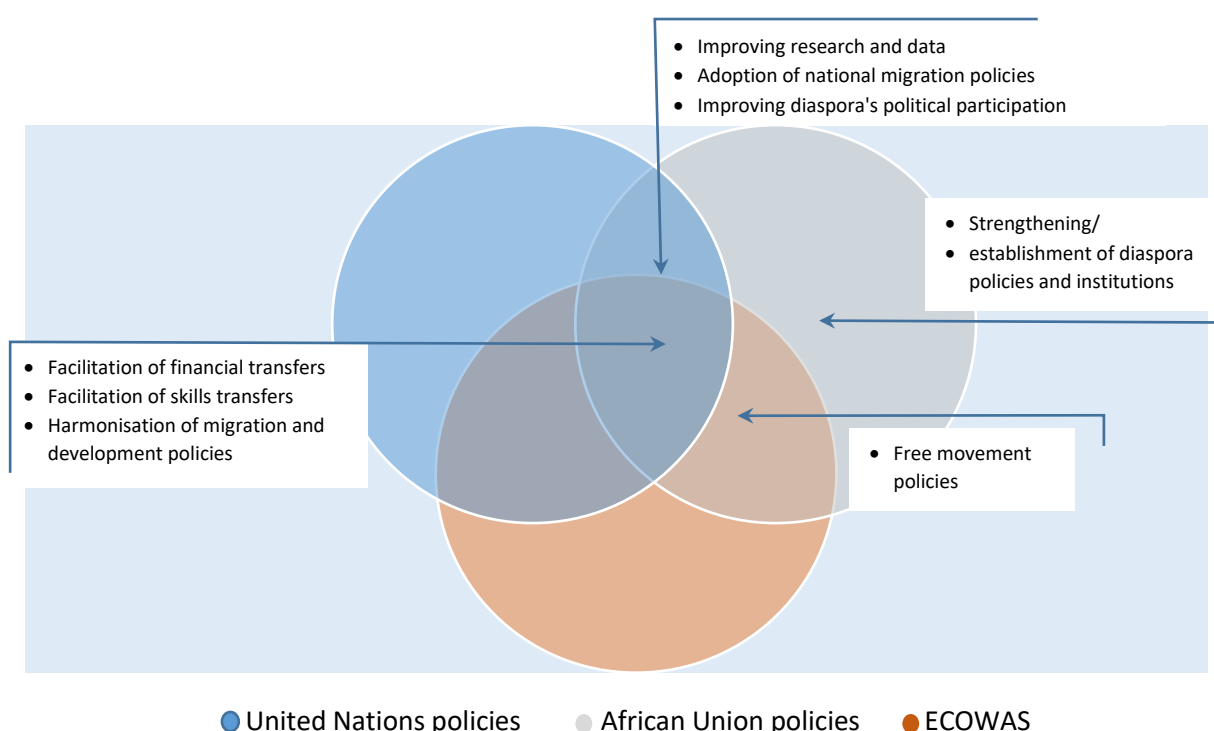
Pedroza and Palop-García (2017) made diaspora policy comparisons for the 22 states in the Latin American and Caribbean Region by applying the "Emigrant Policies Index (EMIX)". The EMIX proposes a helpful tool to condense and compare a broad spectrum of policies across countries.

The diaspora context in the Latin American and Caribbean Region are notably different from the context of the Bangladeshi diaspora. Thus, a good number of issues and components incompatible with Bangladesh. Nonetheless, some issues, such as— *Institutional Participation (Structural consultation, Composition of the advisory body, Chair of the consultative body)*, *Remittances for co-development*, *Brain-gain programmes*, *A National day devoted to the emigrants*, *Explicit reference in the Constitution* requires review to scrutiny their adaptability in our country.

### Diaspora Engagement Strategies Recommended in United Nations, African Union and ECOWAS Policies

It will be helpful to review the critical diaspora engagement strategies suggested in the United Nations, African Union and ECOWAS (The Economic Community of West African States) policies. Diagram 3.3.2 shows the essential strategy of these three groups.

Diagram 3.3.2: Key diaspora engagement strategies recommended in United Nations, African Union and ECOWAS policies



Source: (Fargues, and Rango, 2020).

### 3.4 International Information and Communication Platforms

There are examples of information and communication platforms for diaspora members. Any format is not fully adaptable for many countries; necessary customisation is mandatory. Also, it will require rigorous campaigns and sensitisation efforts will be required to get the diaspora members to register for and use the platform.. Also, targeting the whole diaspora population at the first stage is not feasible. Rather, piloting campaigns and sensitisation activities in selected key host countries will be more instrumental in the first phase. This section provides glimpses of such endeavours.

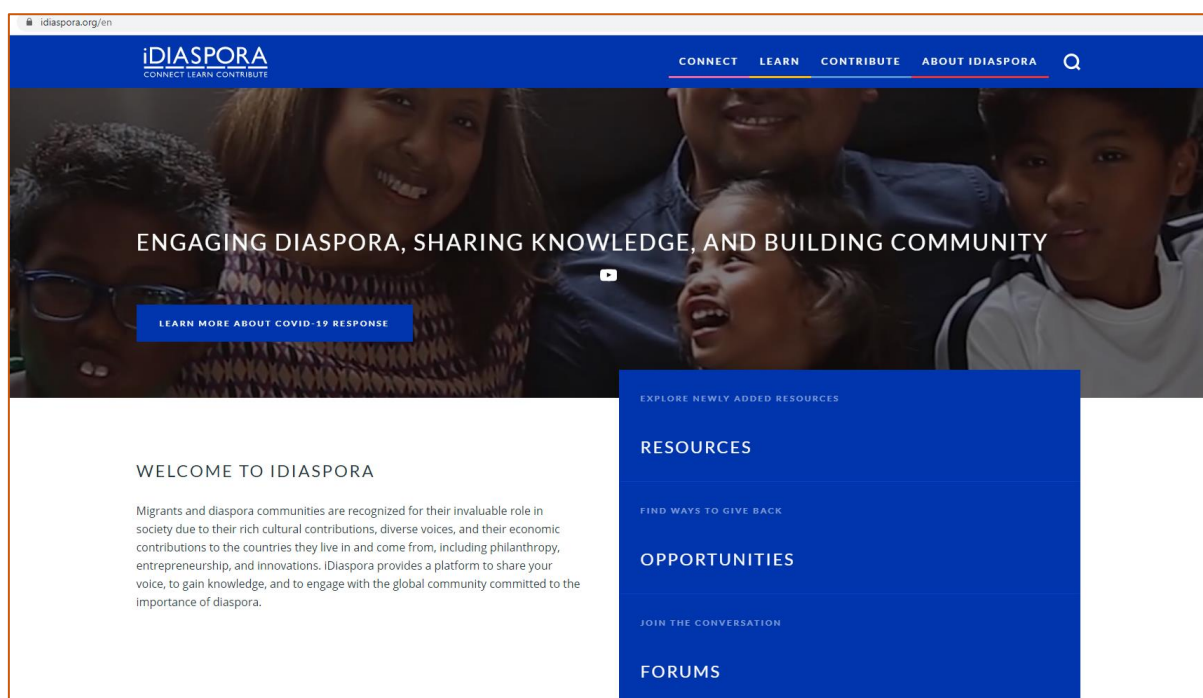
The research team judiciously diagnoses all possible variables and indicators in order to set criteria for selecting international information and communication platforms for developing network and modality adaptation (in the national context of Bangladesh following global migration affairs trend changes) by the Government of Bangladesh and the Bangladeshi diaspora. The research team also considers the role of the international fora (i.e., IOM, ILO, UN Women) in facilitating the capacity building of the government of origin country and diaspora community, as well as relationship development between the origin and host countries (both counterpart governments (origin and host) and three communities- origin, diaspora, and host) into account. The research team followed the following criteria to choose international information and communication platforms for analysis:

- Relativity (with Bangladesh development agenda)
- Credibility (in international migration purview)
- Extensiveness (including issue-coverage radius)
- Exposure (relevant development scopes)
- Accessibility (opportunities of connecting, admission, and tie-up) and
- Dynamism (setting dynamics)

#### **iDiaspora<sup>28</sup>**

iDiaspora, an online platform initiated by IOM, provides an opportunity to share the voice, gain knowledge, and engage with the global community committed to the importance of diaspora. It offers interactive and easy access to global connections, content, and best practices on diaspora engagement for diaspora members, businesses, governments, experts, and stakeholders interested in diaspora engagement. The platform is designed as an evolving space. It is actively pursuing the development of an emerging market. Any individual or organisation can join this platform without any monetary charge. One does not need to be a part of the diaspora community to join this platform. The site does not aim to create a diaspora database; instead, it seeks to provide an opportunity to work as a knowledge and opportunity sharing platform, where the diasporas and stakeholders can share best practices, stories and resources.

<sup>28</sup> Can be accessed from <https://idiaspora.org/>



The Bangladeshi diaspora members interviewed for this study reveal that it has yet to be fully utilised despite the platform's potential. They suggest more promotional activities using social media to popularise it.

### Forum for Indian Science Diplomacy (FISD)<sup>29</sup>

Research and Information Systems for Developing Countries (RIS), an independent think tank in Delhi, supported by the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India is implementing a Science Diplomacy project with support from the Government's Department of Science and Technology—Forum for Indian Science Diplomacy (FISD). Science Diplomacy involves bringing about closer coordination between science and technology and Indian diplomacy to achieve national goals. An essential part of the project is reaching out to Science, Technology, Engineering and Medicine (STEM) professionals from India working abroad to facilitate closer engagement with the Indian Science, Technology, and Innovation (STI) ecosystem, including facilitation of Research and Development (R&D) partnerships and collaborations, and start-up ventures with Indian entities. They are building up a database of interested STEM Indian expatriate professionals across the world. Indian Professionals with relevant experience can register online. Non-resident Indians (NRI), Persons of Indian Origin (PIO), and Overseas Citizens of India (OCI) with STEM backgrounds can register here<sup>30</sup>.

Bangladesh may consider initiating such an online portal to prepare an inventory of the diaspora professionals. However, Bangladesh Missions requires implementing rigorous campaigns and sensitisation activities for promoting such initiatives among the diaspora professionals. Region-wise, phase by phase activation of such endeavour will be practical and feasible.

<sup>29</sup> Details on FISD can be accessed from <http://www.fisd.in/>

<sup>30</sup> Can be accessed from <http://fisd.in/node/488>

### BaLinkBayan<sup>31</sup>

The Government of the Philippines created the communication platform BaLinkBayan<sup>32</sup>—a one-stop online portal for diaspora engagement. It connects Filipino individuals and communities to the Philippines through the diaspora to development (D2D) programme of the Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO). The platform focuses on the five of the D2D: diaspora investment and entrepreneurship, diaspora philanthropy, brain gain programme, educational exchange, and medical mission coordination. BaLinkBayan's long term pursuit to achieve inclusive and sustainable growth. Overseas Filipinos can serve as catalysts to fuel the Philippine economic development. Through this initiative, BaLinkBayan attempts to make an impact by encouraging their diaspora population. This single platform serves the diaspora youth, diaspora retirees, and migrant workers. It helps overseas Filipinos become entrepreneurs, inspires sharing skills, encourages donations to a good cause and philanthropic activities, and connects to other relevant Government servicers.

BaLinkBayan of the Philippines is an example of a user-friendly one-stop online platform for their diaspora community. However, the design and other facilities should be customised for Bangladesh through a rigorous study before initiating a one-stop point for the diaspora members.

### Global Database of Nigerians in the Diaspora (GDND)<sup>33</sup>

The Global Database of Nigerians in the Diaspora (GDND)<sup>34</sup> is also a good attempt. On the home page, they used the following words:

*"Our country Nigeria as a Nation has discovered the great need to involve her Sons and Daughters abroad in the development of both her public and private sectors. She wants them to make themselves visible by registering themselves in this Database."*

The aim was to create a Databank of Nigerian skills abroad to enable the nation to tap from them, favouring National development. To promote the dedicated website, they use a professional Postcard. The Postcard highlights the benefits of the GDND to the Nigerian diaspora, inviting them to submit their details online, thereby populating the database. An electronic version of the Postcard is also available for dissemination via massive and sustained email blasts worldwide e-Groups (Nigerians in Diaspora Organisation, 2009).

## 3.5 Scenario of the International Practices

For a particular country, the relevance of the other international practice of integrating the diaspora community to the country of origin's development is not straightforward. The socio-economic context of different countries of origin and their relationship with other countries varies greatly. Therefore, it is not apparent that good practice can be successfully applied elsewhere. However, in formulating and implementing policy and/or strategy, such examples of notable international practise of facilitating diaspora engagement may increase the horizon of policy/tools alternatives with potential merits and demerits. Therefore, the following section details some relevant international practices facilitating diaspora engagement to the country of origin.

In this research, the country selection criteria used are as follows:

- Similarities of social, economic, and political aspects with Bangladesh
- Connotations of good practices in Bangladesh context (referable success stories)

<sup>31</sup> Can be accessed from <https://balinkbayan.gov.ph/>

<sup>32</sup> Can be accessed from <https://balinkbayan.gov.ph/>

<sup>33</sup> Can be accessed from <http://www.nigeriandiaspora.org/default.aspx>

<sup>34</sup> Can be accessed from <http://www.nigeriandiaspora.org/default.aspx>



- Matchings' with national development objectives of Bangladesh
- Familiarities with Bangladeshi diaspora dynamics
- Relevancies of national development trends and diaspora inclusion pattern of Bangladesh

## India

- **Categorisation of diaspora:** To engage the diaspora, India has categorised the Indian expatriates into three broad categories: Non-resident Indian (NRI: Indian expatriates who hold Indian Citizenship), Persons of Indian Origin (PIO: Indians who have acquired foreign nationality), and Overseas Citizen of India (OCI: Indian origin people who are not a citizen of India but allows to live and work in India indefinitely). This categorisation (see Table 3.3.3) helps India address the different needs of different diaspora community people (with varying statuses) through various policies and tools (e.g., services, income tax, business incentives, dual Citizenship) (IOM, 2006:14–15). The conceptualisation of the diaspora community in terms of their diversity and heterogeneity in skills and educations, and location benefits India by avoiding reliance on a "*fit-for-all diaspora policy*". Instead, such consideration allows policymakers to shift necessary directives from time to time, considering the situations and needs of the diaspora (Sahai, 2013: 51–52).

Table 3.3.3: Comparative Chart\* (not exclusive) on Indian diaspora Categories

Feature	NRI	PIO	OCI cardholder
Who	An Indian citizen who is ordinarily residing outside India and holds an Indian Passport	A person who or whose any of ancestors was an Indian national and who is presently holding another country's citizenship/nationality, i.e., he/she is holding a foreign passport	A person registered as an Overseas Citizenship of India Cardholder under section 7A of the Citizenship Act, 1955. Eligibility to get the card/status are: Indian citizen or eligible to be Indian citizen, child, grandchild, great-grandchild, minor of such citizen, spouse of foreign origin of a citizen of India or spouse of the foreign origin of an Overseas Citizen of India Cardholder
Entitled Benefit	All benefits As available to Indian citizens subject to notifications issued by the Government from time to time	No specific Benefit	Among others: multiple entry lifelong visa for visiting India; exemption from registration with Foreigners Regional Registration Officer; Parity with NRIs in respect of all facilities available to them in economic, financial, educational fields, different entry fees to national monuments, historical sites and museums in India and pursuing the specific professions, in the matter of inter-country adoption of Indian children, pursuing some specific profession, airfares (at Per resident Indian) in domestic sectors in India.
Visa Requirement	No	Yes	Can visit India without visa for life long
Registration with policy authority	Yes	Yes, if the period of stay is for more than 180 days	No
Participation in activities	All activities	Activities as per the visa obtained	All activities except research work (for research work, they require additional permission from respective authority)

\* The Chart is a simplified version of a chart devised by the Ministry of Home Affairs, India. <sup>35</sup>

<sup>35</sup> Ministry of Home Affairs, India. Comparative Chart On NRI/Person Of Indian Origin/OCI Card Holder. Available from [www.mha.gov.in/PDF\\_Other/CompNRIPIOOCI\\_25042017.pdf](http://www.mha.gov.in/PDF_Other/CompNRIPIOOCI_25042017.pdf) (accessed 15 May 2021).



- **Connectivity of Diplomatic Missions:** India initiated annual conferences of the heads of Indian diplomatic missions in receiving countries to promote the connectivity among missions and address crucial foreign policy issues and goals, including the diaspora engagement. In those conferences, the Government briefs top diplomats on regulatory and economic reform initiatives to highlight these aspects on the global stage. Moreover, this conference allowed all Ambassadors and High Commissioners to come to India and participate in a brainstorming session to promote India's national interests abroad (Hindustan Times, 2018 June 30).
- **Information Sharing Platform:** The government of India has institutionalised the information sharing process between the government and the diaspora community. In one way, the Government informed the diaspora community through a monthly e-magazine and web such as "www.overseasindian.in". On the other hand, the diaspora could convey its views, concerns, and queries to the government through various institutionalised channels such as the prime minister's Global Advisory Council of Overseas Indians and annual events held in India and overseas (Ancien, Boyle and Kitchin, 2009:15).
- **Connectivity among diaspora:** The Indian Ministry of Science and Technology, with the diaspora collaboration, initiated the 'Science and Technology Professionals of Indian Diaspora Website' to promote the scientific diaspora network. This platform aimed to bring together Indian-origin scientists and technologists from around the world. It involved a diverse professional and trained staff in destination countries' companies, research laboratories, universities, science departments, and STIOs<sup>36</sup> engaged in cross-border business activities (e.g., technology-intensive business and venture capitalists) (Tejada and Wickramasekara, n.d.: 14).
- **One-Stop Economic Engagement:** In cooperation with the Confederation of Indian Industries (CII), the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs launched a not-for-profit Trust, 'Overseas Indian Facilitation Centre (OIFC)' in 2007. The Centre was coined as a "one-stop-shop" because it is supposed to serve the needs of the Overseas Indian Community in two extensive areas: investment facilitation (e.g., information platform, advisory service, a focal point of business) and the networking of expertise (e.g., Diaspora Knowledge Network-DKN database) (Embassy of India Bahrain 2014).
- **Policy and Research Establishment:** In 2008, the Government of India set up the "India Centre for Migration (ICM)" to serve as a think tank and a focal point for policy input and research activities for the concerned Ministry. The Centre conducts scientific, theoretical, and policy studies and pilot projects to document good practices. ICM's scope of work has grown over time due to a multi-pronged approach that includes actively coordinating the workshop, research projects, and seminars in cooperation with academic institutions, state governments, international organisations, and others. The Centre also conducts researches focusing on monitoring and analysing the trends and dynamics of the global labour market, skill development, and skill up-gradation to promote employment opportunities overseas (India Centre of Migration, 2021).
- **Foundation for Promoting Diaspora Philanthropy:** In 2008, the Government of India sets up the 'India Development Foundation of Overseas Indians (IDF-OI)' as a not-for-profit trust to enable overseas Indians to be involved in philanthropy country's development through a credible institution.<sup>37</sup>
- **Resource Centre for Migrants:** The Government of India has set up 'Overseas Workers Resource Centre (OWRC)' as a facilitation Centre for the potential migrant and present migrant Indian. This

<sup>36</sup> Scientists and Technologists of Indian Origin.

<sup>37</sup> Embassies of India, India Development Foundation of Overseas Indians (IDF-OI). Available at <https://eoi.gov.in/tashkent/?pdf4852?001>

Centre's primary services are to provide- guidance/assistance to migrants on issues of concerns/problem areas, a window for submitting complaints/grievances (e.g., emigration-related information). This Centre operates a 24-hour helpline and is connected to similar Centres both at home and abroad (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2010).

- **Observance of Diaspora Day:** Once every two years, on 9 January, India commemorates "India Diaspora Day (*Pravasi Bharatiya Divas*)" to honour the contributions of the Indian diaspora to the country's development. Two ministries of the Government of India and two business federations/confederations sponsored the series of events during that celebration. Around 7,000 delegates participated in the 15<sup>th</sup> PBD Convention held in 2019. Apart from that, Ministry organised Regional Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Conferences (RPBD) to meet with a large part of India's diaspora, who were unable to attend the main biennial event in India (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2020).
- **Knowing Root:** Ministry of External Affairs has commenced a program, titled "Know India Programme (KIP)," to familiarise Indian-origin youth (18-30 years) with their Indian roots and contemporary India. The Government of India bears most of the orientation/airfare cost of this scheme. Ministry organised six KIPs in a year, while each KIP consists of 25 days' orientation program with a ten-day visit to one or two States. The programme was successfully conducted in 59 editions up to 2021, with 2301 PIO young people participants (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2020a).
- **Scholarship Program:** In 2006-07, India introduced "Scholarship Program for Diaspora Children (SPDC)" to make higher education in Indian Universities/Institutes accessible to the children of PIOs, NRIs, Indian workers in ECR countries (ECR countries included in 2015) and to promote India as a centre for higher studies. Under this scheme, each year Ministry offers 150 scholarships to students with a benefit of up to USD 4000 per annum, covering tuition fees, hostel fees, admission fees, and some other fees (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2020b).
- **Knowledge Transfer:** Having the support from Swiss Agencies and Nobel Prize winners, a former Indian post-doctoral student at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich (ETHZ) has initiated "KIIT School of Biotechnology at the KIIT University in Orissa." This initiative aims to expand biotechnology know-how in India, especially in Orissa, one of the poorest states in India. The team includes local Indian scientists and researchers and STIOs abroad (e.g., Switzerland, Germany) and Nobel prizes winners. In addition, distinguished professors and scholars are members of the scientific advisory board. A similar institutional practice is "The Indo-Swiss Collaboration in Biotechnology (ISCB)," which aims to develop innovative technology, products, and biotechnological to help India reduce poverty and manage natural resources sustainably. The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Government of India (Department of Biotechnology-DBT) co-funded the project (Tejada and Wickramasekara, n.d.).
- **Addressing Citizenship in Different Way (Quasi Citizenship):** As the Constitution of India does not allow dual Citizenship, the country entitles overseas Indians to various state benefits through the Overseas Citizenship of India scheme. Under the scheme, this scheme holders do not receive an Indian passport and have no voting rights. However, registered Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) enjoy benefits such as- 'multiple entry lifelong visa for visiting India; exemption from registration with Foreigners Regional Registration Officer; Parity with NRIs in respect of all facilities available to them in economic, financial, and educational fields; Parity with NRIs in respect of different entry fees to be charged for visiting the national monuments, historical sites and museums in India and pursuing the specific professions.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>38</sup> Accessed from <https://eoi.gov.in/eoisearch/MyPrint.php?4771?001/0020>

## China

- **Knowing Root:** Since 1999, the Office of Overseas Chinese Affairs (OOCA) has organised an annual two-week trip called "Root Seeking Camps," to China for Young overseas Chinese. The programme aims to help Chinese children growing up in other countries connected to their national heritage. Arrangement of this almost free tour (excluding airfare) is part of a Chinese government drive to increase ties with the roughly 60 million Chinese who live overseas. The program seems successful as more than 400,000 Chinese abroad had attended the camps between 1999 and 2016 (Liu, 2016).
- **An organisation dedicated to Bridging:** The "All-China Federation of Returned Overseas Chinese (ACFROC)" is a 'people's organisation' that serves as a bridge between the Party/Government and the returned overseas Chinese and Chinese living in other countries. The Chairman and the vice-chairman of the federation are either returnees or dependents. The federation takes the role of cultural exchange programs, among other things. For example, the ACFROC Youth Committee promotes economic, scientific, and cultural exchange with a focus on youth. The scholarly and cultural outreaching arms of the ACFROC are a research centre (China Institute of Overseas Chinese History) and a museum (China Museum of Overseas Chinese History). The ACFROC publishing company (Overseas Chinese Publishing Company) seeks to build a 'high-level business platform' (Liu and Dongen, 2016).

## Philippines

- **Use of Social Media for On-site Services:** The Government of the Philippines used Facebook as a contact tool to reach out to and support migrants in need all around the world. Social networking has also aided in bridging gaps and maintaining close relations between migrants and their countries of origin. The Government generated several pages to promote pertinent advocacy, initiatives, and services. For instance, "The Filipino Ties" page aimed to deliver updates on different government initiatives, events, and activities related to diaspora and their families left behind, and other relevant news/features on migration and development. The platform 'BaLinkBayan' offered a one-stop online portal for diaspora engagement with the Philippines. The platform intended to bring together 10.24 million Filipinos diaspora into a platform that could contribute to the development of the Philippines by using their experience, expertise, skills, networks, materials, and financial capital (United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, 2020:15).
- **Brain Gain Network:** Brain Gain Network (BGN) is a Philippines organisation that focuses on the rising competitiveness of the Philippine economy by establishing a network of talented professionals, students, and organisations from the Philippines and overseas. In 2011, BGN had 2,240 members in their database, with the majority of them located in the USA and Singapore. Such a database allowed members to search fellow nationals with specific skills, educational backgrounds. Therefore, the database became a convenient stage for the diaspora to make networks and start new businesses in the Philippines. Moreover, the platform assists its diaspora members in finding jobs in business, academic, governmental, and nongovernmental Organisations in the Philippines (Agunias and Newland, 2012:176–177; Brain Gain, 2016).
- **Remittance-Backed Mortgages:** Through "The Pag-IBIG Overseas Program", overseas Filipinos can save and obtain a housing loan. The loan is backed by Pag-IBIG, the country's leading government pension fund. The applicant's eligibility for a home loan was based on two years of active contributor to the fund (Agunias and Newland, 2012:123-124).

## Colombia

- **Diaspora Database and Registration Card:** Colombia administered a census based on consular registries to create its diaspora database. Colombia also works with the United States, a host country of Colombian diaspora, and provides a "Consular Registry Card" to its diaspora in Washington (IOM, n.d.: 207)
- **Diaspora Contributed Technological Project:** The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Colombia has created a networking platform called "RedEsColomba" to increase interactions among members in the following thematic areas: Knowledge Network (scientists and researchers, students, and teachers) and academic institutions (universities, research institutes); Trade Network (commercial endeavours); the Cultural Network. The Colombian Government considered this platform one of the most successful endeavours for integrating diaspora (Agunias and Newland, 2012: 176-177).
- **Mapping of diaspora:** To map the characteristics of Colombians living in London, Colombia conducted a pilot exercise in London. However, they failed to extend the model in other places due to a limited scope and a lack of resources (Agunias and Newland, 2012:28). However, while the political and civic participation among Colombian migrants in London is far from uniform, there is evidence that such activities are significant in the lives of many migrants, particularly working-class women (McIlwaine, C. and Bermudez, A., 2011).
- **Scientific diaspora association:** A group of Colombian Scientists working at the École Polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne - EPFL, a science and technology institute located in Switzerland, created the Association of Colombian Researchers- Switzerland (ACIS) in 1992. The primary goals of ACIS are to promote exchanges between Swiss scientists and researchers who are interested in developing scientific and professional ties with Colombia. ACIS had about 100 members, including scientists and professionals from diverse fields (EPFL, n.d.:10). Another similar initiative in EPFL was Cooperation Programme in the Environmental Field between EPFL, UNIVALLE, and other Colombian Institutions. This programme is intended to increase the scientific capacity of Colombian institutions through the different courses and cooperation projects (Tejada and Wickramasekara, n.d.: 11).

## Mexico

- **Tres por Uno or 3x1:** Collaboration of micro-representative diaspora bodies such as Hometown Associations (HTAs), Government, and Investors/NGO/INGOs in community development activities has been a successful development strategy in some countries of origin. Hometown Associations, which are often run by a steering committee, tie between expatriate's communities and friends and family at the country of origin and flow of knowledge and financial resource to their origin locality. Few governments have harnessed those ties and institutionalised such endeavours by aligning government-relevant projects and funds with them. A Mexican program, the "*Tres por Uno or 3x1*" project, was an example of such an effort. Building infrastructure (e.g., roads, water, sewer, and electricity), educational, cultural, sports, and health projects in expatriate hometowns are typical projects initiated through that 3x1 public-private collaboration. Under this arrangement, expatriates transfer their collective funds to their desired development initiatives in their hometown, which the Local Government and other partners implemented (Savchick, 2020). However, it has been learnt that the programme has been discontinued.

- Mexico's Institute for Mexicans Abroad (IME), a decentralised body within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, seeks to improve the standard of living of Mexican communities abroad by facilitating their integration. IME formalised a long-standing Mexican government policy of gaining the trust and support of a growing expatriate population-based primarily in Mexico's most important neighbour, the United States. Targeting a specific country is an advantageous strategic move. The IME offers a range of health, education, and financial services.

## Ireland

- Many countries have taken the initiative to register diaspora communities and issue with certificates. For Instance, The Irish Government gives a Certificate of the Irish Heritage to anyone who has at least one Irish ancestor. It is noteworthy that the Certificate was not a citizenship certificate, and it does not allow citizenship entitlement. Instead, the provision of such a Certificate is intended to officially recognise those of Irish heritage and give tangible expression to millions of people's sense of Irish identity and build up their strong ties with communities worldwide (Hayes, 2011).
- According to the Government of Ireland (2015), the key role of the government in driving and fostering diaspora engagement is to *Support* (programmes, welfare); *Connect* (whole of Government approach, implementation mechanism of the Policy, local activation for global reach, communication, culture, National Day celebration and commemoration); *Facilitate* (partnerships, networks, returning home, diaspora studies/research hub); *Recognise* (Awards from the highest level, Certificate of heritage— to recognise descendants of previous generations officially, Centenarian Bounty—a Presidential award to those who have lived in and outside the country for 100 years); and *Evolve* (new diaspora communities, Alumni engagement).

Ireland's *Diaspora Policy 2015*<sup>39</sup> could be a useful document to review to set the guiding principles for the Diaspora issue for Bangladesh. The means and ways to connect with the diaspora and engage them in the national development of Ireland could help Bangladesh in designing relevant programme.

## Lebanon

- With the support of UNDP, Lebanon has initiated a platform called 'Live Lebanon' ([www.livelebanon.org](http://www.livelebanon.org)) to mobilise Lebanese diaspora and provide them with an opportunity to contribute to local development (e.g., health, education, and the environment) in the most deprived areas of Lebanon. Under this platform, the provision of 'Goodwill Ambassadors' for their significant diaspora communities/countries allows them to connect between Live Lebanon and individuals, private sectors, and companies who wish to contribute to the cause (Live Lebanon 2021).
- Another initiative in Lebanon was the 'Lebanon Business Network (LBN)' portal, which connects Lebanese worldwide in order to harness Lebanon's economic development and solidarity. The platform provided the following services: Online Marketplace of Products and Services; Company Portfolio; Business and Economic Databank of Lebanese Industries; Business News, Jobs, and Business matchmaking (Georges N. Frem Foundation, 2013).

## Uruguay

<sup>39</sup> The policy could be accessed from <https://www.dfa.ie/media/globalirish/global-irish-irelands-diaspora-policy.pdf>

Uruguay also maintained a diaspora database, similar to Ireland, through the "*Programa de Vinculación con Los Uruguayos Residentes en el Exterior*", which included a website ([www.vinculacion.gub.uy](http://www.vinculacion.gub.uy)). Apart from consolidating ties with the diaspora, the program maintained a 'skills/knowledge database of diaspora members. Diaspora members were free to sign up for this programme. The programme also organised events for the diaspora (IOM, n.d.: 207).

## **Taiwan**

Taiwan facilitated the business environment for its diaspora entrepreneurs to engage in joint ventures, outsource work to their country of origin and promote domestic companies exports. For instance, higher educated American professionals and entrepreneurs were encouraged to return to Taiwan and establish new projects, which eventually led to the development of Taiwan's high technology sector. However, new transportation and communication technologies enabled such a network of domestic and diaspora entrepreneurs to be established (Johnson & Sedaca 2004: 32). Moreover, the import of new institutions such as venture capitalism, facilitated by revised regulatory and business environments ease this transition (Savchick, 2021:10).

## **Ethiopia**

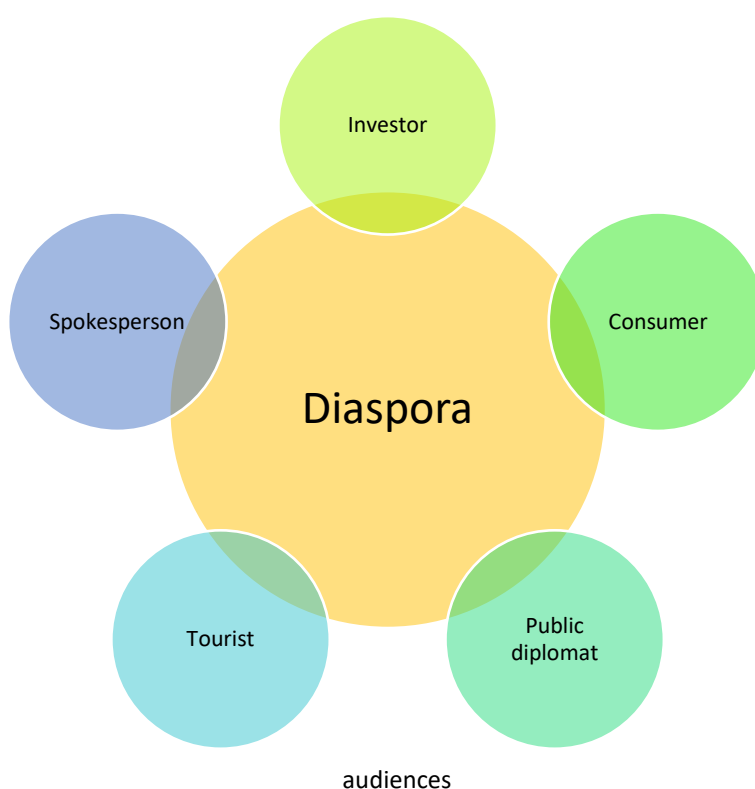
To address the critical skill gaps faced by Ethiopia, a program titled "The Migration for Development in Ethiopia (MidEth) " offered the transfer of knowledge and technology from skilled members of its diaspora community living abroad. The program intended to bring diaspora professionals back to Ethiopia for a period (e.g., six months) by covering their flight and housing expenses . Liaising with Ethiopian North American Health Professionals Association (ENAHPA), the programme brought health professional from North American countries back to Ethiopia to conduct training, lectures, and workshops with doctors, nurses, and other medical professionals. Eventually, the initiatives were supposed to lead to knowledge transfer and capacity building amongst Health Professionals in Ethiopia (Kuschminder and Slegel, 2011: 25).

## Chapter 4

# Promoting Bangladesh's Image

Promoting Bangladesh's image refers to the process of establishing or re-establishing the country's international image. Relevant efforts promote a country's history, culture, and heritage through the use of human capital, products, services, broadcasting, and diplomatic endeavours. Diaspora members can be the frontrunner to frame and uplift the image of their country of origin. Diaspora could do it via business (entrepreneurship, trade, and investment), diplomacy (lobbying, advocacy, and mediation), tourism (branding and referral), broadcasting (public relations, mainstream, and social media communication), and socio-cultural activities (arts, music, cinema, literature, and philanthropy). Diaspora members have the latitude to take the country of origin's *Public Diplomat's* role in mobilising and influencing the government, businesses, media, civil society, and people of the residence countries. Diaspora members' role in their transnational identity is strategically essential to develop and establish or re-establish the country of origin's image and position in the globalised world. Diagram 4.1 portrays the potential role of the diaspora communities in the projecting country of origin's image to international audiences. It is worth noting that the categories of functions overlap—a consumer can also be a tourist and a spokesperson, and the roles can be combined in a variety of ways.

Diagram 4.1: Diaspora's role in developing and projecting the country of origin's image to international



Source: Developed by the authors.

Answers to the three research questions were found in the for the following sections of this chapter on five different thematic matters (*Country Branding, Diaspora Diplomacy, Nostalgic Trade, Diaspora Tourism, and Diaspora Network*) in this chapter:

- What is the role of the particular issue in national development?
- Why is the role of the diaspora vital in the implementation of a specific issue?
- How could diaspora play a role in carrying out the specific issue?



Responses to the above questions have been presented from three aspects: international endeavours, national context, and options for the way forward.

## 4.1 Country Branding

Every state in this globalised world seeks to create a unique and competitive identity by informing international audiences about its resources and opportunities to earn spaces in the global marketplace and reputation in the international society. This tool develops a country's international position to overseas people, civil organisations, media, businesses, and governments. The country brand image helps in determining how foreigners will treat the nationals of a country. The foreign countries' perceived belief in a country's image is unavoidable to explore the export opportunities in foreign markets and attract investments in the domestic market.

### Box 4.1.1: Country branding: The operational understanding

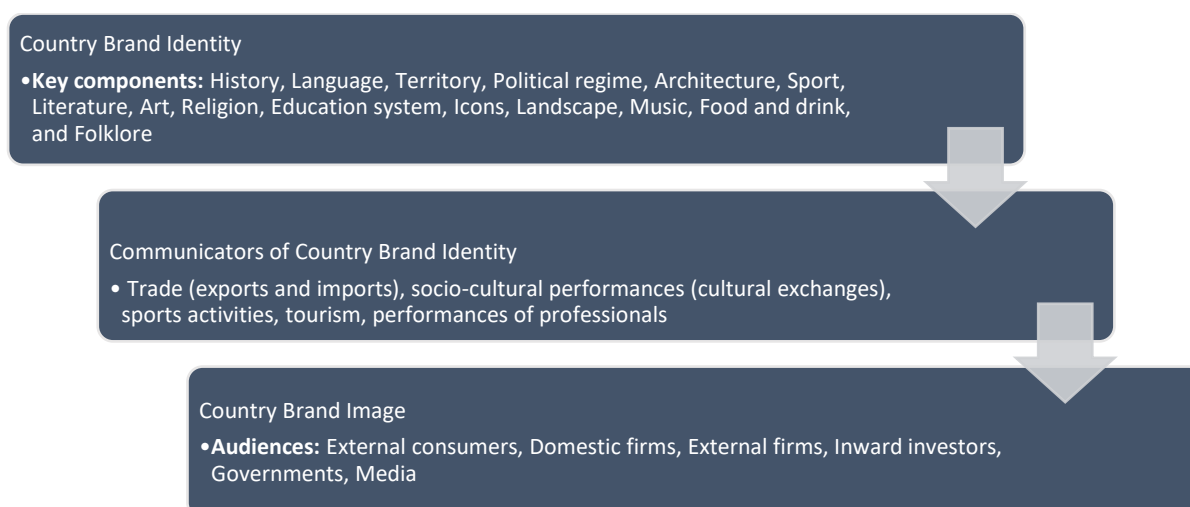
Country branding is frequently perceived through a narrow lens. One views it as a mere marketing strategy. However, this current study perceives country branding from a broader perspective— where marketing is only a tiny part of an expansive basket of multidimensional endeavours. It views country branding as a process in which intangible attributes and efforts are more crucial than tangible ones. Country branding, nation branding, state branding, place branding, and destination branding—all are operationally synonyms.

A country's brand has repercussions in all forms of interactions with the international communities. Through diplomacy, nations have always created their own brands, whether by default or deliberately or indirectly, through their leaders, history, and people (Davies and Loo, 2006). Country branding is an approach to build, manage and establish the image of a country in international society through trade, tourism, investments and accomplishments of both resident and non-resident nationals. According to Anholt (2009), country branding is the process by which the national government creates a "competitive identity," actively marketing themselves around a set of core messages and images. Strategically, country branding combines image mix and marketing mix while considering the country as a brand. Country image mix includes comprises profiles of a nation's physical, historical, political, economic, social, and human traits. Besides, country marketing mix is the grouping of products (goods and services), places (geographic and environmental setting), price (economic, political, socio-cultural, and emotional value), promotion (advertisement, referral, and competitive advantage), people (sponsor, campaigner, and public diplomat), packaging (advertisement, tagline, theme, and logo), and processing (delivery, outreach).

The international reputation and external perception of a country play a pivotal role in pushing export outflows and pulling investment inflows – both financial and technological. A country with a low image or poor reputation in the highly competitive regional and global markets has fewer chances of attracting international tourists, investors, and importers.

A country brand image is a composite of the country brand campaign, personal experience, word of mouth, national stereotypes, the behaviour of nationals, export brands, sports performances, and politics (Dinnie and Fola, 2009). A country brand image constructs three phases framing the identity, featuring identity, and founding image-development process of a country brand image presented in Diagram 4.1.1.

Diagram 4.1.1. Country brand image development process



Source: Developed from Dinnie (2016) conceptual model of nation brand identity and image.

China is a case in point for the nation's success in country branding. China has made progress of establishing itself as one of the best trade, tourism, and investment destinations, as evidenced by its second place in the nation brand ranking of Brand Finance since 2012 (Brand Finance, 2020). The USA is in first place. Meanwhile, India is steadily improving its country branding, having risen from its seventh place in the nation brand rankings (Brand Finance, 2020). The prominent role of Chinese and Indian diasporas in country branding is acknowledged on a national and international level. According to once Overseas Indian Minister, every tenth Indian-American is a millionaire. Every fifth start-up company in Silicon Valley is owned by an Indian, enhancing the image of India (Petkevičienė, n.d.). India also has three unique programmes to make the Indian diaspora an integral part of the country's branding: *a diaspora-led social media campaign, an internship programme for diasporic Indian youth, and a national award to Indian diaspora members' for outstanding work and contribution at home or abroad.*

New Zealand, like India values diaspora members' contributions to the country's international branding. Kenya founded the Brand Kenya Board in 2008. It made significant progress in establishing Kenya as a trustworthy brand among international audiences, including tourists and investors. South Korea established the Presidential Council on Nation Branding (PCNB) in 2009 to engage the South Korean diaspora in the country branding process. The success of South Korea is remarkable. Diaspora communities such as Australian, Singaporean, Brazilian, Lithuanian, Latvian, Norwegian, and Irish diaspora members organise and celebrate special days, anniversaries and thematic events on a regular basis to stimulate the country of origin's brand image and positioning business through diplomatic endeavours in residence countries. Lithuania undertakes a programme that provides professional fellowships to young professionals from their overseas diaspora community to engage in strategic governmental projects and contribute to the high-level decision-making process. Internationally, Indian, Iranian, Nigerian, South Korean, and Japanese diaspora popularise their movies, dramas, animations, and mangas to build the country brand's positive image and position. Meanwhile, Germany, Japan, and Estonia's diasporas strengthen their home-country brand by advancing state-of-the-art technology and information technology.

Bangladesh was ranked 35th as a country brand in 2020, up from 34th in 2019 (Brand Finance, 2020). Bangladesh's branding position is not disappointing, but it has a long way to go vis-à-vis growth to its Asian counterparts China and India. Due to its reputation as a country of disaster, poverty, political

unrest, corruption, lack of governance, and human rights violations, Bangladesh faces some difficulties in projecting a negative image internationally.. Although, some of the allegations are partially true, the partial truths often overshadow the positive features. The role of the Bangladeshi diaspora in uplifting Bangladesh's position and rebuilding its image in host communities and international society begins here. Bangladeshi diaspora members, who are also part of the global audience, are more familiar with Bangladesh's social, economic, and political environments than anyone else.

Bangladesh's country branding focus should shift from solely on tourism to include transnational trade, foreign direct investment, scientific and technological advancement, and popularisation of its culture and heritage. The role of the diaspora must be defined during this process. The Bangladeshi diaspora and the Bangladeshi authorities suggest formulating necessary policies, strategies and implementing planned actions to ensure the diaspora's active participation in the country's development process.

Table 4.1.1: Country branding engaging the diaspora: Status and responsiveness<sup>40</sup>

Variable	Status and responsiveness	
	The purview of the Bangladeshi diaspora	Institutionalisation of Bangladesh
<b>Economic attributes</b>	In most cases, diaspora business communities do not perceive Bangladesh's investment environment and returns on investment as competitive or lucrative as regional and international competitors. Besides, the diaspora members have informed that international investors are unaware of the investment potential in Bangladesh. Therefore, the prospects of the Bangladeshi diaspora for business lobbying remains unutilised. Businesspeople in the Bangladeshi diaspora argue that they are not included in any systematic planning or development process.	Concerned government agencies have discovered that two key elements are missing from the relevant plans and activities. First, no entity specifically targets the Bangladeshi diaspora members' investment potential. Second, there is no institutional mechanism in place to address the prospects of Bangladeshi diaspora members' conducting business lobbying in international markets.
<b>Social attributes</b>	<p>A part of the diaspora maintains a solid economic position in their residence countries. However, despite some notable examples in the UK and USA, their political situation is still not intense in most regions.</p> <p>The discussion with diaspora community representatives revealed a sharp political and regional defragmentation; which impedes the collective effort of branding Bangladesh. Bangladesh also lacks social networking, which has hampered the transnational socialisation of the Bangladeshi diaspora.</p> <p>Diaspora members appreciate organising and participating in cultural programmes. However, in most cases, the events are unable to attract an international audience; thus, such programmes fail to promote the country's name, resources, and potentials.</p>	Extended family members of diaspora members living back in Bangladesh miss the diaspora members living abroad owing to familial bonds and emotional attachment; diaspora members feel the same way. They maintain regular communication and connection. It makes carrying the origin culture in the residence countries more comfortable. The government makes an effort to promote Bangladeshi culture abroad, with cultural programmes and national days held on a regular basis at the country's However, concerned officials have agreed that there are planning-capacity-resource gaps in long-term initiatives to promote and maintain the country's image. Authorities argue that diaspora members often overestimate the government's capabilities due to their emotions and fail

<sup>40</sup> The pertinent findings comes from the triangulation of the information gathered though the key informants' interviews and the discussion with the diaspora members conducted under this study.

Variable	Status and responsiveness	
	The purview of the Bangladeshi diaspora	Institutionalisation of Bangladesh
	<p>Host communities have an overall positive impression of Bangladesh because of the diaspora members' established reputations as professionals and humanitarians. However, the diaspora members have argued that bi-lateral arrangements on skills recognition and accreditation of the Bangladeshi institutes' certificates are critical.</p>	<p>to take into account the systematic framework and limited resources. However, specific planning made jointly with the diaspora and appropriate budgetary allocation from the government could facilitate the whole process. Bangladesh is also losing ground on social media due to the lack of organised country branding on virtual platforms.</p> <p>The concerned agencies recognise that in the residence countries, gaps in skills recognition and accreditation of the certificates exist. Government has a particular focus on skills enhancement, primarily for short-term migrants. However, policymakers and implementation agencies are failing to adequately address the diaspora members' needs. Some sporadic public and private initiatives bridge the professional skills between the residence and countries of origin, which requires a well-planned strategy.</p>
<b>Political attributes</b>	<p>Based on their referrals and memories, the international audience remains concerned about the political violence of the country. Besides, in many instances and for many reasons, global mass media do not portray the country's current political stability. Moreover, the visible political defragmentation among Bangladeshi diaspora communities makes the scenario challenging.</p> <p>A portion of the diaspora claims that the country's concerned authorities use coercive measures to halt social media activities rather than going for country image and position building measures through web-based platforms. In addition, second-generation diaspora members perceive a scarcity of attractive and informative web-platform based materials on the country's potential.</p>	<p>The country's business authorities claimed that foreign investors and tourists are unconcerned about another country's internal political mosaic. They anticipate a more favourable political situation in terms of policy stability and less violence. Against this backdrop, they argued that the country's political stability places it in a much appropriate state for foreign investors and tourists. They argued that planned economic diplomacy and strategic efforts by concerned ministries could put business chambers in a position to contribute visibly to the country's positive image building. However, some key informants pointed out the non-cooperation from the political oppositions and civil societies at large. The authorities are well aware that malicious social media trolls occasionally defame Bangladesh's image. On the other hand, there is a lack of reliable platforms or well-organised web-based groups where diaspora could be involved in objective-oriented activities.</p> <p>According to key informants, the mainstream media and diplomatic efforts have failed to develop an innovative</p>

Variable	Status and responsiveness	
	The purview of the Bangladeshi diaspora	Institutionalisation of Bangladesh
		strategy for portraying the country's current political stability.

In general, Bangladeshi diaspora members interviewed for this study have a mixed view about the Bangladesh Government's willingness to engage them in the development process. They want the Bangladesh government to take proactive, concrete, and systematic measures rather than providing "tokenistic" involvement scopes. Despite this, no mechanism has been enacted to engage them in branding Bangladesh—whether through policy development or developing a branding strategy. In general, the structure and the jurisdiction do not allow it; moreover, the concerned agencies do not have resources dedicated to the relevant tasks. Furthermore, there is uncertainty among the agencies as to who will lead what. Nonetheless, Bangladeshi Missions has taken some innovative approaches to connecting diaspora members with their roots; Box 4.1.2 shows an example.

#### Box 4.1.2: Addressing the young diaspora

The Foreign Mission of the Bangladesh Government is one of the critical organs of Bangladesh, that interacts directly with the diaspora community. Their formal and informal interactions with the diaspora community (such as maintaining official activities, arranging different social gatherings/meetings/workshops, participating in fairs and festivals, interacting via social media/network platform) plays a vital role in the integration process for the young diaspora community. For instance, the High Commission of Bangladesh in London recognises Bangladeshi British school graduates for their outstanding success in GCSE and A-Level Examinations through an event titled "Outstanding Education Achievement Award". In that event held in 2019, The Bangladesh High Commission in London awarded 86 Bangladeshi-British students—many of whom were studying in the UK's top colleges and universities, including Oxford, Cambridge, the London School of Economics and Imperial College. It would be an excellent policy option to establish an institutional platform to share and execute such good practices among the missions.

*Source: Key informant interviews with the diaspora and the Daily Star, 2019 April 10*

Lately, the Bangladesh Foreign Trade Institute (BFTI) – which is part of the commerce ministry – signed a memorandum of understanding with the USA-based multinational news channel Cable News Network (popularly known as CNN) to carry out a branding campaign for Bangladesh in the international arena, highlighting the country's achievements and compliance in its flourishing export-oriented sectors. The focused sectors will be the RMG, agriculture and jute, leather and leather goods, light engineering and two-wheelers, electronics and digital devices, ICT, e-commerce and digital service, and medical equipment and pharmaceuticals will be prioritised. The year-long campaign was set to begin in September/October 2021 (The Business Standard, 2021a). However, the process will only benefit if it remains publicly accountable and diaspora business associations are formally incorporated into the initiative and the Bangladeshi business chambers.

There is still a long way to go in terms of reintegrating Bangladeshi diaspora members into the country's national development process. It requires a systemic and responsive mechanism to cater the needs and potential of Bangladeshi expatriates. The depth of Bangladeshi diaspora integration in the host community will determine their level of attribution level in Bangladesh's national development and the impact of return and reintegration.

Box 4.1.3 describes one of the occasions related to the country branding of Bangladesh.

#### Box 4.1.3: An initiative of trading products with the fragrance of the root

The UK's second tallest building in London's business district, Canary Wharf, was lit up in red and green to mark the 50th anniversary of Bangladesh's independence. Saida Muna Tasneem, High Commissioner of Bangladesh to the United Kingdom (UK) and Ireland, George Iacobescu CBE, Chairman and CEO of Canary Wharf Group, inaugurated the unique lighting. The national anthems of Bangladesh and the UK were played, and the podium and nearby waterfront were also lit up in red and green. Earlier, the iconic London Eye was

lit up to commemorate the golden jubilee of Bangladesh's Independence. The Canary Wharf Group is a prominent corporate group in the UK that employs many British-Bangladeshis and promotes charity and sports between Bangladesh and the UK. Such symbolic events contribute to country branding. However, in their discussions with the research team, diaspora communities argue that several diaspora-led associations organised other relevant events commemorating the same event. Assume that all of the programmes could be organised harmonically. In that case, the impact could be much greater, thereby increasing the brand value of Bangladesh.

*Source: Key informant interviews with the diaspora and the Dhaka Tribune, 2021 April 01*

## 4.2 Diaspora Diplomacy

Diaspora diplomacy refers to soft power-driven diplomatic endeavours performed by diaspora members on behalf of their country of origin. In recent years, countries have adopted diaspora strategies to engage the diaspora for political and development purposes.

### Box 4.2.1: Diaspora diplomacy: The operational understanding

Diaspora strategies are government-organised tactics for enacting soft power through cooperation rather than coercion (Nye, 2004). Countries reach out to the diaspora because of their potential political capital to advance a country's agenda (Rana, 2013). Diaspora diplomacy intersected with non-traditional diplomacies such as public diplomacy, cultural diplomacy, sports diplomacy, media diplomacy, digital or social media diplomacy, and aid diplomacy. Diaspora diplomacy has two focal objectives vis-à-vis the national interest and development plan of the country Of origin. First, mobilise and filter perceived and adhered perceptions, thoughts, opinions, and beliefs of the government, businesses, people, and media. Secondly, to facilitate and promote diaspora interests in both residence and origin. Core modalities are advocacy, representation (branding), communication, mediation, and broadcasting.

Country branding through daily exposure to media materials such as TV dramas, movies, animations, and manga is one example of successful diaspora diplomacy (Tago, 2017). The South Korean diaspora takes the lead in investing in, popularising, and supporting cultural products' acceleration. As a result, South Korea has succeeded in creating a positive image of itself as an advanced, culturally enriched, and democratic country. The Japanese diaspora, like South Korea contributed through diplomatic communication to popularise Japanese animation and manga culture. The Irish, Armenian, and Jewish diaspora members have had success in representing and lobbying their countries of origin in western residence countries. The Kenyan Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Trade adopted two policy objectives focusing on the Kenyan diaspora. The first objective is to enhance partnerships with the diaspora and secure more international jobs for Kenyans by ensuring that Kenya lobbies for those jobs and enters into bilateral arrangements that guarantee an increase in the number of Kenyans employed internationally. Another objective is to improve the delivery of Consular services and develop diaspora-specific products (Embassy of the Republic of Kenya in Japan, n.d). *Kenyan International Jobs and Diaspora Office* engages with the diaspora by facilitating improved delivery of Consular services, developing reintegration programmes, encouraging investment in Kenya, and facilitating the development of diaspora-specific products to increase and better manage remittances (Embassy of the Republic of Kenya in Japan, n.d).

Technological advancements have gradually fostered the growth of diasporic networks. It has aided recent emigrants and diaspora in maintaining contact with loved ones, social ties to their homeland, and psychological ties to their identity (Kalantzi, 2021)<sup>41</sup>. Social media facilitates communication between diasporas and their communities in their origin country (Shayan, 2021). According to

<sup>41</sup> Since the COVID 19 pandemic's outbreak, the impact of information technology has further eroded boundaries and aided in the formation of new diaspora groups that provided support, connectivity, and vital information to communities in need (Kalantzi, 2021).



IOM/iDiaspora (2021a) report titled "Empowering Global Diasporas in the Digital Era", the COVID-19 pandemic has provided the best atmosphere to explore the role of social media in engaging diaspora to address challenges faced by the countries of origin. This report shows that the Afghan, Albanian, Central American, Egyptian, Ghanaian, Greek, Mexican, and Nigerian diasporas capitalised on social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and Podcasts for a variety of purposes, including those related to their origin countries. (iDiaspora, 2021). The Internet and its applications, such as social media, have transformed how diasporas communicate across borders. This new deterritorialised virtual conversation between diasporic individuals contributes to the development of (digital) social networks that serve as resources and opportunities for diasporas, which is critical for social and geographic mobility (Keles, 2016).

The Chinese diaspora has been instrumental in the Peoples' Republic of China (PRC) soft power, playing a positive role in the host countries through Chinese-language social media such as WeChat-in Chinese known as Weixin (Sun, 2021). India has also used digital media to connect with its diaspora as part of its diaspora diplomacy (Murti and Zaharna, 2014). India has launched a unique programme named "Know India", which includes both online and offline activities are aimed at the second generation of the Indian diaspora (Manor, 2017). As a part of this programme, second-generation Indian diaspora youth can visit India to learn about Indian culture, values, traditions, and politics. These members of the new generation of the Indian diaspora are inspired to share their experiences on social media. The Indian Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) promote such heritage trips on its official social media accounts (Manor, 2017). Notably, India celebrates the 9<sup>th</sup> of January as "Probashi Bharatiya Divas" (Indian Diaspora Day). It puts them on a solid footing to proactively engage in the realm of public diplomacy. Diaspora diplomacy has used various social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, Blogpost, Podcast, and Vodcast as tools for communication. It pursues advocacy, broadcasting, and representation to bring the national agendas of the country of origin to wider audience and relevant stakeholders. El Salvador employs an effective social media engagement strategy to establish long-term relationships with its diaspora (Bravo, 2012).

The role of information technology, digital communication platforms, and social media in bringing the diaspora community together has been visible for the last decades. In addition, many earlier studies highlighted the same issue with emphasis. According to Sun (2021), Graziano (2012), and Bernal (2006), social media plays a significant role in bringing the diaspora from different parts of the world together. In cyberspace, digital media enabled the Chinese diaspora to put aside ethnic differences and come together to reinforce the concept of "big family". Thereby, it contributes to the Chinese nationalistic discourse (Ding, 2007). Hiller and Franz (2004) pointed out that diaspora communities use the online network to develop new relationships in the host community, nourish old relationships in their homeland, and rediscover lost ties.

Bangladeshi has had prior experience with Bangladeshi diaspora diplomacy. During the Bangabandhu Government, it played a vital role in mobilising international opinion in support of Bangladesh's cause and gaining recognition for the newly formed nation-state. Some scattered Bangladeshi diaspora diplomacy efforts were reportedly made in line with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bangladesh public diplomacy initiatives. The role of Bangladeshi missions abroad is strategically essential to exercise public diplomacy that incorporates diaspora diplomacy. In comparison to some regional and international counterparts, Bangladeshi diaspora diplomacy has not been developed and extended simultaneously. Bangladeshi diaspora diplomacy stalled due to a lack of adequate impetus from the government. The Bangladeshi diaspora community lost their national integrity due to their imported party-ism, communalism, and localism from their country of origin.



Table 4.2.1. Diaspora diplomacy: Status and responsiveness<sup>42</sup>

Variable	Status and responsiveness	
	The purview of the Bangladeshi diaspora	Institutionalisation of Bangladesh
<b>Economic attributes</b>	<p>Bangladesh was unable to capitalise on its comparative advantage and suffered a setback in export due to a lack of standardisation, quality assurance, overpricing, meagre packaging, and poor marketing. Frequently, Bangladeshi products are marketed as being from India, Pakistan, or Myanmar.</p> <p>The role of the diaspora in promoting economic migration from Bangladesh is sporadic and spontaneous. There is no formal and institutional mechanism in place to cater to the potentials.</p>	<p>Bangladeshi multinational such as PRAN, Square, and Beximco reach out to international consumers, including the diaspora members, with various products. Along with the diaspora communities, they want to reach out to global consumers. It will not only boost their business but will also uphold the country's image globally. Nonetheless, concerned Bangladeshi stakeholders argue that the existing business and investment facilitation from the concerned authorities of Bangladesh is not congenial; also, fund transfer remains difficult and time-consuming.</p> <p>Inclusive planning is absent for engaging the diaspora in professional facilitation for ethical migration towards existing and non-traditional markets.</p>
<b>Social attributes</b>	<p>Belonging to the country of origin and international socialisation with host and origin communities, stimulates diaspora members to promote Bangladesh's national interests in the residence countries. The Bangladeshi diaspora is always eager to serve the national interests of their country of origin. Bangladeshi diaspora members are passionate to improving Bangladesh's international image and expect respect and recognition from the country.</p> <p>However, there is scant evidence of Bangladeshi diaspora diplomacy or public diplomacy endeavours. Bangladeshi diaspora diplomacy requires formally involving Bangladeshi diaspora members in various forms of Bangladeshi public diplomacy.</p> <p>However, diaspora members are sometimes upset and discouraged due to the "unwelcoming" approach from the Bangladeshi missions. Frequently, they find it challenging to portray Bangladesh's positive image in the host community due to some disastrous incidences and brazen activities in Bangladesh. Nonetheless, they</p>	<p>The government recognises the importance of off-track diplomacy and the social aspects of public diplomacy. Bangladesh was ranked 44 in the Global Diplomacy Index 2019 with 57 embassies and high commissions, 16 consulates/consulates-general, and two permanent missions on all continents (Saifullah, 2019). Nonetheless, Bangladeshi missions abroad lack adequate human resources and guidelines to guide public diplomacy efforts.</p> <p>From time-to-time, the Bangladesh government honours and gratitude to outstanding professionals from the Bangladeshi diaspora community who globally popularised Bangladesh. There have been some "one-shot" initiatives to develop communications and relations with internationally reputed non-resident Bangladeshi. However, it does not pay much in the long run for the country's greater interest. The GoB realises the importance of heritage education for the new generation of diaspora. However, no institutional or planned efforts have been made. Experts suggest public diplomacy</p>

<sup>42</sup> The pertinent findings comes from the triangulation of the information gathered though the key informants' interviews and the discussion with the diaspora members conducted under this study. To validate the information, the research team also consulted and used the relevant secondary sources.

Variable	Status and responsiveness	
	The purview of the Bangladeshi diaspora	Institutionalisation of Bangladesh
	want to play the role of the Public Diplomat in the host countries. They also feel the lack of efforts from the government of Bangladesh in mobilising the second-generation diaspora to act as public diplomats of Bangladesh on the international platforms. Belonging to Bangladesh is lacking noticeably absent among the new generations of diaspora.	to promote ancestral orientation programmes and heritage education for the new-generation diaspora.  The country lacks a firm footing in the virtual world, promoting Bangladesh's national interests to international audiences. Social-media-mediated country promotion can be a valuable tool for creating a platform for informed public diplomacy activities. The active role of the Parliamentarians' Caucus could also be beneficial.
<b>Political attributes</b>	<p>Bangladesh has yet to create a strong position or capitalise on comparative advantage to make a win-win agreement with regional and international partners. Bangladesh is also struggling with image issues due to extremism and corruption. Also, it faces the challenge of a massive inflow of Rohingya exodus. The core problem, according to diaspora members, is that they cannot find a formal mechanism to use their comparative advantages on many bilateral and regional issues. Bangladesh is caught between India's and China's geo-economic and geopolitical rivalry, and it has yet to make a balanced relationship with both countries.</p> <p>Over the top, Bangladesh has earned a relatively positive global impression as a result of its humanitarian response to the Rohingya crisis. However, Bangladesh is also known for its environmental vulnerability as one of the top climate victims.</p> <p>There is a strong buzz in the international society that Bangladesh is on track to become the next Singapore by capitalising on sea-line/maritime trade routes.</p>	<p>The better side of the coin is that Bangladesh has been active in all the major international forums, especially developing countries, since its birth. For decades, Bangladesh has successfully led the coalition of the LDCs. Meanwhile, as a middle-income country, Bangladesh has impressed the international community with its performance and contribution to UN peacekeeping missions. Bangladesh is also a leading voice in the global climate change movement. Bangladesh is a pioneer in the Global Compact for Migration (GCM). As a proactive regional actor, Bangladesh plays a pivotal role in promoting regional peace and solidarity through economic and cultural cooperation.</p> <p>Despite some regional collaborations, more programmatic international exposures are required. Civil society members have pinpointed a lack of a well-coordinated longer-term diplomatic vision among the actors. Indeed, there is no compelling evidence to support the use of "public diplomacy" in such efforts. In a broader sense, Bangladesh has failed to capitalise on the good offices of diaspora personnel who support national interests and the national development agenda. The diaspora diplomacy in obtaining the COVID-19 vaccine could be beneficial, which has yet to be realised.</p>

Bangladeshi diaspora members can make a sincere contribution to Bangladesh's diplomatic endeavours. Diaspora diplomacy is an informal spectrum with latitudes to serve the national interests of the respective country. Bangladeshi diaspora socialisation with the host community, access to policymakers of the host government, and network with the CSOs and media of the residence country, allowing them to act as lobbyists in different forms.

Bangladesh's respect and recognition will inspire the Bangladeshi diaspora to adhere to public diplomacy to protect Bangladesh's national interests. Diaspora diplomacy is a magnificent tool for deploying Bangladeshi diaspora members as international public diplomats. It will pave the way for their eventual return and reintegration into national development. Box 4.2.2 delineates a story of public diplomacy by a Bangladeshi diaspora living in Australia unorthodox.

#### **Box 4.2.2: Diaspora diplomacy: The operational understanding**

MasterChef is a popular franchise television show that is viewed all across the globe. The show is also top-rated in Australia. Kishwar Chowdhury is a woman who has made international media headlines after successfully securing a place among the top contestants of MasterChef Australia Season 13. She shows her love and passion for Bangladeshi food in the show. Kishwar is connected to her roots and culture, together with a passion for cooking. She developed an interest in culinary art at a young age. Her fondness for Bangladeshi foods and flavours comes from her parents. She believes that Bangladeshi food is under-represented globally, and that it deserves more attention and appreciation. Her dream is to write a cookbook about traditional Bangladeshi foods and flavours. During a discussion with an Australian-Bangladeshi, the research team felt the craze that Ms Kishwar has created. She is indeed contributing as a public diplomat for Bangladesh.

*Source: (Amber, 2021; The Guardian, 2021 April 19)*

### **4.3 Nostalgic Trade**

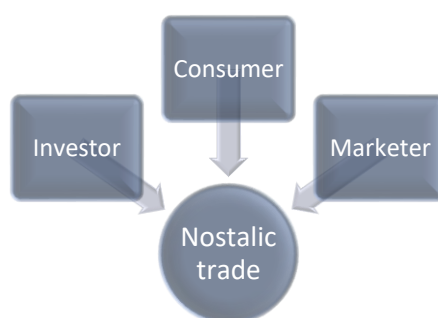
Nostalgic trade refers to products from the country of origin that are preferred by diasporas due to nostalgia. It involves different aspects of trade and commerce, such as importing products from the country of origin and mainly targeting the diaspora members. Ethnic imports carried out by cultural and ethnic enterprises are referred to as nostalgic trade, and they open up new business and market opportunities (Orozco et al., 2005).

#### **Box 4.3.1: Nostalgia trade: An operational understanding**

Diaspora segments are divided into four categories— assimilators, marginal, bicultural, and ethnic affirmers (Kumar and Steencamp, 2013). Apart from assimilators, the other three segments preferred anything that expressed belongingness to the country of origin. Even assimilators are also not excluded because their family choices do have a domino effect. Besides, it is difficult to deny the appeal of A-class consumables' because everyone desires the best for themselves and their peers. Diaspora community preferred nostalgic products because it is the best way to maintain emotional affection to ancestral cultures. Diaspora members' demand for products made in the country of origin opens new doors for national exporters from the country of origin. It leverages the country of origin's domestic production. National producers could enlarge their businesses from national to international by catering to potential diaspora consumers.

According to Orozco et al. (2005), 68.4 per cent of Latin American and Caribbean immigrants in the US buy products from their country of origin. Later, in their study, Orozco and Yansura (2018) showed that 90 per cent of the Salvadoran diaspora in the US spend over USD 130 per month on products from their country of origin distributed and sold by small businesses owned by Salvadorans or other Central American diasporas. Furthermore, Orozco and Yansura (2018) found that Albanian diaspora members in the US demands products from their country of origin. Nevertheless, they were unable to purchase Albanian products due to weak export and distribution networks that face numerous business logistical challenges. Another study on the Romanian diaspora in Germany found conclusive evidence that the diaspora manifests a vital interest in and demand for the goods of the country of origin (Bundas, 2018). Notably, the roles of the diaspora in nostalgic trade are not static but rather dynamic; they also overlap in many combinations.

Diagram 4.3.1. Role of the diaspora in nostalgic trade



Source: Developed by authors

Bangladeshi diaspora members have nostalgia for Bangladeshi products, though this is not backed by statistically significant empirical studies. According to informal perceptions of Bangladeshi diaspora members living in various countries, Bangladeshi diaspora members, similar to other diasporas, are fond of Bangladeshi products. This is reflected in the interviews conducted as part of this study. Bangladeshi diaspora wants to enjoy region-specific foodstuffs and non-food stuff due to their nostalgia and belongingness with Bangladesh's ancestral place. Such region-specific foodstuffs and non-food stuff can also make space in the global multinational cuisine. Ethnic attires have always had a unique attraction to both the diaspora community and the foreigner communities—the new generation of Bangladeshi diaspora members' demands for Bangladeshi inborn products with specific requirements that are still untapped. Bangladesh is losing a latent international consumer group—the second and third generation of the Bangladeshi diaspora—due to a lack of branding, supply, and quality concerns. According to the informed Bangladeshi diaspora members interviewed, there are around 130,000 Bangladeshi families in the UK. The key informants informed the research team that approximately 75,000 Bangladeshis have completed their Graduate and Master's degrees there, which means they earn well and are ready to spend a notable amount on Bangladeshi products. Bangladeshi business communities in the UK informed the research team that there is a market for betel leaves in the UK worth at least GBP 20 million. Bangladesh does have substantial potential in this market. Still, it is unable to capture the market due to a lack of quality and standardisation. More than 70 per cent of the Bangladeshi community in the UK is under the age of 25 years, indicating a large number of youth consumers for Bangladeshi products. Interviews with second and third generation Bangladeshi diaspora members reveal that many have strong attachments to their ancestral land and products. Still, they are unable to find the right product from Bangladesh to serve their tastes and need.

Table 4.3.1. Nostalgia trade with the diaspora: Status and responsiveness<sup>43</sup>

Variable	Status and responsiveness	
	The purview of the Bangladeshi diaspora	Institutionalisation of Bangladesh
<b>Economic attributes</b>	There are ample opportunities for entrepreneurs (both Bangladeshis and Bangladeshi diaspora members) to deal in "nostalgia goods"—foods, handicrafts (Barkat, Osman, and Gupta, 2014). However, diaspora Bangladeshi consumers were unable to obtain their desired nostalgic products due to an absence or ineffective supply chain. Inadequate exports and lack of local distribution channels in the residence	The government of Bangladesh facilitates and endorses local producer groups, both enterprises and entrepreneurs, in producing ethnic products and exporting them overseas.  Bangladeshi local enterprises and entrepreneurs noticed the growing demand of Bangladeshi products' and appealed to international consumers,

<sup>43</sup> The pertinent findings comes from the triangulation of the information gathered though the key informants' interviews and the discussion with the diaspora members conducted under this study. To validate the information, the research team also consulted the relevant secondary sources.

Variable	Status and responsiveness	
	The purview of the Bangladeshi diaspora	Institutionalisation of Bangladesh
	<p>country market are the main barriers in diaspora's access to nostalgia products. As a result, Bangladeshi diaspora consumers' loyalty has gone untapped, and Bangladeshi exporters have been unable to control the diaspora niche market. Besides, nostalgia-focused product trade, production, branding, and investment remain unattended. Due to insufficient exports of Bangladeshi hereditary products to residence countries, consumer loyalty of Bangladeshi diaspora from social obligation and belongingness to the country of origin remains irrelevant.</p> <p>Bangladeshi diaspora members are also dissatisfied with the unpredictability of Bangladesh's tax and non-tax barriers on export. It causes troubles for Bangladeshi consumers and importers, as well as diaspora investors and exporters. Bangladeshi diaspora members consider investing in Bangladesh to produce products and export them to host countries. There were attempts. However, in most cases, there had been no success. They blame the lengthy and bureaucratic business initiation procedure and lack of quality assurance mechanisms.</p> <p>Bangladeshi e-commerce sites are not well-regulated. There have been phishing and financial fraud cases reported online, which deter the Bangladeshi diaspora from outsourcing Bangladeshi products from Bangladeshi online platforms.</p>	<p>including expatriates. Still, no large-scale initiative exists to capture the enormous diaspora market across the globe. The relevant authorities have yet to develop a strategy on the subject.</p> <p>Bangladeshi companies such as PRAN and Square contribute to diversified export items that take into account Bangladesh's signature features and taste of Bangladesh—still, "emotional feeling brandings" are lacking, which is required to promote nostalgic trade. Moreover, such products could not attract international consumers, who should be targeted simultaneously by making the necessary customisation to attract that audience.</p> <p>It may not be feasible to supply all kinds of region-specific products due to the challenge of fulfilling minimum export volume, rigorous process of international standardisation, transportation, and distribution problems. Thus, it requires extensive market research, as well as government intervention.</p> <p>The Export Promotion Bureau of Bangladesh could potentially endorse Bangladeshi diaspora members' nostalgic demands. It can engage them in the development of a supply chain for nostalgia products export to meet their needs.</p>
<b>Social attributes</b>	<p>In Western countries such as the United Kingdom, Bangladeshi restaurants have a high demand for Bangladesh produced groceries such as spices, processed foods, and pickles (Siddiqui, 2004). The first-generation diaspora has pertinent and robust nostalgia for Bangladeshi products (goods and services), which is induced by national emotions, habits, attire preferences, and socio-cultural choices.</p> <p>Bangladeshi diaspora members' transnational social relationships with kith and kin in their country of origin induced nostalgia for inborn Bangladeshi products and consumer loyalty. Therefore, Bangladeshi diaspora members look for</p>	<p>Bangladeshi diaspora members' emotional value remained untapped due to the inability of Bangladesh to supply enough to meet their demand. There is an overall failure to acknowledge their nostalgia for Bangladeshi products by exporting inborn products to their doorsteps abroad.</p> <p>The GoB is endorsing social enterprises and cooperative businesses to strengthen local industries. However, those attempts cannot attract the diaspora in nostalgic trade due to an unstable policy regime. Nonetheless, few Bangladeshi companies are now focusing on exporting region-specific goods, considering potential Bangladeshi expatriate consumers around the world. However, one must</p>

Variable	Status and responsiveness	
	The purview of the Bangladeshi diaspora	Institutionalisation of Bangladesh
	<p>products or services that give them a taste and a touch of their country of origin's culture and heritage.</p> <p>Bangladeshi nostalgic products cannot create much appeal among new-generation due to low-quality products.</p>	<p>differentiate between the tastes and needs of short-term migrant and diaspora communities—which is still widely lacking. The relevant Research and Development rarely consider the tastes and requirements of the second and third generation diaspora.</p>
<b>Political attributes</b>	<p>Bangladeshi diaspora members prefer to have Bangladeshi products at their doorsteps abroad. Diaspora members want to consume, but they are also want importers, entrepreneurs, and investors to help them export their desired Bangladeshi products to their residence countries. However, they were unable to satisfy their desires. They could not play their full potential role due to a lack of proactive cooperation from the concerned authorities as well as a lack of economic diplomacy to manage bilateral and multilateral trade relations.</p>	<p>Bangladesh's political atmosphere is decent, proven by the investment of some giant multinationals. However, the Bangladesh Government believes that many eligible inland companies in Bangladesh can produce and export region-specific inborn products. GoB also believes that international entrepreneurs of Bangladeshi origin can facilitate the nostalgia trade as distributors, importers, and investors. However, civil society members and experts believe that there is a lack of strong political commitment to utilising the diaspora network to reap the potential of nostalgic trades.</p> <p>GoB is seeking professionals from Bangladesh diaspora communities to engage them in the mega national development projects.</p>

Bangladeshi diaspora members' emotional ties associated with their demand for nostalgia products need facilitation by exporting those desired products to residence countries. Bangladeshi diaspora could contribute to Bangladesh's national export by placing orders for Bangladeshi products and investors could invest in the local industries. Such involvement would ensure their reintegration into the national development of Bangladesh. Box 4.3.3 will detail the story of a British-Bangladeshi's initiative in nostalgic trade.



### Box 4.3.2: A story of a nostalgic product trader

Mr. Mahmud (pseudonym) migrated to the UK in 2008 as a student and went on to become a successful lawyer. Observing the trade potential of Bangladeshi perishable fruits and vegetable items in the UK, especially in the diaspora market, Mahmud took an endeavour in 2016 to import those items in the UK. During that process, he managed to avail an import license from the respective UK authority and set up a family export business in Bangladesh. However, it took very few steps to get a necessary permit in the UK. On the contrary, the lack of one-stop government services and banking complexities (e.g., issuing EXP) made his initial journey challenging in Bangladesh. However, he also finds this trade as favorable, mainly since the Government of Bangladesh provides 20 per cent cash incentive for importing vegetables. Mahmud opined that to take this nostalgic trade to the next level; the following issues need to be taken care of:

**Compliance issues:** The UK's DEFRA (Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs) authority has very stringent measures in place when it comes to approving imported perishable food items. They have set up a strict prescription for producing agro products (e.g., soil standard, pesticide management, seeds quality) as well as relevant supply chain management (e.g., storage, transport). However, such prescriptions are not always strictly followed by the Bangladeshi agro producers and supply chain managers. Therefore, imported products quite often fail to pass the quality standard of DEFRA. For instance, Mahmud recently encountered difficulties importing beans from Bangladesh because the product fails to comply with the standard. Mahmud suggested that the Agriculture Extension Offices of Bangladesh need to provide a bit extra effort in enforcing the standard of agricultural production and relevant supply chain management. The Agriculture Extension Office may specify some agriculture zones dedicated to export where it can enforce quality standards. It is also a good policy alternative to establish a close liaison between the exporter and the agriculture office to ensure the quality of products.

**Branding and packaging:** Mahmud dreams of watching his imported Bangladeshi agro product on the shelves of Tesco\*. He desires that those products will be widely available to the Bangladeshi diaspora community in the UK. However, despite his best efforts, Mahmud was unable to compete with India and some Latin American countries for those shelves. He attributed three reasons: **Branding:** India and other Latin American countries have already established a decent branding and supply chain for their products. For instance, mangoes from India and Brazil are widely available in grocery shops in the UK. However, Mahmud, with his modest investment, is struggling to build such branding. **Transportation Cost:** According to Mahmud, one of the reasons for high costs is the cost of air freight. He argued that his Indian and Latin American competitors could import their perishable agricultural products for far less expense. **Packaging:** Even with 20 per cent incentives provided by the government of Bangladesh, Mahmud finds his imported product costly. When he tries to go for good packaging of his agricultural product, the price of those products appears noncompetitive in the market.

Contrasting packaging of agricultural product between Bangladesh and Latin American Brand



Packaging of a Latin American Product



Packaging of Bangladeshi Product  
(brand name blurred to ensure anonymity)

Photo credit: The key informant

\* Tesco is a British multinational grocery and general merchandise retailer, one of the largest retailers in the UK considering gross revenue. In 2020, it had 3,968 stores in the UK and the Republic of Ireland.



Box 4.3.3 has a story on the Bangladeshi initiative focusing on the diaspora communities.

#### Box 4.3.3: An initiative of trading products with the fragrance of the root

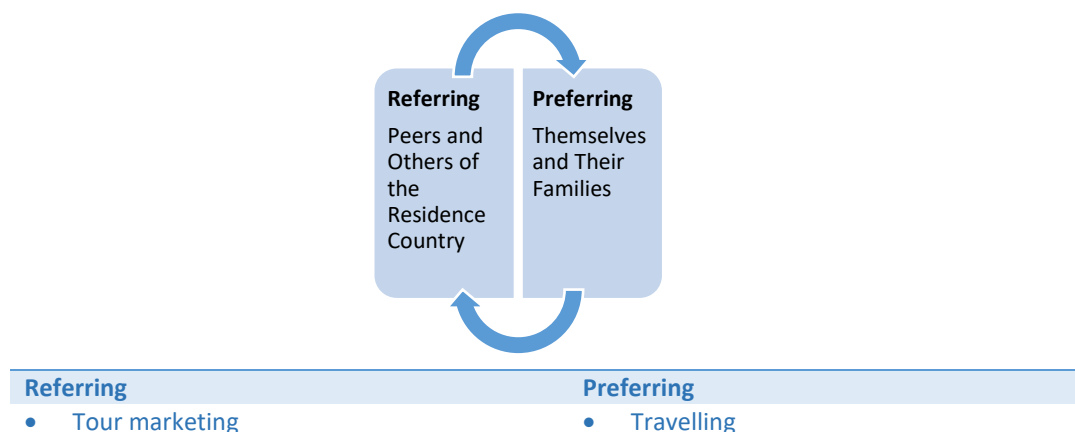
Aadi BD Ltd, one of Bangladesh's newest cross-border e-commerce endeavours, sells some Bangladeshi-made products exclusively to the rest of the world. This website is playing a vital role in connecting non-resident Bangladeshis with their roots. Lately, Aadi has recently had the exclusive right to sell the official Bangladesh Cricket World Cup Jersey 2019 outside of Bangladesh. The website has served around 250 cities in 25 counties during this campaign. They are trying to build an ecosystem by connecting the Bangladeshi diaspora with the local brands. This business venture is trying to bring small brands selling primarily on Facebook, as well as sourcing from local artisans. The product categories of Aadi includes apparel, home décor, books, bags, accessories, and footwear. Products from well-know Bangladeshi brands, including Kaykraft, Aranya, Kumudini, Shadakalo, Cat's Eye, Orion Footwear, Dorjibari, Matador, and Ecstasy. However, the initiative is still in its early stages.. However, according to diaspora members living in many countries, such nostalgic trade business may suffer in the long run if adequate strategic country branding and public diplomacy initiatives are not implemented.. A single business entity cannot invest heavily in marketing its product worldwide. So, it requires joint initiative with solid backup support from the government. Also, it needs to collaborate with the diaspora business association. Furthermore, quality assurance and detailed product information will remain critical in capturing a good portion of the market.

Source: (The Daily Star, 2019, September 01).

## 4.4 Diaspora Tourism

Diaspora tourism is the travel of diaspora members to their origin country for nostalgia, recreation, vacation, or organic needs. The terms diaspora, nostalgia, heritage, and genealogical tourism all refer to the same kind of tourism. It relates to the travel of diaspora members to the origin country searching for roots and heritage, getting together with friends and families, holiday celebration, medical purpose, business exploration, nostalgic trip, social and religious events celebration, and post-retirement seasonal migration. Diaspora tourism is uniquely different from conventional tourism because it capitalises on people's needs as well as their emotions. Diaspora tourism is a form of country branding. Reversely, country branding instrumentally boosts diaspora tourism. Diaspora tourism is inextricably links to nostalgic trade, as tourism is a service sector. Diaspora tourism could also contribute to people's diplomacy through the referral and broadcasting of consumables (products and services) to residence countries. Diagram 4.4.1 illustrates the interconnectivity of diaspora as both a client/customer from host/foreign countries as well as a marketer/promoter/brand-ambassador from origin/destined countries in diaspora tourism. Diagram also demonstrated the diaspora's role in promoting origin country tourism by marketing and lobbying potential investors in the host/residence country (countries) and boosting tourism as tourist/client by travelling to and/or investing in the origin/destined country.

Diagram 4.4.1. Diaspora role in diaspora tourism



- Investment lobbying

- Investing

Source: Developed by authors

South Asian countries such as India and East Asian countries such as China have both benefited from diaspora tourism. Caribbean and African countries are on the course of success when it comes to tapping diaspora tourism. Diaspora tourism may directly benefit the local service sectors of the country of origin. Moreover, Diaspora tourism contributes to the local economic development by benefiting the tourism-based trade and service-related activities. Indian diaspora tourism is also known as heritage tourism, roots tourism, Bollywood tourism, medical tourism, and identity tourism. Indian diaspora members usually visit India to meet their families, reconnect with their roots, meet Bollywood celebrities, tour film locations and pilgrim tours (Newland and Taylor, 2010; Bandopadhyay, 2008). They desire to feel the touch and affection of the country of origin's nature, people, and culture. About 6.87 million non-resident Indians arrived in India in 2018 (Statista, 2020).<sup>44</sup> In some countries, a significant portion of tourism revenue is generated by diaspora members. For example, 70 per cent of tourists arriving in Haiti are either Haitian-born or of Haitian origin (Barkat, Osman, and Gupta 2014).

Diaspora tourism is an untapped area for Bangladesh. Bangladeshi diaspora still nurtures a sense of nostalgia for Bangladesh and usually visits their country of origin on vacation (Barkat, Osman, and Gupta 2014). Bangladesh has a long way to go to the diaspora tourism sector, in comparison to the two Asian neighbours, India and China. According to World Bank Database<sup>45</sup>, Bangladesh had 323,000 international tourists in 2019, compared to 1,703,000 and 2,027,000 respectively in the neighbouring countries, the Maldives and Sri Lanka. Annual statistics on international tourists travelling to Bangladesh do not include trips by Bangladeshi diaspora members' trips. A large number of Bangladeshi diaspora visits the country on the basis of their Bangladeshi passport or national identity. Bangladesh also lacks information on the number of non-resident Bangladeshis (NRBs) who visit Bangladesh every year. Diaspora tourism possesses all the required resources to become a booming specialised service sector that could largely contribute to Bangladesh's local and national economies. Diaspora tourism has the potential to contribute to national development through economic capital (profiting from services and attracting investment), social capital (exporting culture and heritage referral), political capital (strengthening the positioning and reimagining the identity), knowledge and skill transfer, and of country, and country branding.

Table 4.4.1. Mapping diaspora's causal attribution in diaspora tourism<sup>46</sup>

Variable	Status and responsiveness	
	The purview of the Bangladeshi diaspora	Institutionalisation of Bangladesh
Economic attributes	Interested Bangladeshi diaspora tourists could not travel as they wished due to the shortage of flights and overpriced tour package. The diaspora members, who have already visited some tourist spots reports that standard accommodations, transportation, and foods are costlier than in other parts of this region.	The discussion with the relevant agencies confirms that there are no diaspora-centric programmes in the tourism sector. The tourism and travelling demand of elderly Bangladeshi diaspora members have remained unnoticed by the public and private sectors.
	Each Year, a three-day 'World Travel Market' exhibition occurs at the ExCel Centre in London.	Bangladesh's government and national tourism agencies from the private sector are largely absent from social media and

<sup>44</sup> Unavailability of diaspora travel to origin country data is a global problem. Usually, diaspora population uses their passport or citizenship of the origin country while travelling to the origin country. Their visa or immigration information does not have any information or recognise them as tourists in the origin country.

<sup>45</sup> Accessed from <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/ST.INT.ARVL>

<sup>46</sup> The pertinent findings comes from the triangulation of the information gathered through the key informants' interviews and the discussion with the diaspora members conducted under this study. To validate the information, the research team also consulted the relevant secondary sources.

Variable	Status and responsiveness	
	The purview of the Bangladeshi diaspora	Institutionalisation of Bangladesh
	<p>Bangladesh Tourism Board (BTB) and private sector tour operators are regular participants in this event. Still, diaspora members argue that they cannot attract people due to their lack of professionalism.</p> <p>A group of diaspora members has pointed out that there are also potentials in the medical sector, specifically dentist services.</p>	<p>other media platforms. Bangladeshi tourism agencies are far behind in terms of international standards and agencies' branding from other countries. However, the authorities recognise that diaspora-centric tourism could open a new window and accelerate the whole sector—increase revenue and contribute to country branding.</p> <p>The Bangladesh Tourism Board (BTB) and Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation (BPC) indicate the scope for publicly promoting Bangladeshi diaspora tourism. They need to adopt a strategy and action plan to encourage and endorse Bangladeshi tour operator agencies to develop attractive and economical tour packages targeting the diaspora community. BTB and BPC could also play a pivotal role in developing the tourism sector to attract diaspora investment in this sector.</p>
<b>Social attributes</b>	<p>First-generation Bangladeshis reveal that the international community has a mixed view of Bangladesh. They learned about the natural beauty of Bangladesh from the Bangladeshi diaspora. In contrast, due to the media, the international audience is also aware of Bangladesh as a polluted country. Some mega-projects have mixed connotations in the global communities—concerning environmental pollution and corruption. Bangladeshi diaspora members, mainly second and third generation, are well-informed about the country's natural beauty and are interested in visiting places. However, they perceive that the security measures are inadequate; thus, they remain hesitant to visit many historical and heritage sites during their visit to Bangladesh. Almost none of the diaspora members have noticed relevant, effective campaigns from Bangladesh. They also felt a lack of welcoming atmosphere at the airports of Bangladesh.</p>	<p>Bangladesh chose "Beautiful Bangladesh" as the tagline for its brand in 2008 to attract international tourists and investors (Hasan, Bhuyian, and Kamruzzaman, 2013, p. 189). The government of Bangladesh made some sporadic efforts. However, the concerned authorities have agreed that there is much room to disseminate the relevant information through popular web platforms. Still, there is a lack of an all-out media campaign, namely social media campaigns, to construct or reconstruct Bangladesh's identity, image, and position. The authorities confirmed that the foreign missions' capacity and jurisdiction could not implement the required activities to uphold the country's image. No concrete evidence suggests that the diaspora organisations remain included in the pertinent activities' planning and implementation process. No disaggregated data on number of diaspora members who visited the country's popular spots as a tourist. There are gaps in ensuring that airports provide a welcoming atmosphere. Some CSOs have initiatives to mobilise the diaspora community, which requires a harmonious policy guideline. Mainstream media and some social-media groups make some efforts in this area, but they are sporadic and the content does not</p>

Variable	Status and responsiveness	
	The purview of the Bangladeshi diaspora	Institutionalisation of Bangladesh
		reach enough to attract the newer generations. Respect and recognition are determinants that aspire to a new generation of Bangladeshi diaspora to travel Bangladesh with a hunch for ancestral attachment.
<b>Political attributes</b>	<p>Bangladeshi tourism sector got a setback due to the rise of violent extremism and communalism, which induced social and religious intolerance, hatred, and alienation.</p> <p>The following are some of the most commonly reported diaspora issues (mostly among the second generation): Safety and security concerns; Transparency and accountability related concerns (Tourism agencies liability); Immigration-related complicity (including visa processing); Mobility challenges (communication, transit and movement troubles); and Alienation (over expectation, behaviour and attire differences).</p>	<p>The Bangladeshi tourism sector cannot adequately target different tourists and travellers with varied interests and needs, underutilising this sector. It is the right time to utilise its political stability to re-design its tourism opportunity, taking into account the diaspora population. Diaspora tourism is diversified, and it is no longer only a vacation trip. Experts have opined that today's tourism is not mere sightseeing; instead, it is about experiencing life in many forms. Community involvement is a must to promote such tourism, which requires sensitisation through the local governments and local community-based organisations. Tourist-police also needs strengthening.</p>

Bangladeshi diaspora's, particularly those led by new generations', will contribute to their reintegration with Bangladesh's social and economic development process.

## 4.5 Diaspora Network

Diaspora network are formally and informally formed inter and intra, as well as external networking among diaspora associations and other associations or networks. Media communication plays a vital role in developing the diaspora network and connecting the existing network with other diaspora interests. Diaspora networking is the new impetus to drive entrepreneurship and convert the brain drain into brain gain and brain circulation (Dutia, 2012). Liu and Schøtt (2019) analysis confirmed that entrepreneurs in the diaspora are networking and exporting more than natives and that networking promotes exporting. This analysis also revealed that the common trend of diaspora networking is focusing on commercial interests. Origin national identity consciousness, mutual trust, and solidarity reinforce their bonding through social communication via different formal and informal media platforms with the country of origin and themselves as a cluster in the host community.

The Chinese diaspora created a virtual nation across different continents by sharing their history, culture, heritage, ideology, and technology. India is working to create a global Indian community that welcomes all forms of expatriates. The African diaspora builds pathways to their countries of origin (McCormick, 2020). Diaspora members from different African nations are trying to form a unified diaspora network based on "Pan-Africanism" (Edozie, 2012). African diaspora members are actively campaigning for strengthening their cross continents networking based on commonness as African. Diaspora communities such as Nigerian, Kenyan, South-African, Zimbabwean, and Egyptians have a viable network connected with their countries of origin.

Bangladeshi diaspora communities living in different continents formed various issue-based and profession-identity-based multiple associations. The diaspora members interviewed for this study informed that a significant portion of their associations are political or regional in nature. There are

however, associations that actively serve the Bangladeshi diaspora members' interests and work for Bangladesh's interests. Bangladesh has never had a unilateral international Bangladeshi diaspora network connecting all these associations, regional and continental networks. As a result, there is a dearth of strategic relationships among diaspora associations and with GoB. Media and social media platforms facilitate diaspora communities to connect with one another, as well as with CSOs, the media, and people from Bangladesh.

Table 4.5.1. Mapping latitudes of diaspora networking<sup>47</sup>

Variable	Status and responsiveness	
	The purview of the Bangladeshi diaspora	Institutionalisation of Bangladesh
<b>Economic attributes</b>	Diaspora groups, in particular the business associations, want to build bridges between countries. They have some communications and dialogue experience with the government agencies and business associations of Bangladesh. However, Bangladeshi diaspora associations could not lobby adequately to facilitate new overseas markets for the skilled aspirant economic migrants. With despair, they expressed their disappointment that none of their acts resulted in a formal long-term partnership.	Still, the government of Bangladesh lack a formal system of regular and output-centric communications with Bangladeshi business associations and networks. Moreover, the relevant government agencies are yet to initiate a strategic programme to explore new labour markets through the diaspora network of the country.
<b>Social attributes</b>	The new generation of Bangladeshi diaspora is assimilating into their residence country. It detaches them from their country of origin to some degree. However, in discussion with them, it is clear that the majority of them feel for their ancestral land and are eager to contribute to the development of that land, wherever there is a chance. However, they, in many cases, are not associated with the existing Bangladeshi associations. Those associations cannot deal with their emotions and feeling. Some initiatives are bridging the youths of both countries together around a common interest. Such initiatives were found to work well in diaspora networking. The social media platform is a useful tool in this case. However, the second and third generation of the Bangladeshi diaspora is confused by propagating negative or fake news about Bangladesh on social media. On the other side of the coin, the diaspora youth population gets inspired by a positive impression about Bangladesh due to exemplary activities from famous social media youth icons of Bangladesh living in Bangladesh or overseas.  Also, the diaspora communities across different continents are not interconnected due to the absence of any functional diaspora network.	In order to engage the Bangladeshi diaspora in the social development process, some informal channels and networks were formed in Bangladesh. The government of Bangladesh patronised international cultural exchanges, strengthening the Bangladeshi diaspora's engagement with Bangladesh's socio-cultural network.  Bangladeshi foreign missions find it challenging to bring the entire Bangladeshi Diaspora together on one platform due to political and leadership rivalry.  Monitoring social media traffic to determine whether Bangladeshi Diaspora associations or groups work for Bangladesh's national interests is difficult.
<b>Political attributes</b>	There are many Bangladeshi diaspora associations that works on various issues. Most	The government of Bangladesh recognises the importance of including Bangladeshi

<sup>47</sup> The pertinent findings comes from the triangulation of the information gathered though the key informants' interviews and the discussion with the diaspora members conducted under this study. To validate the information, the research team also consulted the relevant secondary sources.

Variable	Status and responsiveness	
	The purview of the Bangladeshi diaspora	Institutionalisation of Bangladesh
	<p>of those associations are driven by political and regional identities. However, the ability of these forum to mobilise the whole Bangladeshi diaspora community is still not tested. The physical distance between Bangladeshi diaspora communities is also a key barrier to undertaking any collaborative action by Bangladeshi diaspora for their interest (both in the residence country and country of origin) and Bangladesh's national interest.</p> <p>A large number of Bangladeshi professionals are not involved in any of the existing Bangladeshi diaspora Associations. They accuse the organisations' political and regional bias. The difference between diaspora associations and their rivalry demonstrated through social media creates distrust among the general diaspora population, particularly youth.</p>	<p>diaspora peoples' in the national development process. It takes steps to become a part of the national development network. For example, the Economic Relations Division (ERD) of Ministry of Finance, a2i and Bridge 2 Bangladesh (B2B) jointly organised a two-day long seminar (26-27 February 2019) "Convention of NRB (Non-Resident Bangladeshi) Engineers (CONE 2019)". Furthermore, in her inaugural speech, the Honourable Prime Minister urged the diaspora members by saying, <i>"Though you came from abroad today, you have the roots in any village of Bangladesh. So, I request you to find your roots and think about how you can develop your own area"</i><sup>48</sup>.</p> <p>However, GoB and its mission missions could not effectively mobilise Bangladeshi diaspora associations and interlocutors due to their sharp political-regional-internal differences and scattered locations. Therefore, former Bangladeshi Foreign Mission high officials suggested preparing a database of all existing Bangladeshi diaspora associations and bringing them under a virtual platform facilitated by the GoB. Such a platform will promote the national interests of Bangladesh in the residence country and global platform.</p>

The government of Bangladesh accepts the importance of engagement with Bangladeshi diaspora associations to organise the Bangladeshi diaspora for their inclusion in Bangladesh's national development through their connection and networks. Meanwhile, different agencies' roles hitherto distributed and synchronised to develop as a minimum as a virtual platform to connect all in a shared network. Bangladeshi foreign missions do not have adequate resources to mobilise the scattered Bangladeshi diaspora networks. Moreover, networking between various diaspora associations across continents could facilitate their active and robust reintegration with Bangladesh's national development. The viable networking of Bangladeshi diaspora associations from different continents strengthens the diaspora voices to protect and recognise their rights in Bangladesh. Networking between all the Bangladeshi diaspora associations and interlocutors is essential. It will earn recognition and respect, reintegrate with socio-economic-political development, and establish rights and resources endowments vis-à-vis the Bangladeshi diaspora.

#### Box 4.5.1: Diaspora diplomacy: The operational understanding

Nadeem A Salam, a 27-year old British-Bangladeshi citizen, is a successful entrepreneur. He is a photographer, filmography expert and flies his own plane as well. Nadeem has worked with many famous bands and directed and produced over 20 music videos, garnering worldwide views. At the age of 17, he started working for a renowned musical band and earned a good amount of money. Then, with that capital, he decided to use his

<sup>48</sup> Details on CONE 2019 can be accessed from <https://a2i.gov.bd/cone-2019/>

entrepreneurial skills to invest that money in business. He started his music company: Skesh Entertainment. Upon realising the massive market in Asia was for music, Nadeem moved to Malaysia and began expanding his operations in Singapore and the Philippines. He was operating in six different countries, over 25 cities, across Asia. Skesh Entertainment managed over 150 international shows across 70 cities around the world in 2019 by himself. During the Pandemic, the company promoted brands through live streaming and broadcasting. Now, he has a business share in an American clothing brand 'Atticus', who also runs the Malaysian clothing label "Rockiss". Nadeem did a show in Malaysia during the Pandemic called "Platform Live". He has decided to do its second season in Bangladesh, showcasing all the country's musical legends. Platform Live will be free for streaming. It is a unique story about a new-generation member of the diaspora who comes to Bangladesh to connect with people from all over the world.

*Source: (The Business Standard, 2021 April 21)*



## Chapter 5

# Economic Tribute

**D**iaspora members contribute to their country of origin in many ways. Among other things, they send remittances, invest in many forms, and initiate or partner in business ventures. This chapter analyses the status, dynamics and potential of the of the diaspora communities' economic contribution to their country of origin. The perspectives of the second generation diaspora are given due emphasis in the discussion. This chapter delineates the obstacles and challenges. It identifies the probable way-outs to best utilise the potentials. For the operational purpose, this study considers three aspects of economic tribute from the Bangladeshi diaspora to their country of origin: Remittance, Investment in financial sectors/instruments, and Investment in productive sectors. However, there are scopes for in-depth study to assess the economic contribution in the form of "Other investment (e.g., real estate)", Tourism-related expenditure, Philanthropy (with monetary involvement), and Employee compensation<sup>49</sup>.

### 5.1 Remittance

#### *Analysis of the official remittance data*

There is a perception that diaspora members remit significantly lesser amounts of money than the remittance sent by the temporary migrant workers. However, an earlier study (Barkat, Osman, and Gupta, 2014) showed that this common perception is not valid. A recent estimate conducted under this study also demonstrates that such perception remains nothing but a misperception. An exploration of the remittance data for the last five fiscal years (FYs) in the three top host countries—the USA, UK, and Italy—clearly validates the point.

In the USA, if we even use the upper limit of the diaspora population in the USA (i.e., 750,000), it comes to 6.2 per cent of our total expatriate population (i.e., 12 million). However, the USA diaspora contributed 13.20 per cent to the total remittance inflow to the country in FY 2020. This trend remains more or less the same for the last five FYs. It indeed indicates that the USA diaspora not only sent remittance to Bangladesh, but they also contributed disproportionately higher compared to their size of the population. In the UK case, 6.7 per cent of the expatriate population contributed 7.5 per cent of the total remittance.

If we consider both the USA and UK—the two largest hosts of the Bangladeshi diaspora—then it shows that 12.9 per cent of the total expatriate population living in these two countries sent 20.7 per cent of the total remittance in FY 2020. The pattern has been similar over the years.

On the other hand, Italy is another major host country for the Bangladeshi diaspora. However, the socio-economic position of Bangladeshis in Italy is not strong compared to the USA and UK. Still, 3.7 per cent of the total Bangladeshi expatriates living in Italy contributed 3.8 per cent of the total remittance in FY 2020.

If we consider these three top host countries for the Bangladeshi diaspora—USA, UK and Italy—then, it shows that 16.6 per cent of the total Bangladeshi expatriates (Diaspora, in this case) living in these countries contributed one-fourth (24.5%) of the remittance received in the country in FY 2020. Table 5.1.1 shows the pertinent details.

<sup>49</sup> A recent guideline developed by IOM (2020) could help in estimating the relevant data: *Contributions and Counting: Guidance on Measuring the Economic Impact of Your Diaspora beyond Remittance*. International Organization for Migration (IOM), Switzerland. Available at <https://publications.iom.int/books/contributions-and-counting-guidance-measuring-economic-impact-your-diaspora-beyond-remittances>

Table 5.1.1: Official remittance flow scenario from the top three host countries of the Bangladeshi diaspora

Country	Remittance					
	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	Total in last five FYs
USA (in million USD)	2424.32	1688.86	1997.95	1842.86	2403.40	10357.39
Percentage of remittances sent from the USA to total remittances	16.24	13.23	13.34	11.22	13.20	13.4
Percentage of USA-based diaspora to total Bangladeshi expatriates (in 2020)	6.2					Remittance contribution 7 percentage-point higher
UK (in million USD)	863.28	808.16	1106.01	1175.63	1364.89	5317.97
Percentage of remittances sent from the UK to total remittances (in million USD)	5.8	6.3	7.4	7.2	7.5	6.9
Percentage of USA-based diaspora to total Bangladeshi expatriates (in 2020)	6.7					Remittance contribution 0.8 percentage-point higher
Total remittance from the USA and UK	3287.6	2497.02	3103.96	3018.49	3768.29	15675.36
Percentage of remittances sent from the USA and UK to total remittances	22.0	19.6	20.7	18.4	20.7	20.3
Percentage of USA and UK-based diaspora to total Bangladeshi expatriates (in 2020)	12.9					Remittance contribution 7.8 percentage-point higher
Italy (in million USD)	351.31	510.78	662.22	757.88	699.15	2981.34
Percentage of remittances sent from Italy to total remittances	2.4	4.0	4.4	4.6	3.8	3.9
Percentage of Italy-based diaspora to total Bangladeshi expatriates (in 2020)	3.7					Remittance contribution 0.1 percentage-point higher
Total remittance from the USA, UK, and Italy (in million USD)	3638.91	3007.8	3766.18	3776.37	4467.44	18656.7
Total remittance (in million USD)	14931.16	12769.45	14981.69	16419.63	18205.01	77306.94
Percentage of remittances sent from the USA, UK, and Italy to total remittances	24.4	23.6	25.1	23.0	24.5	24.1
Percentage of USA, UK, and Italy-based diaspora to total Bangladeshi expatriates (in 2020)	16.6					Remittance contribution 7.9 percentage-point higher

Source: Estimated by the authors based on the remittance data published by the central bank of the country—Bangladesh Bank (<https://www.bb.org.bd/econdata/wagermidtl.php>; and <https://www.bb.org.bd/openpdf.php>) and Number of overseas employment published (expatriates in this case) by BMET (<http://www.old.bmet.gov.bd/BMET/viewStatReport.action?reportnumber=24>)

What happened during the COVID-19 pandemic's severe crisis? This reality negates the assumption that remittances will fall during the Pandemic. Instead, it increased. In addition to the short-term migrant workers, the diaspora communities continued their affiliation to their country of origin in this unprecedented-gravest time. Remittance flow sent through official channels decreased by almost 11 per cent between FY 2019 and FY 2020 during the pandemic. Also, between July 2020 and March 2021 (i.e., nine months), the official remittance inflow amounted to USD 18603.84 million, which is already higher by 2.2 per cent than the total remittance earned in FY 2020. With the exception of Italy, Germany, and France, remittance inflows to other top host countries of the Bangladeshi diaspora have increased. Their economy is also hit hard by the pandemic. Interviews with the diaspora members revealed that some of them sent a significant amount they received from their host country's governments as support during the Pandemic crisis. That trend continues. Some countries show an exceptionally high rate of increase. In Australia, Bangladesh Bank data shows that the official remittance inflow to Bangladesh in FY 2019 and FY 2020 was USD 57.1 million and USD 61.3 million, respectively. Between July 2020 and March 2021, the amount increased significantly to USD 104.78 million (i.e., around a 71% increase in the first nine months of FY 2021, compared to FY 2020). Table 5.1.2 shows the pertinent details.

Table 5.1.2: The remittance inflow from the key host countries of the Bangladeshi diaspora

Country	Remittance inflow to Bangladesh (in million USD)					Change between FY 2020 and the first nine months of FY 2021 (%)
	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021 (up to March)	
UK	808.16	1106.01	1175.63	1364.89	1516.18	11.1
USA	1688.86	1997.95	1842.86	2403.40	2490.15	3.6
Greece	22.53	39.43	42.94	52.30	64.67	23.7
Canada	49.54	57.56	62.90	77.15	98.18	27.3
Japan	22.92	31.44	49.54	45.35	61.97	36.6
Australia	52.03	56.56	57.15	61.32	104.78	70.9
South Africa	85.12	153.15	168.14	168.06	272.92	62.4
Italy	510.78	662.22	757.88	699.15	601.48	-14.0
Germany	31.75	40.20	60.62	52.75	49.23	-6.7
France	104.80	134.40	159.42	160.53	152.58	-5.0

Source: Estimated by the authors based on the remittance data published by Bangladesh Bank (<https://www.bb.org.bd/econdata/wagermidtl.php>; and <https://www.bb.org.bd/openpdf.php>)

One point worth mentioning is that in Australia, the Bangladeshi diaspora population is 0.3 per cent of the total expatriate population. At the same time, in the first nine months of FY 2021, they contributed 0.6 per cent of total remittances received during that duration. In South Africa, the diaspora population is only 0.11 per cent. Therefore, their contribution to total remittance in that same duration is around 1.5 per cent.

This evidence nullifies the common myth that diaspora members are alienated from their roots and do not send remittance. In contrast, the diaspora members are in regular touch with their country of origin. They regularly send remittances to Bangladesh as other short-term migrant workers do. Even during the pandemic crisis, they continued their financial contribution towards the country in terms of remittance. They also increased their donation to support their country of origin during the pandemic catastrophe. In fact, in general, they contribute disproportionately higher than the amount of remittance to their population size.

## ***More insights on the remittance amount***

The analysis, as mentioned earlier, is solely based on the official remittance data sent through formal financial channels. However, it is also a reality that a sizable portion of remittances to Bangladesh are sent through informal channels rather than proper channels.<sup>50</sup> Based on the number of key informants, an earlier study conducted in 2014 (Barkat, Osman, and Gupta, 2014) concluded that at least 30 to 40 per cent of additional remittance came to Bangladesh through the informal channels. However, remittances sent through unofficial channels have been on a decline in the last five years. The ease with which formal financial transactions could be completed had a positive impact. Remittance senders were also discouraged from using informal channels by the Money Laundering Act of 2012.

Over the top, the amount of remittance sent through unofficial channels decreased significantly in recent years. Primarily two factors contributed to this: GoB-announced cash incentives on remittances forwarded through official channels and Pandemic-induced semi-collapse of many informal channels due to travel restrictions and bans. According to experts, the unofficial remittance inflow would be around 15 per cent of the amount sent officially at present.

In mid-2019, the GoB Bangladesh announced a two per cent cash incentive for the expatriate community on remittance amounts. At the same time, they can send up to BDT 500,000 in to the country without providing documentation. This strategy of the government worked. Primarily, it aimed to promote sending remittances in the Pandemic-driven global economy. Remittances have increased notably through official channels. Also, the travel restrictions all over the world halted informal money transactions to a large extent. These factors added up to a significant increase in official remittances. However, during interviews with diaspora members, the research team found that some of them were unaware of the cash incentives on remittances sent to Bangladesh through formal financial channels.

Also, many Bangladeshi diaspora members come to visit their country of origin on a regular basis. They bring and spend a good amount of money during those visits, which does not add to this official remittance inflow statistics. One, without any declaration, can bring up to USD 5,000 into Bangladesh, and subsequently, money entering the country in this way does not add to the official remittance figures. A group of the interviewed diaspora members for this study revealed that they often bring more money than this amount. Bangladeshi-British diaspora members visit Bangladesh more frequently than other diaspora groups. Every time they visit, they bring a large amount of cash. Key informants suggested that it is better to add around 20 per cent additional amount with the official remittance sent from the UK.

On the other hand, due to geographical distance and cost, the Bangladeshi-American diaspora cannot visit Bangladesh as frequently as the British-Bangladeshis do. So, even if they travel less to Bangladesh, they bring a good amount of cash to the country, which accounts for at least 15 per cent of remittances that comes through official channels. For Italy, another host of a large Bangladeshi diaspora, the scenario is not similar. As the overall income level of Bangladeshis living in Italy is lower than their counterparts in other regions of the world, they are unable to bring a large amount of money with them when they visit Bangladesh. However, on average, the income level is higher among the Bangladeshi-American compared to the British-Bangladeshis. Around 10 per cent additional amount adds to the official remittance amount sent from Italy as the diaspora members bring cash in hand when they visit to Bangladesh.<sup>51</sup>

<sup>50</sup> Sometimes, this is known as "underground banking", which is a comprehensive term referring to any informal banking arrangements that exist alongside formal banking activity but are generally independent of it.

<sup>51</sup> It is also quite natural that four-fifths parts of the Bangladeshi expatriates —the short-term migrant workers—cannot bring much money while visiting Bangladesh, as in most cases they are involved in less-paid jobs, mostly in the gulf countries. They might add 5 per cent to the official remittance amount by bringing cash in hand while visiting the country.

Based on the insights gathered from key informants, an analysis of these three top host countries of the diaspora population provides some insights and food for thought. According to the current research, USD 5394.9 million in remittances entered the country in FY 2020, which is 20.8 per cent higher than the official figure from the three top hosts of the Bangladeshi diaspora. Thus, 16.6 per cent of the expatriates (expatriates includes the short-term migrants and the diaspora) living permanently in the USA, UK, and Italy contributed to 24.7 per cent of the total remittance in FY 2020. Table 5.1.3 contains the details.

Table 5.1.3: The researchers-estimated remittance inflow from the major host countries of the Bangladeshi diaspora in FY 2020

	In a million USD		%	
	Official remittance (in million USD)	Researcher-estimated remittance (in million USD) (including 10% addition through informal channels; 15% for USA, 20% for UK, and 10% additional for Italy in cash bringing, while visiting country)	Diaspora proportion to the total expatriate population	Remittance proportion to total Researcher-estimated remittance *
USA	2403.40	3124.4	6.2	14.3
UK	1364.89	1501.4	6.7	6.9
Italy	699.15	769.1	3.7	3.5
Total	4467.44	5394.9 (20.8% higher than the amount received officially)	16.6	24.7
* For estimating the total remittance in FY 2020, HDRC includes remittance from unofficial channels (15% additional) and undeclared cash, bringing cash-bringing while visiting the country (assumed as 5%). The remittance that came through official channels in FY 2020 was 18205.01 million USD, which according to HDRC-estimates come to USD 21846 million.				

The inference is that both the short-term migrants and the diaspora members send remittance. Also, it reflects the truth that, as in general, income is determined by skills level. Therefore, in order to earn more and send more remittances to the country, it is necessary to increase one's skill level.

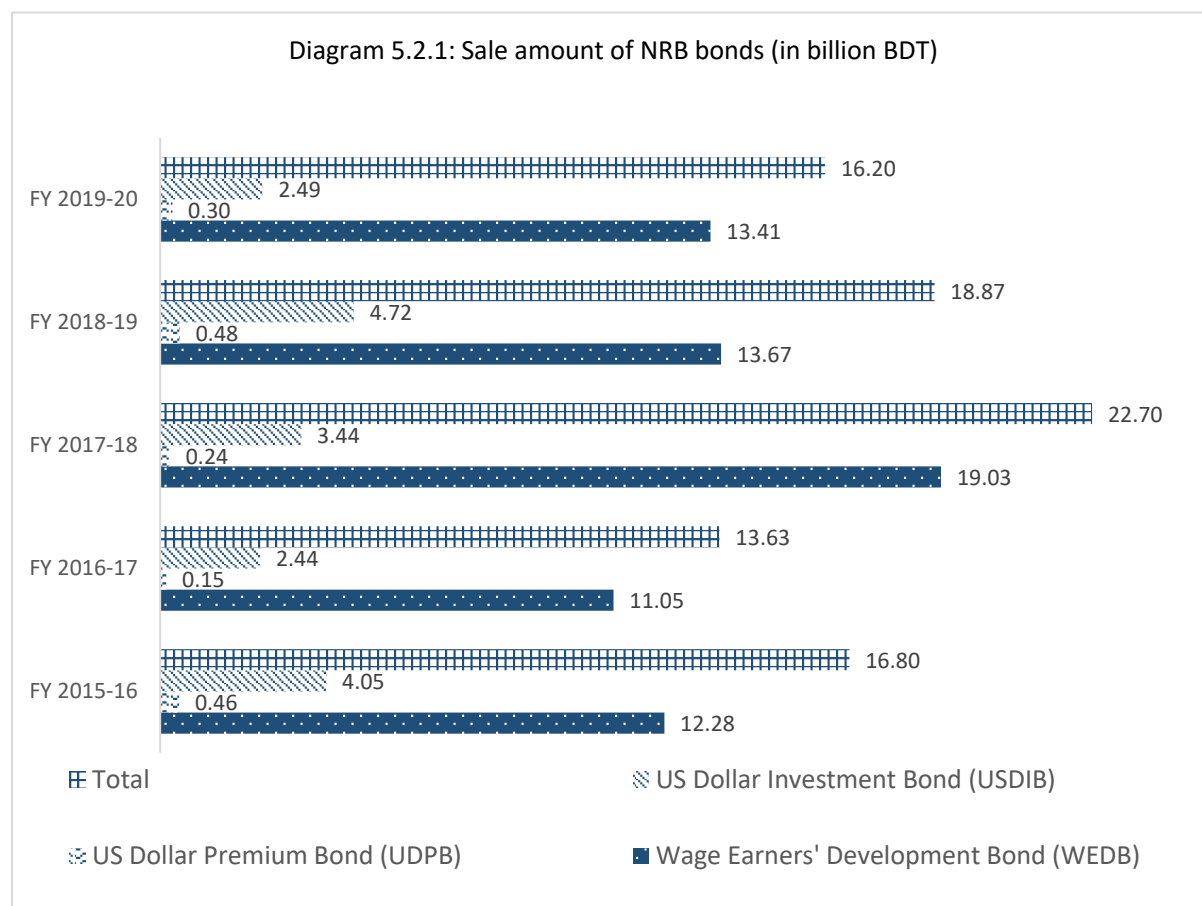
## 5.2 Investment

Bangladeshi diaspora can invest in Bangladesh for setting up a service or product-oriented business. They can purchase bonds and invest in the capital market on behalf of non-resident Bangladeshis (NRBs). Also, Bangladesh Bank allows them to open a savings account in commercial banks.

### *Investment in the NRB bonds*

The government had introduced three types of Savings Bonds for Non-resident Bangladeshis (NRBs): Wage Earner Development Bond (WEDB), US Dollar Investment Bond (USDIB) and US Dollar Premium Bond (UDPB). They aim to encourage wage earners and NRBs to invest and increase remittance inflows. By selling NRB Savings Bonds, the government raises funds for cover the budget deficit and encourages wage earners and non-resident Bangladeshis to invest their hard-earned remittances in the productive sector. The WEDB targets (Maturity 5 years, available in the denomination of BDT and interest rate 12.0% in BDT) are the general Bangladeshi wage earners or Bangladeshi nationals employed abroad. On the other hand, the DIB (Maturity 3 years, available in the denomination of USD and interest rate 6.5% in USD) and DPB (Maturity 3 years, available in the denomination of USD and interest rate 7.5% in BDT) targets the diaspora groups, in particular, holding a Non-resident Account (FC Account) (Bangladesh Bank, 2019). The government is considering converting the existing dollar bonds into multi-currency (such as pound sterling and euro) investment tools to attract more non-resident Bangladeshis (NRBs) to the state-run investment scheme (Karim, 2020).

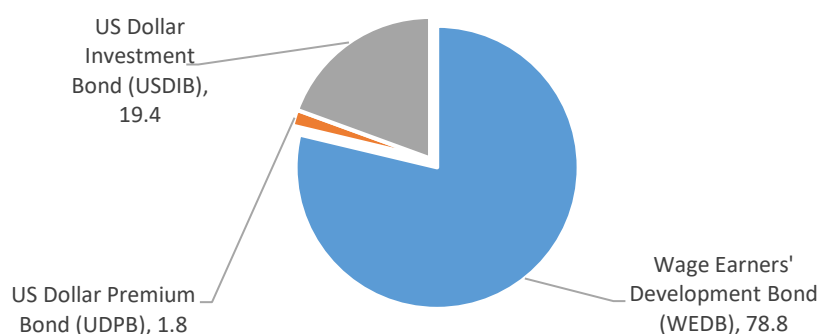
However, the government's plan does not work accordingly. An analysis of the last five FYs clearly shows an overall declining trend in NRB Bond sales. Also, the actual sales figures have always remained not much lucrative comparing the economy's size. In FY 2015-16, the total sales amount of NRB bond was BDT 16.80 billion, which comes down to BDT 16.20 billion in FY 2019-20— a 3.6 per cent decrease. Also, after adjusting for inflation- the real value against the FY 2019-20 comes down to only 11.4 billion BDT— a reduction of around 29.6 per cent. Thus, the total figure and all three types of NRB Bonds witness a decreasing trend, except for some increase in the FY 2017-18. Diagram 5.2.1 shows the pertinent trend.



Source: Department of National Savings and key informant from the relevant department of Bangladesh Bank

Analysis of sales of NRB bonds in the last five FYs shows that almost four-fifths (78.8%) of the sales comprises Wage Earners' Development Bond, followed by US Dollar Investment Bond (19.4%). On the other hand, the sales volume is negligible for the US Dollar Premium Bond, only 1.8 per cent of total sales. Diagram 5.2.2 shows the composition. It also clearly reflects the reality that diaspora-targeted bonds (i.e., USDIB and UDPB) remain unpopular.

Diagram 5.2.2: Composition of the type of NRB bonds by sales amount in the last five FYs (2015-16 to 2019-20) (%)



Source: Authors' estimates based on the data of the Department of National Savings and key informant from the relevant department of Bangladesh Bank

Although the returns on the bonds mentioned above are significantly higher than those on many other international bonds, the bonds are not widespread popular among the NRBs. The primary reason for the unsatisfactory sale of these bonds is that far too many NRBs are unaware of their existence and benefits. The interviews with general diaspora people conducted for this study also reveal that the majority are unaware of such financial investment options. The diaspora population suggests mapping the famous and reliable media used by them in different world regions. Using those media in collaboration with the concerned diaspora associations could popularise these financial products. The researchers find a relatively more straightforward process of buying the bonds than the previous state. There are some proactive measures from the authorities too. The NRBs can directly buy bonds from abroad. They do not need to be present physically at the authorised dealers. They require only sending a copy of the passport to the Bangladesh Missions before buying the bond. The Central Bank also allows the Central Bank to borrow home loans in the local currency, principally decided at a maximum debt-equity ratio of 50:50. A crucial problem lies in the information gap among the diaspora communities and the lack of confidence in the country's banking system. It requires systematic evidence-based image rebuilding initiatives and pinpointed customised promotional activities targeting regions and groups of diaspora. The concerned authorities agree that there were sporadic efforts in popularising these financial products. However, it lacked proper strategic actions. Also, those did not have continuity. Also, some opine that high denomination keeps playing a significant role in inadequate response to the Bonds' sale, particularly the UDPB and UDIB. However, leaders of NRB CIP (Commercially Important Person) urges the Government to reconsider limiting the NBR investment in the Bonds (The Daily Star, 2021 January 07).

A recent study (PIDG, GC and TAF, 2019) suggests that making the country's bond attractive to investors to subscribe to bonds will be highly difficult without systemic changes in the market and regulatory environment. On the other hand, institutional investors have expressed interest in investing in high-grade corporate bonds that meet their risk, yield, and tenure expectations. However, experts indicated that retail and international investors could attract corporate bonds with adequate regulation, information dissemination, incentives, and systemic corrections. However, there is no room for complacency in the systematic changes and regulations in the overall market. Therefore, to revitalise the country's capital market, the government, regulators, market participants, and other stakeholders will need to collaborate.

It is an excellent point to mention that the 8<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan July 2020-June 2025 foresees the NRB or *Diaspora Bonds* as "an innovative tool for development financing by tapping into the wealth of a diaspora population and opening new marketing channels" (GoB, 2020: 250).



## ***Investment in the capital market***

The diaspora enjoys similar benefits as foreign investors. Diaspora investment is treated equally to Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), which benefits from several incentives. Currently, Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission (BSEC) allows general investors to buy 70 per cent of shares of any initial public offerings (IPOs). Of the 70 per cent shares set aside for general investors, the regulator fixes 65 per cent for resident Bangladeshis and 5 per cent for non-resident Bangladeshis (Mahmud, 2021 and Key Informant Interviews).

At the same time, the government decides to reserve 25 per cent primary shares in IPO for the NRBs at the NRB banks (i.e., NRB Bank Ltd, NRB Global Bank Ltd, NRB Commercial Bank Ltd) to attract more investments from them (Saif, 2019).

Still, diaspora members' participation in the country's capital market is negligible; the interviews revealed their lack of interest. In FY20, the remittance inflow invested in NRB Savings Bond is 1.05 per cent only.<sup>52</sup> The diaspora members have less confidence in the capital market and fears manipulations. They recall the share market scams and fear to invest in the market.

The BSEC issued a policy on establishing digital booths to facilitate foreign investment in the capital market. They expect that foreigners and NRBs will invest effortlessly in Bangladesh's capital market using digital booths abroad. Lately, the BSEC has planned some promotional activities, including Roadshows, to attract more investment by foreigners and the NRBs (Kashem and Islam, 2021; and Key Informant Interviews). As part of it, the BSEC organised a four-day long roadshow in February 2021 at Dubai in UAE, titled "Rising of Bengal Tiger: Potentials of Bangladesh Capital Markets", to attract foreign and NRB investors in the country's stock market. This event was a series of seminars and bilateral and multilateral meetings (The Financial Express, 2019).

The Bangladesh Fund was established in March 2011 by the Investment Corporation of Bangladesh (ICB), a state-owned corporation, to mobilise savings and create innovative investment opportunities. The Bangladesh Fund was established as a BDT 50 billion mutual fund investing in stocks traded on the Bangladesh stock exchanges, hoping to stabilise the share markets following the scandal-plagued crash of 2010–11. Nevertheless, that fund could not gain the interest of the expatriates (Barkat, Osman, and Gupta, 2014). However, experts also opine that nowadays, foreign investment is rarely made by individual investors; instead, most foreign investment is made by wealthy fund managers or hedge funds that technically manage the wealth of wealthy individuals. These investors have always been viewed as extremely risky throughout the world. As a result, caution and stringent control measures should be used to encourage foreign investment in our secondary capital market.

On the other hand, establishing a mutual fund with steady growth and a balanced growth portfolio targeted exclusively at Bangladeshis living abroad, particularly the diaspora, has the potential to attract additional foreign capital to the country's capital market. In ensuring the success of this initiative, a convenient selling option should be established among the NRBs, while also establishing the transparency and accountability of the company handling this type of investment opportunity. Furthermore, to begin with- reputable firms with a proven track record might be permitted to manage these investment options for Bangladeshis living abroad (Roy, 2020).

<sup>52</sup> According to the Dhaka Stock Exchange, the total transaction of the foreign portfolio investors was Tk 10,388 crore in 2020, which was 7.69 per cent of the total transaction of the exchange (Source: The Daily Dhaka Tribune, 03 February 2021, Accessed from <https://www.dhakatribune.com/business/stock/2021/02/03/foreign-and-nrb-investors-key-to-injecting-fresh-funds-into-capital-market>)

Bangladesh offers a couple of money-depositing mechanisms for the Bangladeshi expatriates, including the diaspora (Box 5.2.1)

**Box 5.2.1: Money-depositing mechanisms for the NRBs**

**Non-Resident Foreign Currency Deposit (NFCD):** The NRBs, including those having dual nationality and ordinarily residing abroad, may maintain an interest-bearing NFCD Account with US dollars, Pounds Sterling, Japanese Yen, and Euros. The account holder can repatriate the balance and the interest in foreign exchange according to their choice. They may also convert the balance into taka at the prevailing exchange rate.

**Non-Resident Investor's Taka Account (NITA):** Non-resident persons/institutions, including non-resident Bangladeshi nationals, may buy/ sell Bangladeshi shares and securities, deposit profit and dividend and sales proceed NITA Account. Funds in a foreign currency can be credited to the NITA Account if they have been remitted abroad through an official banking channel or via a transfer of funds from an NFCD Account held in Bangladesh. A NITA account holder can buy and sell shares and securities and remit abroad in equivalent Foreign Exchange. A non-resident person/institution with a NITA account must open a Beneficiary Owner Account with the stockbrokers or banks who are depository participants. The shares are credited into the Beneficiary Owner Account. Non-resident persons/institutions may appoint a nominee to handle transactions.

### **Investment in the banks**

Bangladeshi diaspora communities had been demanding a bank for themselves since the late 1990s when remittance inflow increased at a stable rate. Bangladesh Bank approved the idea at one stage, and now, there are three NRB banks: NRB Bank Ltd, NRB Global Bank Ltd, and NRB Commercial Bank Ltd. The first NRB bank's activities started in 2013.

The theoretical ideation of the design of the NRB Bank first came from a senior official of the Banking Regulation and Policy Department, Bangladesh Bank. The Bangladesh Bank official presented the idea and proposal for such a bank in a paper titled "Alternative resource of World Bank for external financing in Bangladesh: A foreign remittance approach". This paper was presented at the 16th Biennial Conference of the Bangladesh Economic Association (BEA) on 15 December 2007<sup>53</sup>.

This idea of initiating NRB bank was unique; it aimed to facilitate diaspora engagement in financial sectors. Primarily, the diaspora members financed the NRB banks. However, the diaspora investors to these banks faced many hurdles. In an interview taken seven years back (Barkat, Osman and Gupta, 2014), the then Chairman of NRB Commercial Bank Limited argued- starting a business in Bangladesh is constrained by bureaucratic control rigidity and navigating through all the red tape is highly time-consuming. He said, "*If an investor-friendly environment and good image of the country are not built, it will be challenging to attract investment from Non-Resident Bangladeshis.*" He pointed out lack of good governance in the country remained a significant challenge in deposit collection for the bank.

More importantly, in the discussions for the current study, a couple of seasoned banking professionals unanimously comes to the point that, as time passes on, the primary vision of the NRB bank—that is, providing services focusing on the needs and welfare of Bangladeshi diaspora—seems to get lesser emphasis. Instead, these banks are working, more or less, the same as other typical commercial banks.

Moreover, the concerned ones suggest strengthening the GoB-initiated Probashi Kallyan Bank (PKB) potentials, established in 2010. Currently, the PKB is focusing on migrant workers. The PKB could concentrate on developing products to attract investment from the Bangladeshi diaspora. The PKB requires strategic planning to include the diaspora within their reach. Attracting diaspora investment will also boost the financial strength of PKB.

<sup>53</sup> Source: key informant interview with Md Bayazid Sarker, Deputy Director, Banking Regulation and Policy Department, Bangladesh Bank, conducted under the study of Barkat, Osman, and Gupta, 2014

## Investment in the productive sectors

The Bangladeshi diaspora members invest directly in many sectors and sub-sectors. Bangladeshi diaspora businesspersons have invested in many entities of the country. Foreign investors, including the diaspora, prefer manufacturing sectors like light engineering. Also, they have their branch offices here—particularly in the IT sectors—where they engage the Bangladeshis. They invest here for two reasons: nostalgia, doing something in touch with the country, and making a profit. However, above all, the inclination towards the country remains the primary reason to choose Bangladesh to invest. Box 5.2.2 contains one such example.

### Box 5.2.2: A British-Bangladeshi's Investment

Iqbal Ahmed is a Bangladesh-born British entrepreneur who has benefited by importing shrimp, hotel and real estate development, hospitality, and food. His two companies, Seamark and Ibco, made him one of the United Kingdom's richest men and placed him at the highest-ranked British Bangladeshi in the 'Sunday Times Rich List'. Iqbal Ahmed was born in the Sylhet district of Bangladesh and migrated to the UK in 1971 at the age of 15. After completing his education from City College in Westminster, he joined his family's business in Oldham.

In the year 2000, Seamark launched a full-fledged processing plant in Chittagong, Bangladesh. The GBP 10 million investment in the seafood plant has created 1,000 new jobs in the local area. In addition, IBCO Food Industries, a Seamark subsidiary, opened in 2006 to meet the growing demand for vegetables, fruits, finger foods, and seafood. Its Bangladeshi operation processes various products, including shrimp, poultry, dry foods, finger foods, frozen fruit and vegetables, and more. He is so successful that the British community often acknowledges him as 'Mr Shrimp' or 'King Prawn'. Mr Ahmed is also the founder Chairman of NRB bank projects in Bangladesh that intend to assist non-resident Bangladeshi citizens in their contribution to the economy of Bangladesh. He also runs an organisation to aid and develop the lives of the poor of Bangladesh.

*Source: (LinkedIn, 2021; DBpedia, 2021 and Manchester evening news, 2012 November 22)*

Bangladesh could not attract foreign investors and was frequently unsuccessful. Nonetheless, one should consider the country's overall Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) scenario: the FDI inflow amount is not high and low as a percentage of GDP. Table 5.2.1 shows a hike in the FDI in FY 2018-19, which is not a usual one, and it dropped notably in FY 2019-20 (39% reduction). Also, in FY 2019-20, the net FDI inflow was 0.72 per cent to the country's GDP, while at the same period in Vietnam, it was 6.15 per cent, 1.8 per cent in India. As a result, Bangladesh is gradually losing its position to regional competitors in attracting FDI.

Table 5.2.1: FDI inflow to Bangladesh

	FY 2017-18	FY 2018-19	FY 2019-20
Net FDI inflow (in million USD)	2580.44	3888.99	2370.45
Net FDI inflow as percentage of GDP	0.94	1.29	0.72

*Source: (Bangladesh Bank, 2020a)*

There is no accurate disaggregated data on the amount received from the diaspora as FDI. The Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (BIDA) database usually does not have separate data for them. Many NRBs makes investments without declaring their foreign identity. NRBs invest through informal and local channels using a local base (in a partnership or individually as resident national). However, key informants claim that the diaspora investment amount is still tiny compared to the total FDI.

Bangladesh equally treats and offers the same privileges such as tax waivers, tax holidays, land acquisition scopes, both ways of credit transfer (investment and profit) to a foreign investor and an NRB investor.

There are particular authorities, such as Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (BIDA), to facilitate the whole process. However, it does not have a dedicated policy or framework focusing on the Bangladeshi diaspora. Consequently, the BIDA is trying to bring 150 services of 35 government agencies in one point required to address and facilitate the investment of local, joint and foreign investors. In addition to BIDA, the Bangladesh Export Processing Zone Authority (BEPZA), Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (BEZA), and Bangladesh Hi-Tech Park Authority (BHTPA) also work to promote domestic and foreign investment. It is notable that according to the "One-Stop Service Act 2018", these four authorities qualify to provide one-stop service.

At the same time, Bangladesh is initiating 100 Special Economic Zones (SEZs) across the country. By setting up SEZs, the government is encouraging economic growth, creating jobs and reducing poverty. Bangladesh intends to use SEZs as a policy tool to address regional disparities (Razzaque, Bazlul and Eusuf, 2018).

The critical challenge for Bangladesh in attracting diaspora investment is the non-congenial business climate. Unfortunately, Bangladesh ranks 168<sup>th</sup> out of 190 countries in the Ease of Doing Business Index, while India, Vietnam, and Sri Lanka rank 63<sup>rd</sup>, 70<sup>th</sup> and 99<sup>th</sup> (World Bank, 2020). Bangladesh has made incremental progress toward removing some investment barriers, such as improving access to reliable electricity. Still, its insufficient infrastructure, limited financing instruments, bureaucratic delays, lack of enforcement of labour laws, and corruption continue to stymie foreign investment. Although new government efforts to improve the business environment appear promising, implementation has yet to occur. In addition, the slow adoption of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms and slow judicial processes impede contract enforcement and business dispute resolution (US Department of State, 2020).

Diaspora investors are dissatisfied with the business environment, which is embedded with corruption, non-responsive and lengthy processes. Investors are concerned about the country's bureaucratic control rigidity and extremely time-consuming red-tape. A diaspora businessperson boldly argues by saying, *"We do not need any additional incentive, only we need the concerned authorities to respond to our needs timely"*. Another diaspora businessperson told the research team, *"We need a responsive authority and a stable business policy. We cannot get the services timely, and we are never sure what to expect when. To be frank, we want to invest in Bangladesh; but before we invest here, we think twice"*. The interviews conducted with the businesspersons both at home and abroad reveal a similar picture.

Concerned government authorities confirmed that non-resident Bangladeshi investors' and entrepreneurs' complaints are not exaggerated in many cases. However, there are gaps in responsiveness, and sometimes the whole process becomes lengthy.

The taxation policy remains one of the critical determinants that encourage investment. The Capital Gain Tax (CGT) was also introduced in 2010, and its rate has been a source of contention for many years. Therefore, the National Board of Revenue (NBR) requires to clarify some of the issues related to the rate of CGT applicable to non-resident investors (Siddiqui, 2021).

The discussions with the concerned authorities revealed gaps in promoting investment opportunities for potential international investors. Also, some "Diaspora Investment Index" could help the potential diaspora investors with evidence and attract them accordingly.<sup>54</sup> The business community of Bangladesh has argued that if we want joint-venture type business initiatives from diaspora communities, the initial impetus must come from the government—in the form of the concrete time-bound strategic plan and economic diplomacy. There are efforts being made. For example, in the late 2019, the Industries Minister paid a visit to the UK. In the 3<sup>rd</sup> British- Bangladeshi Business Award giving function at Birmingham, Honourable Minister urged the British-Bang Bangladeshi young business entrepreneurs to invest in the emerging business sectors in Bangladesh (Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha, 2019). British-Bangladeshi business communities welcome such efforts. At the same time, they look forward to some proactive joint venture plans from the government in the form of a public-private partnership. Foreign Missions' websites contain some information on investment procedures and incentives. However, the relevant pages of the websites are not adequately user-friendly, lacks detailed data, and there is a lack of audio-visual promotions. For example, the website of the Embassy of Bangladesh in Doha, Qatar, has a dedicated page on investment<sup>55</sup>. It is indeed a reasonable effort.

Nonetheless, the page could include detailed business and economic data, as well as evidence of its market size and comparative advantages, aided by interactive audio-visual materials. Also, the page could have an Arabic version. A standard format, developed by the relevant authorities and ensured with necessary updates could be helpful; though, it will undoubtedly require country or region-specific modifications.

Also, in discussion with the key informants, it is strongly recommended to invite diaspora communities to invest in the SEZ in their respective origin regions. It would attract investment to the country and ensure the diaspora involvement in its development in a more inclusive manner.

The diaspora investors to Bangladesh's service sector, particularly the IT sector, opine that claiming Intellectual Property Rights over innovation is a real challenge. According to them, the current legal implementation structure is not adequate to ensure their rights on the Intellectual Property.

There are awards for the top investors. Also, the GoB gives recognition, in the form of awards, to the expatriate importers of the raw materials from Bangladesh for their businesses in the host countries (Bangladesh Customs, 2021).<sup>56</sup> The GoB also provides Commercially Important Persons (CIP) among the diaspora communities. Box 5.2.2 has some relevant initiatives. The diaspora business communities acknowledge the honour of the government. However, they flagged the lack of proactive follow-up activities from the concerned authorities of Bangladesh, which would be helpful to engage more proactively in developing the country. The Bangladeshi businesspersons also opine for a government-initiated long term strategic partnership with the diaspora business associations to attract more investment towards the country.

<sup>54</sup> Section 3.3 of Chapter 3 in this report has details on such index.

<sup>55</sup> Available from <https://www.bdembassydoha.org/investinbangladesh.html> (accessed 07 may 2021)

<sup>56</sup> Import regulations concerning NRBs can be accessed through the Import Policy Order, 2015 – 2018, which can be downloaded from Ministry of Commerce website ([www.mincom.gov.bd](http://www.mincom.gov.bd)). Specific provisions that relate to NRBs are - Paragraph 6 (a) (ii) (Source of Finance); Paragraph 8(7) (Import against direct payment/purchase abroad); and Paragraph 12 (Import by Bangladeshi professional's living abroad).

**Box 5.2.3: Government acknowledging the diaspora contribution**

The Government declared 38 non-resident Bangladeshis (NRBs) as a Commercially Important Person (CIP) in 2018 to contribute to the country's economy, three of whom were women. They achieved the honour under three categories: one for industrial investment, thirty for sending the highest remittances through legal channels and seven for importing Bangladeshi raw materials abroad. The Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment published the relevant gazette notification in this regard at the end of 2020. The selected individuals will avail of some facilities for two years since the announcement of the notice. They will get a CIP card. Bangladesh Secretariat will allow their entrance. They will remain eligible for inclusion in the policymaking committee in the respective sectors and prioritise attending high-level meetings in the country and abroad. Also, they will receive invitations to programmes to be celebrated in Bangladesh missions abroad to mark various national days and festivals. Also, they will get priority in booking seats for air, railway and waterway tickets for business purposes, access to VIP lounges at airports and preference for their family members in booking cabins at government hospitals.

Earlier, in late 2019, Bangladesh Bank awarded 28 individuals and eight businesses for their outstanding contribution to inward remittances in 2018. Of the 28 top remitters, ten are specialist professionals, eight general professionals and ten businesspersons. There was no woman in this list of top remitters. Of the eight business organisations, the Central Bank awarded five local banks and three exchange houses owned by NRBs due to their excellent performance in remitting foreign currencies.

*Source:* (New Age, 2020; Hasan, 2019)

## Chapter 6

# Social Tribute

The social tribute of diaspora is a two-way journey. Diaspora consciously, subconsciously and unconsciously exchanges social capital attained from hereditary society with the host country and vice-versa social capital assimilated from the host community to the native nation. Social tribute has three main contributing aspects: *civic, intellectual and philanthropic (financial and non-financial) tributes*.

### 6.1 Social Remittances: A Civic Tribute

The social remittances, similar to economic remittances, have found appeal in diasporas as an attribute to origin country. Peggy Levitt (1998) coined the term “social remittances” twenty years ago. Social remittances were introduced to capture the notion that, in addition to money, migration also entails the circulation of ideas, practices, skills, identities, and social capital between sending and receiving communities (Lacroix, Levitt and Vari-Lavoisier, 2016). Giriyan (2015) defined social remittances as a set of skills, ideas and practices imbibed by a person over time that begin to reflect in his or her personality and way of life; in short, it is the social impact of migration that leads to social development. Social remittance is a migration-driven form of cultural diffusion (ideas, behaviours, identities, and social capital) between sending and receiving communities, which promote immigrant entrepreneurship, community and family formation, and political integration (Levitt, 1998). North-South Centre of the Council of Europe (2006) refers to social remittances to ideas, practices, mindset, world views, values and attitudes, norms of behaviour, and social capital (knowledge, experience and expertise). Diaspora mediates and gets transferred from host to home countries. Social remittances deal with immaterial resources like knowledge, know-how, ideas, and practices between diaspora members' homes and host societies. Social remittances point towards speaking, ways of doing, and thinking patterns that circulate along migratory paths (Vari-Lavoisier, 2020). The concept of social remittances revealed that in addition to economic remittances, expatriates also remit ideas, norms, lifestyles, behavioural practices, and social capital to their origin country (Castles, Haas and Miller, 2014).

According to Levitt (2001), social remittances are available in three forms: normative structures, systems of practice, and social capital (including human capital). Normative structures refer to ideas, values and beliefs steering behaviour norms, caring family notion, community engagement and social mobilisation. Normative structures produce systems of practice that encompass organisational rehearses, such as engaging and socialising members, goal setting and strategizing, establishing leadership rules, forming interagency ties and individual positioning in the family activities, and participation in the political, religious and civic groups (Levitt, 2005). Social capital is the combination of values and norms. According to Putnam (2000), social capital refers to collective action, consisting of social networks of civic engagement and associated norms that affect the community. North (1990), within social capital, included the social and political environment, which influence institutional norms to develop and shape social structure. Social remittances need assessment through a transnational perspective. It evolves in the transnational social space formed by the diaspora population. Both individual and community produce social remittances.

Diaspora exchanges social remittances with the families and friends from the ancestral community through physical and virtual communication channels: *physical visits, virtual visits (video calls using various online platforms) and correspondences (letters, telephonic conversation, SMS/MMS, social media interactions)*.



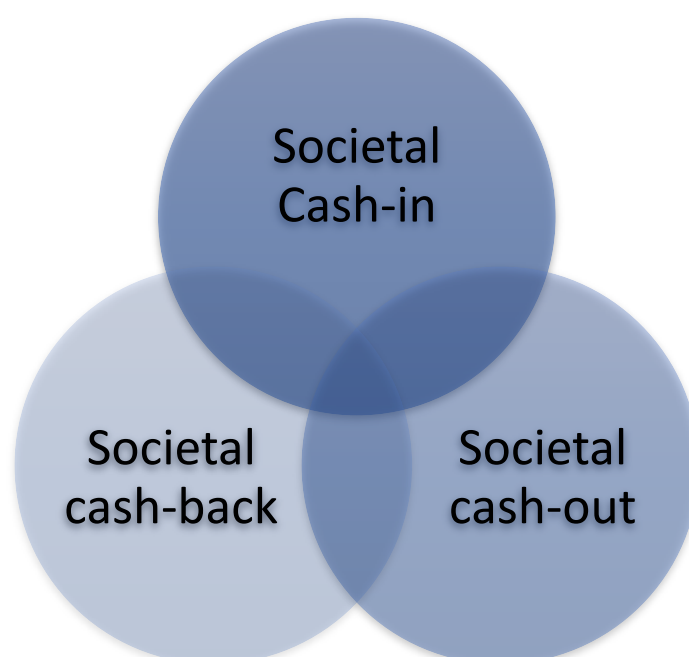
### □ Global experiences

Isaakyan and Triandafyllidou (2017), in their study, showed how the Bosnian, Indian, Moroccan and Ukrainian diaspora members are remitting social remittances (cultural, civic and political) to the origin countries. A survey conducted by the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe (2006) shows that the African diaspora acquired social remittances through formal education and training in knowledge institutions, work experiences, and socialisation in the host countries. African diaspora individuals, groups and organisations transfer diverse and wide-ranging social remittances (innovative ideas, valuable transnational networks, knowledge, sound political contributions, policy reforms, valuable democratic habits and attitudes, appropriate peace-making ideas and practices, new technological skills, norms of behaviour, work ethics, social values and cultural influence) to their origin countries. African diaspora seeks further opportunities to improve national and local governance of their respective origin countries by transferring best practices (civic and political) learned from the host countries.

### □ Societal-cash in-out-back

In this study, societal cash-in refers to social remittances sent back to the origin country by diaspora. The use of diaspora-remitted social remittances by the receiver origin community is referred to as societal cash-out.. Diaspora acquisition of social remittances sent by their origin community is referred to as societal cash-back. Societal cash-back is also applicable when diaspora cash-in social remittances to their origin country. There is every possibility of returning something intangible in exchange for the ancestral community.

Diagram 6.1.1: Diaspora's articulation of social remittances



Source: Developed by the authors

### □ Societal cash-in

Due to a lack of tracer studies in this domain, it is difficult to determine how much social remittances or societal cash-in is sent by Bangladeshi diaspora. It is worth mentioning that human and social behaviours and customs evolved over time. Many internal and external triggering factors influence behaviours, values, ideas, traditions, morals, and beliefs. Emigrant(s) are usually assimilated and/or accustomed to cultural traits of the host community with owned beliefs, behaviours and practices. Cultural melting and assimilation are common phenomena in the context of globalisation and the

revolution of social media. Nevertheless, gathered news pieces and (in) formal conversations with the diaspora members help in the discovery of transferred social remittances.

Social remittances have been an integral part of the migration of Bangladeshi professionals. A significant portion of them are members of the Bangladeshi diaspora (Barkat, Osman and Sengupta, 2014). Recognition of social remittance diffused by the Bangladeshi diaspora community in Bangladesh has long been under-recognised by academicians and policymakers. Therefore, a portrayal of some of the contributions by the diaspora community in Bangladesh society from the perspective of social remittances is worthwhile. Mohammad Ataul Karim, a Bangladeshi American scientist, who is ranked among the top 50 researchers in the Applied Optics field, is another example of the diaspora influencing Bengali Language Processing in ICT research and development (Academic Influence, n.d.). His edited book 'Technical Challenges and Design Issues in' offer a platform for research and development in ICT that is significance to Bengali-speaking people worldwide (Karim, Karim and Kaykobad, 2013). Social remittances can take the form of redefining, revamping and propagating a country's ideas and identities. These progressions occur in Art, Literature, Business, Journalism, Music, Academia, and Human Rights Activists. In the sphere of art, a British Bangladeshi, Akram Khan, a Dancer/choreographer, has blended his knowledge and skill of kathak training and contemporary dance and exhibited his work in Bangladesh. British Bangladeshi writers like Monica Ali and Tahmima Anam, journalists like Abdul Gaffar Choudhury, academia such as Naila Kabeer have transmitted narratives, knowledge, and ideas pertinent to Bangladesh.

By living abroad, not all members of diaspora contribute to Bangladesh's social and cultural aspects. It is not all about investment and business models; also, diaspora members introduce business and management culture in Bangladesh. Moreover, their role in such transformative business is indeed shaping the socio-cultural aspect of the Bangladeshi people. For Instance, American Bangladeshi such as Kamal Quadir (founder and CEO of CellBazaar Inc), Iqbal Quadir (founder of Grameen Phone), Fahim Saleh (founder of Pathao) are among the list of influential people who have contributed to the entrepreneurship, business, and management culture of Bangladesh. Moreover, few inventions of the Bangladeshi diaspora have a global impact; and Bangladesh is also a beneficiary of those innovations, e.g., Jawed Karim (co-founder of YouTube) and Salman Khan (founder of Khan Academy).

The first-generation Bangladeshi diaspora members inform that they will continue to cash-in social remittances because of their direct connections with left-behind and extended family members living in the origin country. The same could not assume in the next-generation Bangladeshi diaspora because they have distant and limited connections with ancestral family members. However, diaspora interlocutors and former Bangladeshi ambassadors see the role of social media as promising and essential. It allows the next-generation of Bangladeshi diaspora to develop a relationship with kith and kin from the same generation. First-generation Bangladeshi diaspora members have thanked globalisation for reducing differences in perceived thoughts and cultures between the next-generation diaspora and the same age in Bangladesh. Attraction to exploring genealogical history is also aspiring and involving the next-generation Bangladeshi diaspora in the process of remitting social remittances.

#### □ Societal cash-out

The model example of the cash-outing of social remittances transferred from the Bangladeshi diaspora is the invention of Chemical Scientist Abul Hussam. Since 1985, Professor Abul Hussam, PhD has taught at George Mason University in the USA (George Mason University, n.d.). His research examines trace arsenic, aquatic chemistry of arsenic in groundwater. It develops a simple arsenic filter acclaimed recognition by international publications and accolades. He received the 2007 Grainger Challenge Prize for Sustainability from the US National Academy of Engineering (NAE) to develop the SONO arsenic filter. He donated the majority of his USD 1 million prize amount to a Bangladeshi non-profit organisation – *Manob Sakti Unnayan Kendro* (MSUK). MSUK, in turn, used the donation to produce

and distribute 250,000 SONO filters to the poor people of Bangladesh free of cost, with the support from donor agencies (Barkat, Osman and Sengupta, 2014). People affected by arsenic poisoning in drinking water in Bangladesh, India, Nepal, and Pakistan use his invention for safe drinking water. Muzahid Khan, a reputed British Bangladeshi businessman, led and facilitated a group of people from Oldham to build a village health centre in Bangladesh for providing health care to the marginalised rural community. He also arranged a cycling event in which a group of British cycling enthusiasts rode 600 kilometres across Bangladesh to raise funds for Vision Bangladesh, a project of Sightsavers and BRAC. Besides, Muzahid Khan, every year, take many British and new-generation of Bangladeshi diaspora to visit Bangladesh for nature and cultural exploration. Mohammad Ajman Miah, better known as Tommy Miah or 'Curry King' in Britain, is a Bangladeshi-born British celebrity chef. He has promoted innovation and quality in Asian and Bangladeshi cuisine, developed dishes for the highest quality international manufacturers, wrote books, and offered Indian meals to flights worldwide. While he rebranded Asia and Bangladesh in food culture globally, he integrated those ideas/identities back home (Bangladesh) with the following activities: hosting a Television show, establishing a Hospitality Management Training Institute, possessing a restaurant, arranging food hygiene classes for refugee camps in Bangladesh, supporting Bangladeshi students to study in the UK, sponsoring charity groups working in health services and orphanage house (PeoplePill, n.d.a).

Cultural diffusion by the diaspora community at the family level is also remarkable. For instance, besides financial remittance, the Bangladeshi UK community also diffuses some aspirations/way of life among the family members and community living in Bangladesh. The aspiration of migration and preparation for such migration, in many cases, become values and norms among the Sylheti communities. Once migrated, it is also evident that they reshape the old social network with the new transaction (cash remittance or kind) and expand the social capital through charity. An example of a charity request shared by a UK Bangladeshi respondent depicts raising money for a person living with cancer via family and friends and not through social media or large groups. This incident suggests that how the diaspora community retains and expands its community network and integration. The network also extends through impersonal charities like mosques, schools, and healthcare facilities through various organisations.

First-generation Bangladeshi diaspora's proactive role in cash-out social remittances is evident from the examples mentioned above. According to the first-generation Bangladeshi diaspora, similar to cash-in of social remittances, next-generation Bangladeshi diaspora members' role in societal cash-out is a matter of concern. However, a promising fact is that genealogical connections are motivating next-generation Bangladeshi diaspora. Next-generation Bangladeshi diaspora members want to know about their forefathers. In this connection, they get involved with the remitting process of social remittances.

#### □ Societal cash-back

Ancestral family, community and society also cash-back social remittances to the diaspora population. Bangladeshi diaspora interlocutors informed that the new-generation Bangladeshi diaspora imports social remittances from their tours at the ancestral land. A couple of cases identified from the discussion with key informants from Bangladeshi diaspora communities living in the UK and USA prove the new-generation member receiving social remittances from their connection with ancestral society and culture. Besides, conversation with new-generation members of the Bangladeshi diaspora indicates the growing role of social media in developing close ties with kith and kin from ancestral families and acting as a channel of importing-exporting social remittances. However, mass media (television channels, radio stations, daily newspapers) are still vital in transmitting social remittances.

First-generation Bangladeshi diaspora members usually take away or cash-back social remittances from their physical and virtual interactions and communications with family members and the

community living in Bangladesh. As a result, they get cash-back social remittances from the ancestral community while cash-in social remittances are to them.

Naturally, next-generation Bangladeshi diaspora primarily gets cash-back social remittances through social media because they physically interact with people of the origin country rarely. Interestingly and unnoticeably, the reality shows on music, dance, culinary art, and fashion in Bangladesh open up scopes for next-generation Bangladeshi diaspora's engagement with cultural diffusions from the ancestral community. Both direct participation and watching such programmes contribute cash-back of social remittances to them from the traditional society. An example of Cash-back of social remittances to next-generation Bangladeshi diaspora has presented in Box 6.1.1.

**Box 6.1.1: British Bangladeshi youth changing career and lifestyle from interaction with social media friends from Bangladesh**

A British Bangladeshi youth, unwilling to disclose the identity, who graduated from one of the leading business schools in the UK, has joined the culinary business of the family. The youth were introduced to same-aged youth from Bangladesh through social media. Bangladeshi youth was running an organic firm in Bangladesh. British Bangladeshi child conceived the organic farming idea and relevant knowledge from the Bangladeshi social media friend and own start-up business in the UK.

A British Bangladeshi girl, unwilling to disclose her identity, could not start her professional career due to restrictions from in-laws. At the same time, she aspired and guided one of her friends from Bangladesh to prepare for higher studies in the UK. Her Bangladeshi friend, in return, gradually motivated her and suggested some tips to pursue in-laws to move out from their strict position. British Bangladeshi girl succeeded to convince her in-laws using tips from Bangladeshi friends. As a result, they joined as an artisan in one of the leading fashion houses in the UK.

*Source: Discussion with the researchers*

## □ Troublesome and redress

Transferring social remittances is challenging due to political culture differences between host and origin countries and domestic political polarisation. Another tricky area is cultural differences between sending and receiving countries. Bangladeshi diaspora interlocutors informed that the Bangladeshi diaspora community, especially next-generation ones, face difficulties connecting with their ancestral families due to socio-cultural differences. Neither community of origin country welcomes social attributes from people of exact origin but practices different normative structures and systems of practice and vice-versa in case of the new generation of Bangladeshi diaspora when they are in the receiving end. Both inbound and outbound social remittances are somewhat toxic due to some negative aspects of politicisation and localism. However, political connection with the origin country and local fellow feeling usually provides ultra-edge to build up, strengthen, and flourish networking among the diaspora in the host and the origin communities in the migration arena. Bangladeshi diaspora interlocutors and concerned government agencies need an institutional platform at the local level in the origin country for facilitating and overseeing the transfer of social remittances to their ancestral families. Bangladeshi diaspora interlocutors think such an institutional platform will allow the diaspora population to reach out to their ancestral community for remitting social remittances.

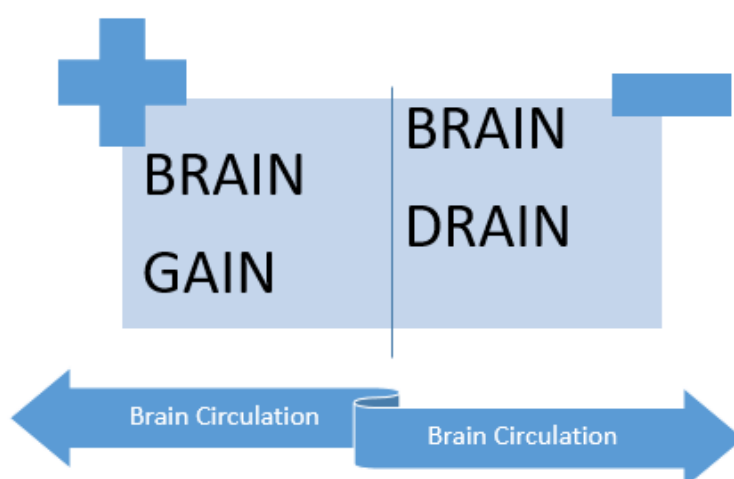
## 6.2 Knowledge and Skills Sharing: An Intellectual Tribute

Human resources, mainly trade-based professionals, are essential to ensure smooth take-off for national development. Developing countries like Bangladesh faces some obstacles in their development voyage due to lack of skilled professionals. Bangladesh does produce qualified professionals. Many professionals move out of the homeland for higher studies and get settled permanently overseas to secure-solvent-stable life for their own and family.

### Global experiences

In their study, Meyer and Brown (1999) show that Singapore, Korea, India, and China, due to their structural and institutional readiness, enabled them to absorb and utilise their diaspora's skills through research, technical, and industrial networks governments have gradually built. Over 1,000 Indian scientists working abroad have returned to India between 2014 and 2017 because they found the Indian environment promisingly developing for scientific research (The Hindu, 2017). Besides, they want to contribute to their ancestral land. The Department of Science and Technology (DST) of India has rolled out a faculty scheme titled Visiting Advanced Joint Research (VAJRA) to attract Non-Resident Indian (NRI) scientists from abroad to provide them with the opportunity to conduct research in India (The Hindu, 2017). India officially introduced policies to attract returning diaspora to the ICT sector, particularly in the software industry. India, which has experienced formidable brain gain due to the Indian diaspora, feels a longing of their ancestral culture. There are currently better economic opportunities in India (Karpilo, 2020). Chinese highly skilled diaspora members have demonstrated growing flows of business and trade knowledge and financial investments as exhibited by the increasing number of businesses and companies set up or financed by overseas Chinese businessmen (Zweig, Chung and Donglin, 2008). China has also established special zones where members of the returnee can get assistance in setting up a business venture, tax waiver in the high-tech industry, and tax-free import of materials. Besides, Taiwan built a science park targeting diaspora (Ahmed, 2019). Taiwan also offers incentives (including outright monetary grants, discounted airfares, subsidised housing, subsidised education for their children, priority access in government institutions) to Harvard or MIT educated professionals to motivate them to return home (Khan, 2021). Lithuania has undertaken a programme offering professional fellowship to young professionals from their overseas diaspora community to engage in strategic governmental projects and contribute to the high-level decision-making process. Korean diaspora professionals usually return home after a certain period to be involved in the origin country's professions.

Diagram 6.2.1: Diaspora's knowledge and skills articulation: Drain-Gain-Circulation



Source: Developed by the authors

### □ Brain drain-gain-circulation

In this study, Brain-drain is coined as young professionals and tertiary level educated students migrating and permanently settling abroad. Furthermore, brain-gain refers to knowledge and skills transfer from diaspora professionals to the origin country. Moreover, brain-circulation denotes to tertiary level educated students and young professionals' migrating to developed countries for higher studies and on-the-job training to improve knowledge and skill and apply them in the national development of the origin country.

#### □ Brain drain

Brain drain (or human capital flight) is the large-scale emigration of many individuals with technical skills or knowledge (Barkat, Osman and Gupta, 2014). The brain drain refers to the migration of educated, skilled, professional, talented individuals migrating overseas for economic and social security and recognition in migration affairs. Brain drain refers to both economic cost and intellectual loss of the country of origin. Such knowledgeable, skilled, talented, professional individuals usually take the investment and input (tangible or intangible) from home to abroad (government, society, and family) with them. According to Niimi, Ozden and Schiff (2008), expatriates with tertiary education reduce total and per capita remittances. Brain drain squeezes national growth by creating a vacuum of knowledge and skills in healthcare, science, and technology. The intellectual and skilled professional permanently migrated abroad. The emigration of intellectual and skilled professionals stunned key driving fields of development. It brought economic, social, and political loss to the origin country.

The drain of brains from Bangladesh happens primarily through channels of higher studies abroad. Bangladeshi students at the tertiary level are attracted by funded higher studies (post-graduation, doctorate, post-doctorate) abroad (scholarship or financial aid). A study conducted by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (2017) suggested that 90 students leave Bangladesh every day to pursue graduation or higher education abroad. Most of them never return, considering secure and solvent better life in the destined countries (Hasnat, 2018). UNESCO report of 2017 also showed that more than thirty thousand Bangladeshi students went abroad consecutively in 2015 and 2016 (Hasnat, 2018). Another study report published by UNESCO confirmed that more than sixty thousand Bangladeshi students enrolled in tertiary studies abroad in 2017 (Rabbani and Kyunghak, 2020). Besides, those who can afford the funding for higher studies of their own do not hesitate to migrate abroad with the target of pursuing higher studies followed by settling down in the destination country. Bangladeshi tertiary level students are attracted to developed countries for higher education, followed by settling permanently due to exposure to research funding, the scope of scientific exploration, technological innovation and secure career path. They hardly want to continue higher studies at home due to political unrest, corruption, faculties' rivalry and lack of good governance at the educational institutions. Job placement and underpaid wages also concern Bangladeshi tertiary level students. For example, Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) alumni inform that many engineers who graduate from the BUET could not find a suitable job here in the country. They choose "Plan B" of migrating abroad for career and life. Professionals are also migrating permanently from Bangladesh along with graduate students.

Diaspora interlocutors and BUET alumni informed that many IT professionals (Software engineers, programmers, data analysts) move out of the country because the ICT sector in Bangladesh remains less robust than the neighbouring Asian rivals. They see more significant and better opportunities in the developed countries, which becoming their ultimate choice. The frequent migration of IT professionals is hurting Bangladesh gradually and deeply because they are essential to cope with the challenges of the global fourth industrial revolution.

#### **Box 6.2.1: A diagnostic examination of brain drain in Bangladesh: Case of BUET**

Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) is the leading academic institute in Bangladesh. BUET is the perfect case for brain drain- knowledge and skill loss of Bangladesh. Every year around 1100



students is admitted to the 12 departments of the university. The majority of graduates from leading departments regularly migrate abroad for higher education to settle overseas permanently. Discussions with BUET alumni confirmed that a better livelihood than the origin country is the main triggering factor for Buetians' permanent migration to foreign countries where they initially went for higher studies.

Why do BUET graduates prefer to settle abroad? The response is typical for all developing countries, particularly for South Asian countries. That is a secure-solvent-progressive future for self and family. Former BUET alumni argued that there is hardly any appropriate job scopes for CSE graduates in Bangladesh. The ICT sector started to develop but did not flourish much. Only a few could have the opportunity to become university teachers. Still, others seek opportunities elsewhere and primarily outside of the country.

Permanently settling abroad also depend on the scopes (rules and regulation) of immigration in the destination country. In many countries, the immigration rules are strict and complex, which takes more than 8 to 10 years to become a permanent resident. In contrast, those who went to the North American countries-the United States of America (USA) and Canada do not return home because settling in those countries is relatively effortless. They find recognition, socio-economic security and scopes for prosperity. In contrast, it is not easy to become a resident in Europe, and most Europe bound BUET graduates usually return home or move to North America after completing their higher education. However, migrating from European countries (using as transit point) to North American countries is also a trend after completing the masters, MPhil and PhD.

The discussion revealed that from the top six departments of BUET, each year in recent times, around 500 to 700 students graduate, and eventually, 60 to 80 per cent of them settle in abroad.

The trend of intention to home return increased but not on a significant scale. Home return intention comparatively increased more among the civil engineering (CE) and electrical and electric engineering (EEE) graduate expatriates due to the opening of mega development projects in Bangladesh. In addition, overall wages increased. CE and EEE graduates also find scopes of consultancy with development projects in Bangladesh.

Discussion with BUET alumni also revealed that former Buetians maintain a close relationship with the respective department and university alumni association at home and abroad. In addition, BUET alumni expatriates try to visit the country during the annual alumni get together.

*Source: Discussion with the BUET alumni members*

Medical professionals (doctors, nurses) are another group along with engineers, who are permanently migrating from Bangladesh, creating a vacuum in the healthcare sector. However, due to international accreditation issues with the MBBS degree demotivates the physicians from migrating abroad. In discussion with the first-generation diaspora, members revealed that they are frustrated by their inability to find a decent job after graduation due to nepotism and corruption. They also informed that there were minimal job opportunities in the private sector and that wages and other benefits were not regulated and scanty.

Graduates from engineering and medical schools in Bangladesh, in particular, do not receive adequate funding for research. The research fund at all public universities in Bangladesh is indigent, and there is hardly any funding at private universities. For example, the University of Dhaka, known as Oxford of East, fails to develop financing and opportunities for research to graduates and faculties of disciplines like physics, mathematics, and biology (Abdullah and Hussain, 2014). Diaspora interlocutors expressed their keen interest in contributing their knowledge, skills, and finance to Bangladesh's scientific and social research. At the same time, they want the government involvement and a concrete platform.

Engineering and Medical alumni from Bangladesh, both living in Bangladesh and in diaspora abroad, suggest that Bangladesh needs to work first to sojourn brain drain by improving the quality of education (curriculum, environment, research, funding). It also requires establishing of a transparent and proper job placement system with adjusted benefits.



### □ Brain gain

The perspective of brain drain in connection to the expatriate community (including diaspora) is gradually shifting, with brain gain taking over the spotlight. Brain gain is also referred to as brain exchange, which is a two-way flow of highly skilled individuals between a sending and receiving country (Torres and Wittchen, 2014). Diaspora populations who have gained knowledge and skills in host countries have proven to be potential assets which could be resourceful for their origin countries. Diaspora investment and business venture create scope to remit their acquired human capital to the origin country, in the process, thereby turning brain drain into brain gain. Diaspora investors and entrepreneurs also serve as transnational knowledge linkages, contributing to technology diffusion and production know-how from individuals in the origin country to those in the host country (International Development Group, 2015).

Each year, the number of highly trained or qualified people migrating from Bangladesh is increasing gradually. From one perspective, this trend exhibits a growing concern of losing much-needed human capital. However, from the other viewpoint, it also paved the way for utilising their more sophisticated (acquired in receiving country) knowledge by developing the home economy and society by providing a positive atmosphere and incentives.

According to the US Embassy in Bangladesh, Bangladesh is one of the fastest-growing countries (ranked 17<sup>th</sup> in 2019-20 and 20<sup>th</sup> in 2018-19) of origin for international students (8,838 students in 2019-20) in the United States (US Embassy in Bangladesh, 2020). Notably, among these students, 64 per cent of these students were enrolled in graduate level. Some students emigrate to developed countries right after graduation. In contrast, others work for a couple of years before making the permanent shift. Therefore, from the first perspective, such flow of students will turn out as a brain drain for Bangladesh, especially given that a recent study World Economic Forum revealed that 82 per cent of those aged 15-29 have no intention to live in Bangladesh, and instead want to migrate permanently (Khan, 2021). The emigration of skilled professionals from Bangladesh is getting more popular gradually.

Bangladesh hitherto formulates a specialised policy for stimulating brain gain. Bangladesh offers dual citizenship to those who do not want to lose their foreign passport (Rashid, 2020). Nonetheless, apart from the dual-citizenship initiative, it has not undertaken any specialised programme to stimulate the permanent return of diaspora professionals. Only some initiatives are noticed in the private sector, particularly in private academia, but that is also not smooth ground due to accreditation of educational qualification (Ahmed, 2019). University Grants Commission (UGC) is not offering any special treatment (recognition, facilitation) to Bangladeshi origin academicians return and re-engagement in the teaching and research at private and public academia.

However, some evidence suggests that the reverse migration of such skilled professionals is also gaining momentum in Bangladesh. Some Bangladeshi Americans have returned to Bangladesh and introduced several business start-ups, entrepreneurship, and business models. Some examples of Bangladeshi Americans are presented in Box 6.2.2.

#### **Box 6.2.2: Few brain-gain examples of Bangladeshi Americans**

**Syed Almas Kabir**<sup>57</sup>, Chief Executive Officer of MetroNet Bangladesh Limited. After completing his HSC from Notre Dame College, Dhaka, Mr Kabir pursued his graduation from Jadavpur University, India (Electrical Engineering) and MS from New York University's Polytechnic School of Engineering, USA. After 1992, he joined Radio Shack's After Sales Service department as a "Tandy Certified Computer Sales Specialist". He managed the tri-state region of New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut. Since coming back to Bangladesh (in 1994), Syed Almas Kabir has worked for different universities in Bangladesh (e.g., IUB, NSU, City University, National University), with various capacities (e.g., Assistant professor, Register in-charge, Vice President Director). Following that, he consolidated MetroNet, one of the most prominent IT companies offering Intranet, IP Telephony, and other IT Enabled Services, to a new standard in the last decade. Syed Almas Kabir is actively involved with many different social and professional bodies like the Bangladesh Association of Software and Information Services (BASIS), Internet Service Providers Association of Bangladesh (ISPAB).

**Naveed Mahbub**<sup>58</sup> is an engineer/comedian who left Bangladesh after completing a BSc degree from BUET to attain higher education at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, USA. He served for Ford & Qualcomm USA and was the CEO of IBM & Nokia Siemens Networks Bangladesh for 13 years. Later on, with his acquired professional capacity and passion for comedy, he founded the country's first comedy club, Naveed's Comedy Club, in 2010. He has also worked as a newspaper columnist and hosts different TV shows in Bangladesh.

**Kamal S. Quadir**<sup>59</sup> has introduced e-commerce in Bangladesh by founding CellBazaar. At present, Quadir is heading the company bKash, the world's second-largest and fastest-growing mobile financial services company, with his acquired knowledge and skill from MIT Sloan School of Management and international business exposures.

**Nusrat Aman**<sup>60</sup> attended her education from S Clark University, Institute of Business Administration (Dhaka University), and Harvard University. Following her graduation in Biology & Psychology and Neuroscience, she has worked at different health facilities in the USA like Massachusetts General Hospital, the Institute of Child and Mother Health. She is currently working as the Chief Patron and the CEO of Ayat Education, including institutes like the College of Nursing & Health Sciences and Skill Development Center. In addition, she is actively involved in promoting training and development programmes to increase employability among the Bangladesh youth population.

## □ Brain circulation

The migration flow of scientists, engineers, doctors and IT experts from developing to developed countries is considered as entirely hurtful for the origin countries. Such migration considers as brain loss by national development planners of the source countries. However, consider brain retention when these professionals return or are engaged in the origin country's national endeavours. Brain loss and retention are marked negative by either sending (origin) or receiving (host) countries. In this context, brain circulation of international students, professionals and other skilled workers mobility benefited origin countries (Friesen, 2014) and host countries (Oosterik, 2016). In their study, Lee and Kim (2010) tried to explain Korean students' migration to the USA for higher studies followed by on-the-job training for a particular term before returning home as professionals and joining a job in their origin country as an example of brain circulation. A clear understanding of the high-skilled labour flows involving brain retention, brain gain, brain circulation and brain linkages is needed to optimise the benefit of highly skilled professionals (Mortuza, 2019). Brain circulation focuses on the mutual benefits of an individual's knowledge and skills to the origin and host countries. Brain circulation refers to the

<sup>57</sup> American Alumni Association.(2021). Executive Council 2018-20. Available At- <https://aaa.net.bd/executive-council-2018-2020/> (Retrieved on May 4, 2021)

<sup>58</sup> People Pill. Naveed Mahbub. Available at- <https://peoplepill.com/people/naveed-mahbub?fbclid=IwAR2S7h5-WIAjTFVq862WArefwUey9pndTJw62GqzsinITl4TbNrhGpjGLYk> (Retrieved on May 2, 2021)

<sup>59</sup> People Pill. Kamal S. Quadir. Available at- <https://peoplepill.com/people/kamal-quadir> (Retrieved on May 1, 2021)

<sup>60</sup> American Alumni Association.(2021). Executive Council 2018-20. Available At- <https://aaa.net.bd/executive-council-2018-2020/> (Retrieved on May 4, 2021)

gradual development of knowledge and skills of an individual through sharing (exchange and transferring). Box 6.6.3 presents a model case of the Bangladeshi diaspora's brain circulation.

#### **Box 6.2.3 Bibi Russel, circulating knowledge of fashion from Dhaka to London to Dhaka**

Bibi Russel is a renowned model and fashion designer of Bangladeshi origin. She was born and brought up in Bangladesh. She went to Europe to pursue study on fashion with knowledge of Bangladeshi tradition. She incorporated Bangladeshi tradition with the western school of fashion. Bibi has successfully taken "gamcha" to unbelievable heights. Even a film star like Antonio Banderas flaunts it at a red-carpet event. People in fashion cities like London, Paris, and Spain adore her gamcha accessories, scarves, bags, and even masks (The Daily Star, 2021). She is directly transmitting her advanced knowledge to Bangladesh to train emerging fashion designers and entrepreneurs of Bangladesh. She is now working on artisans and crafts to etch a name for Bangladesh in the international fashion scene. In a recent initiative of the British Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce (BBCC) to develop young entrepreneurship in Bangladesh, she mentored to guide those aspirant young rural entrepreneurs from Sylhet.

*Source: Key Informant Interviews with diaspora association and Secondary Document Review (namely, Newspaper clipping)*

#### **□ Troublesome and redress**

Bangladeshi diaspora professionals of the first generation have expressed their keen interest in permanently returning home. They desire to contribute to the national development of Bangladesh through their knowledge and skills. However, instances of fraud and security concerns demotivate them from returning home to do something for their origin country.

In the era of globalisation, an internationally educated person becomes a global citizen, and s/he expects to contribute to other communities with her/his community. In this context, the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) needs to focus on mapping ways of engaging Bangladeshi diaspora professionals in national development endeavours. Considering the importance and attraction of higher studies and working as global professionals, brain drain is not entirely preventable. Bangladeshi diaspora members and former Bangladeshi ambassadors suggested focusing on brain gain by engaging Bangladeshi diaspora professionals contractually or permanently. Diaspora professionals could not be attracted unless improving (including reformation in some areas) sectors like infrastructure, education, finance, and the environment (Rashid, 2020). Bangladesh also needs to address the accreditation of educational, professional certifications, accountability and transparency in the development sector to aspire Bangladeshi diaspora professionals to engage in specialised roles in the national development programme. Courtesy of the COVID-19 Pandemic, like other countries, Bangladesh realised the diverse roles of the online platform. A couple of Bangladeshi diaspora associations suggested developing an online-based professional network to link diaspora professionals with professionals and institutions in Bangladesh. It will enable them in transferring knowledge and skills transfer, which will contribute to national development. The Economic Relations Divisions, Ministry of Finance took some initiatives to uphold the concept of diaspora networks in strengthening bilateral economic relations, including sharing knowledge through training and workshops. They also initiated a website<sup>61</sup> titled "Knowledge for Development Management (K4DM) " to gather project proposals from the diaspora. However, it did not work as an effective tool for networking.

Meanwhile, next-generation Bangladeshi diaspora members do not have much motivation as the first-generation due to less emotional attachment. They are more assimilated into the host country, which is their first home. First-generation Bangladeshi diaspora informed that like Lithuania's professional fellowship to young professionals from Lithuanian diaspora, Bangladesh could launch a similar endeavour targeting next-generation Bangladeshi diaspora.

<sup>61</sup> The web-site can be accessed from <http://www.nrb.gov.bd/>

Informants from concerned government agencies suggested physically or virtually engaging skilled professionals and business professionals from the Bangladeshi diaspora community in the skill-development and business development training. Bangladeshi diaspora associations endorsed the idea and urged creating an institutional mechanism to provide a platform for diaspora professionals to share their knowledge and skills in Bangladesh.

### 6.3 Extending Hands: A Philanthropic Tribute

Diaspora members and their descendants retain meaningful personal and professional ties to their ancestral countries. These ties often translate into contributions of time and more tangible resources (Newland, 2004). Most diaspora members in utmost host countries worldwide predominantly contribute to origin countries by extending their hands through philanthropic activities. According to Timothy Pina, "*philanthropy is not about money, it's about feeling the pain of others and caring enough about their needs to help*" (Christensen, n.d.). The statement is duly justified through the actions of the diaspora community. Diaspora members raise their hands through charity, donation, sponsoring, aiding, lobbying, and advocating to support people of the exact origin living in the origin countries and overseas. The diaspora population as individuals, groups, or communities privately or publicly donate to a wide range of causes in their origin countries. Diaspora philanthropy occurs at various levels and can take on different forms depending on the diaspora community and its relationship with the origin countries. Diaspora members do philanthropy through sending remittances as aid, donations to charity and social work, investing in short to long-term community development programs, emergency responses during and after disasters, and religious charities (Newland, Terrazas and Munster, 2010). Both financial and non-financial philanthropic support is measurable as a courtesy to the development of social auditing mechanisms. Social audit mechanisms could calculate the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and impacts of charitable works and suggestions.

#### □ Global experiences

Indian diaspora is one of the largest and oldest diaspora communities in the world. They do extensive and diverse philanthropic activities in the origin country and for the fellow ancestral people abroad. Ashish Dhawan, an Indian diaspora who established Ashoka University, India's first liberal arts university, raised funds from the Indian diaspora living in different corners of the world. He also runs a fellowship programme named Young India Fellowship for the Indian Students. A group of Indian diaspora formed the Hans Foundation in India to contribute to education, healthcare, livelihood and disability (Tandon, 2018). Indian diaspora from across the world come forward to help their origin country during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Indiaspora (2020) published a report titled "Indian Diaspora in Action: Tracking the Indian American Response to COVID-19". It details the actions of 58 non-profit organisations re-purposing their efforts in response to the Pandemic and illustrates the power of the Indian diaspora community. The report shows how the Indian diaspora is helping their origin community people living in the USA and India by providing food assistance, COVID-19 preventative personal safety kits to frontline healthcare workers, financial aid to healthcare centres, and education via e-learning. Indian American diaspora launched a website [chalogive.org](http://chalogive.org) (refers to let help), which collect USD 10 to USD 10,000 from diaspora members to give on-ground relief in India (Indiaspora, n.d.).

Diaspora of Chinese, Vietnamese, Laotian and Thai origin living in the USA formed the Hmong community to preserve and promote their ancestral culture and values (CAF America, 2018). This community organisation is helping the new generation of the diaspora to be oriented and connected with their ancestral culture.

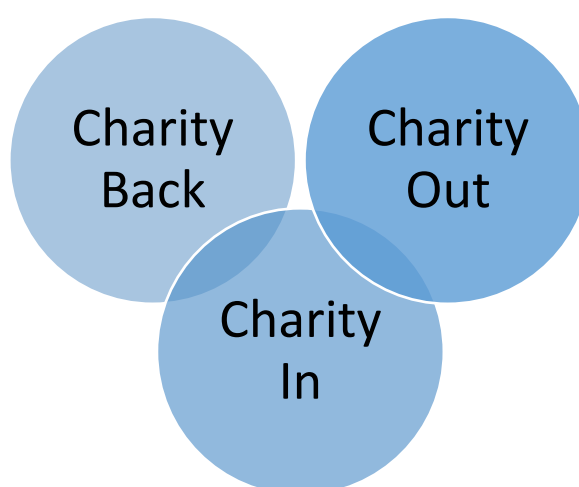
African diaspora formed a philanthropic network named *African Diaspora Philanthropic Advisor Network* to connect, educate, and elevate philanthropic advisors and consultants from the African

diaspora charged with guiding, influencing, or leading the philanthropic goals of individuals, families, and institutions globe (Moore Philanthropy, n.d.). African diaspora members (comprising all African nations) contribute USD 63 billion per year for education, home building, land purchases and farm improvements, all critical enablers of social transformation (Manlan, 2018). Somalian diaspora (part of the African diaspora) sends USD 1.4 billion to the origin country, the equivalent to 23 per cent of the country's GDP and higher than any amount of foreign aid (Manlan, 2018). According to Manlan (2018), if African diaspora redirected USD 315 million or 0.5 per cent of their annual transfers to civil society organisations, the whole scenario of Africa would change. The African diaspora is also helping people from their origin countries who migrated to the host countries. For example, *African Bridge Network*, an African American diaspora organisation, provided professional support (professional mentorship, career advising, and networking opportunities to new arrivals) to Africans immigrating to the USA since 2010 (CAF America, 2018). A recent study of the Indiana University-Lilly Family School of Philanthropy (2020) shows The African Universities engage African diaspora members. It benefits these academies with financial (development assistance, research fund) and non-financial resources (expertise, experiences, mentoring, network).

#### □ **Charity in-out-back**

In this study, Charity-in denotes diaspora gave-way/donation for people of Bangladesh. Charity-out considers as the process of utilisation of charity-in. Charity-back refers to acknowledgement received by diaspora members for Charity-in for Bangladesh and charities they received from Bangladesh in any form.

Diagram 6.3.1: Diaspora's charity articulation: In-Back-Out



#### □ **Charity-in**

Discussions with Bangladeshi diaspora interlocutors and former Bangladeshi ambassadors confirmed that Bangladeshi diaspora members extend their hands to help individually and collectively their left-behind families and communities at home. The Organisational form of the philanthropic activities conducted by the Bangladeshi diaspora for Bangladesh appears robust on many occasions. For instance, twelve Bangladeshi diaspora organisations based in the USA launched a United Bangladesh Appeal program to raise funds to support the Sidr affected people of Bangladesh in 2007 (Chowdhury, 2017). The program contributed more than USD 300,000 to relief efforts in Bangladesh. Another example of Bangladeshi diaspora's charity-in at individual level is Professor Abul Hussam's donation of USD 1 million to produce SONO Filters for arsenic affected rural people in Bangladesh, which he received for the invention of SONO Filter (Chowdhury, 2017). The Friends of Bangladesh, UK (FOB), established in 1981, is a registered charity that seeks to promote self-reliance through various projects amongst poor and underprivileged people, especially in Bangladesh. It also contributes money directly to the victims and through Bangladesh High Commission in London. In addition to the intervention for

poverty alleviation, the organisation has projects dedicated to medical services (at a village of the Noakhali district of Bangladesh) for orphan children and community members, a school for street children (at a village of Munshiganj district), scholarships for students, and women health services (forthcoming) for Breast Cancer Awareness and diagnostic. However, apart from the organisational arrangement, many charities take a personal form. For example, a 100-year-old British Bangladeshi man named Dabirul Islam Choudhury raised £420,000 for coronavirus charities. In the Holy Month of Ramadan, he raised the sum by walking 970 laps of his 80 m garden in East London. Around a quarter of the sum was donated to the NHS (National Health Service) for the local community's wellbeing. The rest were distributed to victims of the coronavirus in the UK, Bangladesh, and worldwide among 52 countries. The DIA gives Bangladesh Alliance (DGB) is the Bangladeshi diaspora chapter of the Diaspora Investment Alliance (DIA) which designed philanthropic initiatives to engage with the Bangladesh diaspora and provide them with an easy, safe, and effective model to give back to Bangladesh (CAF America, n.d.). DGB mobilised Bangladeshi diaspora members to support financial and human capital to address socio-economic challenges induced by various reasons (social, economic, political, and environmental) faced by Bangladeshi people. DGB aims to empower the Bangladeshi diaspora to tax-effectively channel philanthropic capital to their country of origin in beneficial ways for sustainable development (CAF America, n.d.).

Bangladeshi diaspora's philanthropic activities mostly remain unnoticed because Charity-in happens commonly in the informal channels. British Bangladeshi diaspora members informed that they built roads and canals at their ancestral villages with their own raised funds in a discussion. Though local government agencies are aware of it, the Government of Bangladesh. (GoB) has yet to recognise it. In another discussion with the British Bangladeshi diaspora members, discussants reported that they send aid to poor people from their ancestral villages during natural disasters such as floods and festive occasions like Eid. However, most charities by the British Bangladeshi diaspora members remain undocumented. A Bangladeshi diaspora community member residing in central London opined that a considerable amount of money is collected and donated by the Bangladeshi UK Diaspora community from a religious orientation (like zakat). He suggested that though the Diaspora community is donating money from the religious sentiment that money is not going to the most vulnerable Muslim community (e.g., Syria, Palestine); instead, that money goes back to their homeland (Bangladesh).

Examples of Bangladeshi diaspora members' Charity-in mentioned above are mainly from the first-generation of the Bangladeshi diaspora. First-generation Bangladeshi diaspora will continue their charities for Bangladesh until their last breath due to their intense emotional attachment with the ancestral land. What will happen next in term of the potentiality for next-generation Bangladesh diaspora Charity-in? First-generation Bangladeshi diaspora members stated in the discussion that next-generation Bangladeshi diaspora members are interested in involving in philanthropic works. However, they are pragmatic and want to see the real and visible impact of charity give way. Next-generation Bangladeshi diaspora likes to Charity-in through formal channels and looking forward to smooth, transparent and accountable use for the targeted causes. A group of Key Informants opine that MoEWOE may initiate a charitable fund for the expatriates' welfare, particularly the distressed ones. If the fund can ensure transparency backed by adequate and effective promotional activities, it could attract diaspora donations.

A Mexican programme entitled "*Programa Tres por Uno*" (Three for One Programme) attempts to harness and prioritise efforts by the organised diaspora community. The basic idea is that members of the Mexican diaspora send "community remittances" to the places they came from for investment in local public sector projects such as roads, schools, hospitals, potable water, sewage, the electrical grid, or other public spaces and objects. Also, matching public funds add to that donation. It has attracted considerable attention from the diaspora. Other governments and/or expatriate communities already implementing or considering variants of this programme include El Salvador, the Philippines, Peru, Colombia, and Ecuador. Bangladesh's government can also take such an initiative



for community development through a clearly defined, accountable, and transparent mechanism (Barkat, Osman, and Gupta, 2014).

#### □ Charity-out

Bangladeshi diaspora members' charities are managed mainly by their left behind and extended families at home. Diaspora charities are formally used only when funds are transferred directly to any local foundation formed by diaspora members or donated directly to formal Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in Bangladesh. For example, *Mati*, a registered Non-Government Organisation (NGO) based in Mymensingh, formed by a German Bangladeshi charity-out, and received charity from Germany and other European countries to help marginalised and deprived people Mymensingh and Jamalpur districts of Bangladesh. *Mati* also facilitates international volunteers from the Bangladeshi diaspora and European Origin. They seasonally come to Bangladesh and are voluntarily involved in social activities in Bangladesh. Discussions with a couple of veteran journalists revealed that Madrassas in rural Bangladesh are the prime receivers of Bangladeshi diaspora's charities and charity-out organisations. Madrassas and mosques received regular and seasonal charities from the Bangladeshi diaspora. Madrassas use the charity funds they receive to run residential academic programmes. Another charity-out platform is a donation to political parties' funds (both at the local and national levels), which is controversial but factual. Often, diaspora members themselves do both Charity-In and Charity-out. For example, A Bangladeshi origin American Professor visits his ancestral village every year with a charitable fund that he distributes among the dependents from family and community. He also conducted self-funded research on stranded Muslim Rakhines (commonly known as Rohingya) from Myanmar in 2019 to mobilise global diplomatic support and international humanitarian aid.

Discussions with diaspora interlocutors suggested that first-generation Bangladeshi diaspora, due to their sentiment not much rigid about charity-out process and charity misplace or misuse. However, the next generation of Bangladeshi diaspora prefers to donate to Bangladesh through regulated channels and platforms.. Next-generation Bangladeshi diaspora members are less interested in religious and political charities. Next-generation diaspora members informed in the discussion that they are interested in charities for Bangladesh to promote education, healthcare, and building resilience against climate change, including supporting victims of natural disasters.

#### □ Charity-back

Charity-back is not common in diaspora philanthropy discourse but evidential. Discussions with the first-generation diaspora confirmed that, whether formally or informally, their philanthropic contribution is appreciated by the receivers and concerned people, which is their takeaway or Charity-back to them. For example, discussions with Australian Bangladeshi diaspora members revealed that those victims of the bushfire crisis received aid from Bangladesh. A conversation with a couple of Italian Bangladeshis revealed that after charities for the deadly earthquake in 2016, Bangladeshis sent charities to relatives living in Italy, demonstrating charity-back.

The concept of donation also changed globally. Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) become non-profit organisations. NGO's charity business changed to social enterprise. Diaspora contributors of NGOs now receive social and economic profits (Charity-back), which they could Charity-in for other causes or people.

Globalisation opens up a new window for Charity-back, especially when new-generation Bangladeshi diaspora involving in philanthropic activities. A German-based Bangladeshi researcher and a Bangladeshi origin journalist working at Deutsche Welle (DW) spotlighted social media by youth from Bangladesh and Bangladeshi origin living abroad jointly raising funds for global causes supporting conflict and natural disaster-affected people residing in different corners of the world. They also have Charity-back from international friends to Charity-in for global appeal when they organise charity-raising programmes for the origin country.



#### □ Troublesome and redress

According to the Bangladeshi diaspora interlocutors, Bangladeshi diaspora members are discouraged from extending their hands due to unfortunate events like fraud with funds and politicisation. Diaspora interlocutors suggested that Bangladesh's key ministries, namely the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Social Welfare, Ministry of Youth and Sports, Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, jointly could develop a diaspora philanthropy fund to ensure smooth Charity-in from Bangladeshi diaspora members living across the world and institutionalised Charity-out for the targeted cause (s) like the development of education, healthcare, rural livelihood. Such funds also would contribute to the Charity-back to diaspora contributors through institutional recognition to their extended hands. Besides, the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) could consider developing a partnership with NGOs to look after philanthropic ventures using specialised funds created for receiving contributions from the diaspora community (Siddiqui, 2021a). GoB also could involve members from Bangladeshi diaspora associations in the management committee for such a fund. A couple of Bangladeshi diaspora associations suggested creating a specialised fund by the concerned government agency to attract donations from the Bangladeshi diaspora communities in different countries. They want such funds to use for the welfare of the Bangladeshi labour expatriates and their families' interest. They particularly mention that such a fund could be worthwhile to manage burials of deceased expatriates and help their destitute families.

## Chapter 7

# Conclusion and Recommendations

**T**he whole-of-government approach ensures horizontal and vertical policy coherence across all sectors and levels of government. A broad multi-stakeholder engagement through a whole-of-society approach is crucial to ensure the active inclusion of Bangladeshi expatriates in national development (Barkat, Osman, Ahmed, 2020).

Governments in both the host and country of origin, as well as other actors must look beyond immediate benefits. Policies and programmatic initiatives must guarantee that the diaspora is not categorised as a single, homogeneous group but rather that the needs of different generations, genders, socioeconomic backgrounds, and other factors are taken into account. Governments must also have more effective plans and ambitions and pursue longer-term planning for diaspora participation (Ahmed, 2021).

It requires to include diaspora in its development planning. The highest level authority must drive the implementation of proposed interventions. The impetus and overall guidance should come from the Honourable Prime Minister's Office (PMO) to showcase the highest level commitment of the Government to the diaspora communities.

To harness the Bangladeshi diaspora potentials for national development, it requires to follow the 5-R approach—*Recognition, Respect, Rights, Return and Re-integration*, and *Resources (financial and human)* in the national policies and strategies. The first 4-Rs (*Recognition, Respect, Rights, and Return and Re-integration*) are the responsibilities of the Government and other relevant stakeholders in Bangladesh to ensure the 5<sup>th</sup> "R" (*Resources—financial and human*) of the diaspora members towards the country's development. According to Barkat, Osman, and Gupta, 2014, it requires re-defining the diaspora in categories at the initial stage. It needs to consider the patterns and nature of migration, the behaviour of Bangladeshi migrants, and that of people of Bangladeshi descent born overseas and the characteristics of resource-mobilisation in Bangladesh.

Also, the process cannot bring substantial without sound knowledge about the diaspora communities— *who they are, where they live, their skills, capacity, interest, and category*. Also, institutional partnerships with the diaspora networks remain a critical issue to tap into the potentials.

It requires a formal institutional mechanism to ensure the diaspora's active participation in the country's policymaking process to reconstruct their ownership of its development. A well-coordinated longer-term strategic vision providing formal recognition will create a firm footing of successful diaspora-inclusion in the country's development.

To foster constructive diaspora consequences for Bangladesh's development, systematic and synergistic policy initiatives would be crucial. To achieve better results, it demands mobilisation and coordination among efforts and resources of various stakeholders. Also, it requires a strong commitment from the government and the Local Government Institutions (LGIs) to establish a congenial environment with adequate security. Such efforts will create an ecosystem with trust, which will mobilise the diaspora.

This research does not recommend creating a new organisation to deal with the diaspora issue. As mentioned earlier in this report, there is an "Interministerial Steering Committee on Overseas Employment (IMSCOE)" led by the Honourable Prime Minister. Also, there is a multi-stakeholder forum—"National Forum on Migration and Development" to ensure civil society members'

participation. The Bangladesh Migration Governance Framework 2020 (Barkat, Osman, Ahmed, 2020) suggested creating (or renaming the IMSCOE with a revised mandate) "Interministerial Steering Committee Steering Committee on Migration and Development (IMSCM&D)" with a mandate to cover the diaspora issue. Hence, the proposed IMSCM&D would be responsible as the highest level of authority for policy guidance and coordination and follow-up, covering all aspects of migration. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) and the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment (MoEWOE) — would act as the key agencies of the proposed IMSCM&D.

A "*Diaspora Engagement Strategy*" (including a re-integration mechanism) could play a pivotal role in embarking on the pathway to include Bangladeshi diaspora in national development. The proposed IMSCM&D could assign a relevant agency to develop this strategy, backed by systematic research. Through a consultative process, the Diaspora Engagement Strategy should define the diaspora by categories of generations. In addition, it requires amendments in the "Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Policy 2016" to capture the various aspects of the diaspora, including the categorisation criteria.

The accompanying research recommends the following, shown in Table 7.1, preferably be addressed in the proposed Strategy. Proposed time frames are "Short-term: 1-2 years", "Medium-term: 3-5 years", and "Long-term: 6 to 10 years". Accordingly, Annual Development Programmes and national policy and planning documents need to accommodate the strategic programmes.

Table 7.1: Recommendations to ensure inclusion of diaspora in the national development

Sl.	Proposed plan of action	Key implementer	Partners	Time frame
<b>Area of intervention 1: Recognition</b>				
1.1	Organise an online platform to provide diaspora cards in line with the definitions by type of diaspora	MoEWOE	MoFA NIRW WEWB DAs Media	Medium-term
1.2	Establish a self-administered one-stop online platform for the diaspora members and diaspora organisations—which will act as a comprehensive database, communication and knowledge-sharing platform.	A2i, PMO	MoFA BMET DPs Ros	Short-term
1.3	Conduct rigorous campaigns and sensitisation activities in the host countries by the Bangladesh Missions to ensure the diaspora members' and their organisations' registration at that online platform ( <i>In the first stage, the target could be the USA and UK</i> )	MoFA	MoEWOE DAs DPs Media	Medium-term
1.4	Ensure diaspora representation in developing the national policies, plans, strategies, and programmes ( <i>including Bangladeshi retiree professionals from the diaspora members in the advisory role to design and implementation of national-level policies, plans programmes</i> )	MoP	Concerned Ministries	Short to medium-term
1.5	Ensure diaspora representation in the civil society-led national policy and platforms (i.e., forum, committee)	CSOs	DAs DPs	Medium-term

Sl.	Proposed plan of action	Key implementer	Partners	Time frame
1.6	Prioritise diaspora agenda by the Parliamentarians' Caucus on Migration and Development	CSOs	BP DPs	Short-term
1.7	Diplomatic engagement with the Bangladeshi diasporic politicians from the host western countries to protect and promote the national interests of Bangladesh	MOFA	MoEWOE	Medium-term
<b>Area of intervention 2: Respect</b>				
2.1	Ensure smooth entries of the expatriates (diaspora and short-term migrant workers) at the immigration points. The new generation diaspora needs particular attention.	MoCAT	MoEWOE MoHA CSOs	Short-term
2.2	Engage notable Bangladeshi diaspora members as "Goodwill/Country Ambassadors" and proactive facilitation of the pertinent activities—to <i>promote the country image, establish the rights of the migrant workers, strengthen the soft diplomacy platform, and tap investment potentials</i>	A2i, PMO	MoFA MoEWOE DAs CSOs Media	Short to medium-term
2.3	Prepare a specific guideline to routinely recognise diaspora members/organisations regularly with award and salutation for their contribution ( <i>on economic, social and knowledge</i> )	A2i, PMO	MoFA MoEWOE BB BIDA DAs CSOs Media	Short-term
2.4	Establish and promote a cell on " <i>Diaspora Engagement Cell</i> " and initiate a one-stop service point with a hotline number for the diaspora regarding all welfare and rights-related issues and promote it accordingly	MoEWOE	WEWB MoFA DAs CSOs Media	Short-term
<b>Area of intervention 3: Rights</b>				
3.1	Streamlining the process of getting Dual Nationality Certificate	NIRW	MoFA MoHA	Medium-term
3.2	Ensure voting rights of the Bangladeshi diaspora	BEC	MoFA	Long-term
<b>Area of intervention 4: Return and Re-integration</b>				
4.1	Mapping the existing and probable crises applicable to the Bangladeshi diaspora members by country and region and forming " <i>Crisis Management Committee</i> " in key host countries ensuring selected diaspora associations' proactive participation	MoFA	MoEWOE DAs RO DPs	Short-term
4.2	Engage diaspora communities for providing inputs for return and reintegration policy, backed by an extensive research	MoP	Das ROs CSOs	Medium-term
4.3	Establish an institutional system for accreditation of the skills training certificates	NSDA	MoE UGC BMET	Medium-term

Sl.	Proposed plan of action	Key implementer	Partners	Time frame
4.4	As part of the reintegration process, accommodate diaspora investors with need-based arrangements	BIDA	MoC BEZA BHTPA MoEWOE	Medium to long-term
<b>Area of intervention 5: Boosting financial accessibility</b>				
5.1	Preparing an action plan for promoting the financial market investment opportunities and remittance channels for the diaspora ( <i>A pilot in two / three selected host countries will be helpful in the first phase</i> )	MoF	BB BAB- <i>Bangladesh Association of Banks</i> PKB MoFA MoEWOE DAs Media	Short to medium-term
5.2	Introducing financial products targeted to the diaspora and conducting necessary promotional activities	PKB	BB MoFA DAs Media	Medium-term
5.3	Initiating a one-stop service point with a hotline number for the diaspora regarding all banking issues and promoting the service	BB	MoFA DAs BAB Media	Short-term
5.4	To increase remittance flow through formal channels, promoting the opportunity to get CIP (Commercially Important Person) status through sending a certain amount of remittance	BB	MoFA MoEWOE DAs BAB Media	Short-term
<b>Area of intervention 6: Knowledge and skills remittance</b>				
6.1	Prepare an action plan to utilise the skilled/professional diaspora's knowledge and networks to develop the science and technological front of the country	MoST	MoE ICT Division BMET BASIS	Short-term
6.2	Organise short-course/programme/lecture of the diaspora members in educational institutes (including the Technical Training Centres) in their respective origin district when they visit their home country through launching a national programme for the diaspora	MoE	BMET LGI's DAs Media	Medium-term
6.3	Develop a fellowship programme to the members of the new generation diaspora	MoE	UGC DAs Media	Medium-term
6.4	Collaborating with diaspora organisations to facilitate labour (skilled and semi-skilled) and professional migration from Bangladesh	MoEWOE	DOs BOESL BAIRA CSOs	Medium-term
6.5	Involving the diaspora members to the relevant government mechanism (i.e., DEMO, TTC) in	MoEWOE	DEMO DAs	Medium-term

Sl.	Proposed plan of action	Key implementer	Partners	Time frame
	their respective origin district to facilitate safe labour migration		LGI's Media	
<b>Area of intervention 7: Country branding</b>				
7.1	In addition to observing the "International Migrants Day", a day needs to be declared a "Bangladeshi Probashi Divash" and celebrated worldwide through thematic events showcasing the beauties and prospects of the country, with the active participation of the diaspora members.	PMO	MoFA MoEWOE DAs CSOs DPs	Short-term
7.2	Stocktaking of the best practices of the Bangladesh Missions through a systematic review and establishing a mechanism to use the learning	MoFA	DOs ROs DPs Media	Medium-term
7.3	Develop a standard format of the website of the Bangladesh Missions with the necessary contents ensuring updating procedure, which can act as one-stop information dissemination and networking hub	A2i, PMO	MoFA MoEWOE DAs CSOs	Short-term
<b>Area of intervention 8: Support diaspora diplomacy</b>				
8.1	Design a social media engagement strategy to build a long-term relationship with the diaspora communities, in particular with the new generations	A2i, PMO	MoFA DAs CSOs Media	Short-term
8.2	Establish a well-coordinated longer-term diplomatic vision through capitalising on the skills and strengths of the good offices of the selected diaspora professional ( <i>Initiating formal partnership with the Bangladeshi diaspora business chambers will facilitate economic diplomacy</i> )	MoFA	MoEWOE MoC DAs Media	Medium-term
8.3	Organise a regular programme for the new generation of the diaspora in visiting Bangladesh, which will make the public diplomacy process sustainable ( <i>Targetting 5-6 cities of diaspora concentration in the first phase will be helpful</i> )	A2i, PMO	MoFA MoEWOE MoHA MoCA LGI's DAs Media	Medium-term
8.4	Set up a cell to incorporate Bangladeshi diaspora associations, Bangladeshi origin politicians and professionals to run advocacy groups in the host countries to do lobbying for the protection and promotion of national interests of Bangladesh	MoFA	MoEWOE	Medium-term
8.5	Organise networks of the Bangladeshi diaspora engaged in different fields to extract all possible inputs to manage pandemic time global politics an economy-related concerns of Bangladesh	MoFA	MoHFW	Short-term



Sl.	Proposed plan of action	Key implementer	Partners	Time frame
<b>Area of intervention 9: Fostering trade linkages</b>				
9.1	Conducting extensive market research to map the product needs ( <i>including mapping of the vital diaspora business chambers and personnel</i> ) across the countries and regions and financial feasibility in trading those products and facilitate the relevant export	MoC	DAs ROs DPs Bangladesh Accreditation Board	Medium-term
9.2	Organise educational and cultural exchange programmes targeting the next generation of the Bangladeshi diaspora	MoCA MoE	MoFA MoEWOE	Medium-term
9.3	Facilitate an Online Bazar of heritage products through connecting with international carrier services	a2i, PMO	MoC EPB	Medium-term
<b>Area of intervention 10: Promoting diaspora tourism</b>				
10.1	Backed by thorough market research, design attractive and economical tour packages targeting the different segments of the diaspora communities—nostalgia trip for the older generation, adventure trip for the younger generation, ethnic, nature and heritage trips for interested ones ( <i>As an initial condition, it requires information dissemination through the suitable media and strengthening tourist police</i> )	MoCAT	TOAB BPC BTB ROs DAs MoHA LGIs Media	Medium-term
10.2	Ensure community involvement to promote diaspora tourism. It requires sensitisation through the local governments and local community-based organisations.	MoCAT	BPC BTB TOAB CSOs LGI's Media	Medium-term
10.3	Establish a department in the National Archives on the genealogical data with exposure of online research and access to information of inheritance records	MoCA	MoFA	Long-term
10.4	Promote medical tourism, particularly in the dental health arena, and facilitate relevant technical skills exchange initiatives	MoHFW	BDS DAs Media	Medium-term
<b>Area of intervention 11: Facilitating investment</b>				
11.1	Strengthen the BIDA operations to provide one-stop services more efficiently, create a cell designed to facilitate the diaspora investment	BIDA	DOs MoC	Short-term
11.2	Initiate a dynamic " <i>Diaspora Investment Index</i> " to support the potential diaspora investors in taking informed decision	BIDA	ROs	Short-term
11.3	Approaching the diaspora to take part in developing the Special Economic Zones (SEZs) and facilitating their efforts	BEZA	MoF BIDA DAs BAs	Short to medium-term

Sl.	Proposed plan of action	Key implementer	Partners	Time frame
11.4	Organise "Business Summit" and/or "Investment Summit" in the critical host locations	MoF	BIDA MoC BEZA MoFA DAs BAs	Short-term
11.5	Approach the IT professionals among the diaspora communities to invest in the Bangladesh Hi-Tech Park Authority (BHTPA) and facilitate their efforts	BHTPA	MoF BIDA ICT Division BASIS	Short to medium-term
<b>Area of intervention 12: Social remittances</b>				
12.1	Organise and promote diaspora's social development role in Bangladesh (in particular— peace education, multicultural harmony, women-children-youth welfare)	MoF	MoLGRDC MoSW MoWCA MYS LGIs DAs CSOs Media	Medium-term
<b>Area of intervention 13: Philanthropy</b>				
13.1	Initiate and promote an " <i>Expatriate Development Fund</i> ", in which anyone, including the diaspora, could support welfare activities for the distressed expatriates and their families (both in host countries and Bangladesh)	WEWB	MoF MoFA MoEWOE	Short to medium-term
13.2	Promote diaspora-led infrastructural development initiatives through government matching grants	MoF	PMO MoLGRDC LGIs	Medium to long-term

**Abbreviations used**

a2i, PMO	Access to Information, Prime Minister's Office
BAB	Bangladesh Association of Banks
BAs	Business Associations (Bangladesh-based)
BASIS	Bangladesh Association of Software and Information Services
BB	Bangladesh Bank
BDS	Bangladesh Dental Society
BEC	Bangladesh Election Commission
BEZA	Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority
BHTPA	Bangladesh Hi-Tech Park Authority
BIDA	Bangladesh Investment Development Authority
BAIRA	Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agencies
BMET	Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training
BOESL	Bangladesh Overseas Employment and Services Limited
BP	Bangladesh Parliament
BPC	Bangladesh <i>Parjatan</i> Corporation
BTB	Bangladesh Tourism Board
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
DAs	Diaspora Associations
DEMO	District Employment and Manpower Office
DPs	Development Partners
EPB	Export Promotion Bureau
ICT Division	Information and Communication Technology Division

LGI's	Local Government Institutions
MoC	Ministry of Commerce
MoCA	Ministry of Cultural Affairs
MoCAT	Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoEWOE	Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MoHA	Ministry of Home Affairs
MoLGRDC	Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Co-operatives
MoP	Ministry of Planning
MoSW	Ministry of Social Welfare
MoWCA	Ministry of Women and Children Affairs
MYS	Ministry of Youth and Sports
NIRW	National Identity Registration Wing, Bangladesh Election Commission
NSDC	National Skills Development Authority
PKB	Probashi Kallyan Bank
PMO	Prime Minister's Office
ROs	Research Organisations
SEZ	Special Economic Zone
TOAB	Tour Operators Association of Bangladesh
UGC	University Grants Commission
WEWB	Wage Earners' Welfare Board

"Coordination" among the stakeholders will be the critical factor to achieve the goals. Besides, it requires the timely utilisation of resources and efforts from a holistic perspective. For example, suppose a Bangladeshi diaspora medical professional living in the USA, registered at the proposed professional diaspora's database, avails a package tour to his ancestral land with family, including his daughter—a second-generation diaspora. Then, the mechanism should enable him to get some opportunities to run a free medical camp in the village, provide support to foster a potential long-term institutional health partnership using the diaspora's expertise and network. The concerned authority also needs to provide all necessary information and promotional content to the second generation and request her to take a course in the local school during her vacation and avail an adventure trip to Sundarbans with her British friends.

Furthermore, one thing is vital to deal with the utmost care: the mechanism should be responsive. It should not instruct the diaspora to avail services from different providers, rather s/he will be able to avail the basic necessary information and services from one point. At least, there will be an institutional, systematic referral system facilitating the need and potentials of that diaspora.

The pertinent institutions should be well resourced and revitalised adequately. In addition, the implementation machinery needs to accommodate inclusive public monitoring and overseeing mechanisms to produce effective and sustainable results.

Though it seems a distinct subject, diaspora should not be treated as isolated to society-state-global politics. No intervention will create substantial results unless and until there is a firm political commitment. Members of the Bangladeshi diaspora can contribute meaningfully to national development only if a culture of "decent politics"<sup>62</sup> is established at every level.

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<sup>62</sup> More details on "decent politics" can be found at: Barkat, A., 2020. *In Search of a Transition from the Virus-driven Great Disaster to a Decent Bangladesh: On the Larger Canvas of Society-Economy-State* (in Bangla Boro Pordai Shomaj-Orthoniti-Rashtr: Viruser Mohabiporjoy theke Shovon Bangladeser Shondhane). Bangladesh Economic Association (BEA) and MuktoBuddhi Publishers. Dhaka.

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## Annexes

**Annexe A:** Diaspora Organisations

**Annexe B:** Data Collection Instruments

**Annexe C:** Data Collection Schema by Respondent Category

**Annexe D:** Relevant Details about Selected International Instruments

**Annexe E:** HDRC Team

## Annexe A

### Diaspora Organisations

Sl no.	Organisation name	Country	Contact details	Focus area
<b>Asia</b>				
1.	Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Japan (BCCIJ) diaspora	Japan	New Kanda Bldg 302, 3-3Kanda Kaji-cho, Chiyoda-Ku, Tokyo 101-0045 Tel: +81-3-3527-1655 Fax: +81-3-3527-1699 E-mail: info@bccij.com Website: <a href="http://www.bccij.com">http://www.bccij.com</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To promote, protect and strengthen bi-lateral trade and commerce between Bangladesh and Japan;</li> <li>To promote investment, joint ventures, research and development in both countries;</li> <li>To maintain close ties with traders in Japan and Bangladesh, including the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) and relevant government organisations.</li> </ul>
2.	Japan Bangladesh Society	Japan	1-22-11 Sangenjaya, Setagaya-ku, Tokyo 154-0024 Phone: 03-3410-1024 E-mail: info@japanbangladesh.com Website: <a href="http://www.japanbangladesh.com/en/">www.japanbangladesh.com/en/</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To introduce the cultural heritage of Bangladesh to Japan;</li> <li>Provide health care assistance and support to Bangladeshi expatriates in Japan;</li> <li>To provide support in running a charity hospital in Khulna city;</li> <li>To arrange training programmes, study tours and exchange programmes.</li> </ul>
3.	Singapore Bangladesh Society	Singapore	88 Owen Road, #01-02, Singapore 218901 Phone: +65 96685777 E-mail: secretaryofsbs@gmail.com Website: <a href="https://sbsocietydotcom.wordpress.com/">https://sbsocietydotcom.wordpress.com/</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To promote mutual understanding and friendship between the people of Singapore and Bangladesh;</li> <li>To promote, develop and present Bangladesh and Singaporean culture and tradition amongst its members;</li> <li>To promote social, cultural and recreational activities amongst the members and their families;</li> <li>To promote and maintain brotherly and cordial relations with all communities in Singapore;</li> <li>To hold the celebrations of occasions of national importance to Bangladesh and Singapore;</li> <li>To undertake any other socio-cultural activities which are of interest to Bangladesh and Singapore.</li> </ul>

Sl no.	Organisation name	Country	Contact details	Focus area
<b>Australia</b>				
4.	Australia Bangladesh Business Council (ABBC)	Australia	Suite-19, 296 Marrickville Rd, Marrickville NSW 2204 Phone: 0451 452 545, +61 402 021 450 Email: info@abbc.org.au Website: http://abbc.org.au/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To promote business, trade and investment between Australia &amp; Bangladesh and lend practical assistance to members in that regard;</li> <li>To assess and represent members and their business interests before the governments in Dhaka and Canberra in bilateral issues;</li> <li>To cooperate with other organisations and chambers to further its members' interest nationally and internationally;</li> <li>To be involved in community development programmes including social services, appropriate technology transfer, health, education and cultural exchanges.</li> </ul>
5.	Bangladesh Australia Association of Western Australia	Australia	37 Chesters Way, Winthrop, WA 6150 Website: <a href="https://www.baawa.org.au/">https://www.baawa.org.au/</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To foster friendship, understanding and good fellowship between the people of Bangladesh and Australia.</li> </ul>
6.	Australia Bangladesh Association (ABA)	Australia	Phone: +61 0411887627, +61 0433814221 Email: admin@abav.org.au Website: http://abav.org.au/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To uphold and nurture the cultural heritage of Bangladesh;</li> <li>To enhance friendship, bondage, communication, team spirit and promote cultural heritage within the Bangladeshi Australian community;</li> <li>To bridge the cultural gap between the ethnic Bangladeshi community and the mainstream Australian community.</li> </ul>
7.	Bangladesh Society of Sydney Inc. (BDSS)	Australia	34/43 Watkin Street Rockdale NSW 2216 Australia Phone: +61426832510 E-mail: info@bdss.org.au Website: http://www.bdss.org.au/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To promote unity and harmony amongst Bangalee community residing and upcoming expatriate Students in Australia by providing social, cultural, educational and job-related information;</li> <li>To arrange functions and ceremonies of national importance concerning the Bangalee community;</li> <li>To promote social and cultural events in the form of a periodic symposium, Debates, Social Gatherings, Excursions, Sports, and other related activities.</li> </ul>

Sl no.	Organisation name	Country	Contact details	Focus area
8.	Bangladesh Australia Association Canberra (BAAC)	Australia	GPO Box 2152, Canberra ACT 2601 bangladeshassociationcanberra@gmail.com Website: <a href="http://baac.org.au/">http://baac.org.au/</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To promote cultural diversity and harmony in the Canberra community.</li> </ul>
9.	South Australian Bangladeshi Community Association (SABCA)	Australia	Camden Park, SA 5038 E-mail: <a href="mailto:contact@sabca.org.au">contact@sabca.org.au</a> ; <a href="mailto:info@sabca.org.au">info@sabca.org.au</a> Website: <a href="http://www.sabca.org.au/">http://www.sabca.org.au/</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To develop an awareness of Bangladeshi culture, language, tradition and lifestyle among Australian friends and neighbours to build a homogeneous and harmonious multicultural Australian society.</li> </ul>
<b>Europe</b>				
10.	All European Bangladesh Association (AEBA)	France	AEBA Headquarters, 48 Rue de Vouille, 75015 Paris AEBA Secretary-General Mr Kazi Enayet Ullah, Phone: +33608711387 E-mail <a href="mailto:ullahenayet75@gmail.com">ullahenayet75@gmail.com</a> Website: <a href="http://www.aebaonline.com/">http://www.aebaonline.com/</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To render voluntary services to the Bangladeshi trapped in dangers in different countries of Europe;</li> <li>To uphold the Bangladeshi heritage and culture</li> <li>To do 'image building' of Bangladesh abroad.</li> </ul>
11.	Bengali Community in France (BCF)	France	27 Avenue de la Porte de Vitry. 75013 Paris Phone: +49 123475915 E-mail: <a href="mailto:contact@bcfonline.fr">contact@bcfonline.fr</a> Website: <a href="https://bcfonline.fr/">https://bcfonline.fr/</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To promote the integration of people of origin Bangladesh through social networks, online platforms and seminars; for the same purpose;</li> <li>To promote the education of young people from Bangladeshi expatriates, mainly through awards and distinctions for academic achievement;</li> <li>To organise activities representing culture;</li> <li>To work in areas of climate change, environmental protection as well as human rights.</li> </ul>
12.	Desh Kultur Verein e.V. (Desh Cultrual Association)	Germany	Desh Kultur Verein e.V. Anspacher Str. 860326 Frankfurt Phone: +49-69-75008610 E-mail: <a href="mailto:info@amardesh.de">info@amardesh.de</a> Website: <a href="http://www.amardesh.de/">http://www.amardesh.de/</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To organise and celebrate Bangalee social and cultural events;</li> <li>To promote appreciation and understanding of Bangalee culture, language and traditions;</li> <li>To teach the children of the Bangalee and international community the Bangla language, culture and traditions;</li> <li>To cooperate with other cultural groups and regional organisations in promoting and sharing Bangalee culture.</li> </ul>

Sl no.	Organisation name	Country	Contact details	Focus area
13.	BASUG -Diaspora and Development [BASUG has chapters in Finland, Germany, Italy, Netherlands and United Kingdom]	Netherlands	Zinkwerf 45, 2544 EC, The Hague, The Netherlands Phone: +31 6 106 444 71 E-mail: info@basug.eu Website: https://www.basug.eu/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To strengthen the diaspora advocacy movement to bring forward the expatriate agenda both nationally and globally;</li> <li>To assist marginal poor women and children with no primary education in identifying their problems and work to mitigate their poverty;</li> <li>To empower women with a particular focus on gender equality;</li> <li>To innovate different modes and mechanisms of development and awareness messages on issues including Violence Against Women;</li> <li>To build strategic partnerships and alliances with various stakeholders, development agencies, diaspora organisations, and platforms active in the Netherlands and beyond migration, remittance, and development.</li> </ul>
14.	Probashi Parishad (Moscow)	Russia	Postcode 111396, Street FREAZEVSKAYS, House 11, Block- 5, Apt-30 Phone: +79265813058 E-mail: diken669@gmail.com	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To promote unity among Bangladeshi origin Russian community</li> <li>To protect the interests of Bangladeshi origin Russian community</li> </ul>
15.	British Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce & Industry (BBCCI)	United Kingdom (UK)	Business Development Centre Unit-16, 7-15 Greateorex Street London E1 5NF Phone: +44-(0) 20 7247 5525 E-mail: info@bbcc.org.uk Website: http://www.bbcc.org.uk/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To promote, protect and strengthen bi-lateral trade and commerce between Bangladesh and the United Kingdom and between them and the European Community;</li> <li>To promote investment, joint ventures, research and development in both countries;</li> <li>To maintain close ties with traders in the United Kingdom and Bangladesh, including the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry and relevant government ministries.</li> </ul>

Sl no.	Organisation name	Country	Contact details	Focus area
16.	Westminster Bangladeshi Association (WBA)	United Kingdom (UK)	Pimlico Resource Centre, Aylesford Street, London SW1V 3RL Phone: 020 7828 6500 E-mail: wbasw1@aol.com Website: <a href="http://wbasw1.org.uk/">http://wbasw1.org.uk/</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To engage the BME community focusing on the Bangladeshi people of Westminster and enabling them to access mainstream services and opportunities to achieve social cohesion and better community relations within the broader framework of multiculturalism;</li> <li>To develop a cohesive partnership with other stakeholders by focusing on the people of Bangladeshi origin;</li> <li>To promote people of Bangladeshi origin well-being by engaging them to be socially included through active participation.</li> </ul>
17.	British Bangladeshi Caterers Association (BBCA)	United Kingdom (UK)	E-mail: <a href="mailto:info@bbca-co.uk">info@bbca-co.uk</a> Website: <a href="http://www.bbca-co.uk/">http://www.bbca-co.uk/</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To raise the collective standard of the British Bangladeshi Catering industry,</li> <li>To represent British Bangladeshi Catering at the highest level in the public and private domain;</li> <li>To increase and bring value to BBKA membership, amongst others.</li> </ul>
18.	Confederation of Bangladeshi Organizations (CBO)	United Kingdom (UK)	GGRC - Greets Green Resource Centre, Harwood Street West Bromwich West Midlands B70 9JF Phone: 0121 500 5441 E-mail: <a href="mailto:info@cbo786.co.uk">info@cbo786.co.uk</a> Website: <a href="http://www.cbo786.co.uk/">http://www.cbo786.co.uk/</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To improve quality of life for all residents but primarily Bangladeshi and other BME groups living and working in the Sandwell Borough;</li> <li>To develop information, advice, assistance and self-help within local communities and primarily the Bangladeshi and other BME community throughout the Borough of Sandwell;</li> <li>To assist in supporting and initiating community development initiatives aimed at eradicating deprivations and disadvantages.</li> </ul>



Sl no.	Organisation name	Country	Contact details	Focus area
19.	Isle of Dogs Bangladeshi Association & Cultural Centre	United Kingdom (UK)	IoD Bangladeshi Asso & Cultural Centre, Cubitt Town Library Strattondale Street London E14 3HG Phone: 020 7538 1650, 07956 217 606 E-mail: info@iodbangladeshi.org.uk, iodbangladeshi@aol.com Website: <a href="https://www.iodbangladeshi.org.uk/">https://www.iodbangladeshi.org.uk/</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To relieve poverty by provision of advice, information and counselling;</li> <li>• To advance education in the language, history and culture of Bangladesh and to integrate with the multicultural society of this land;</li> <li>• To promote education amongst the residents of Tower Hamlets, in particular, the Bangladeshi residents of Docklands area by provision of training to obtain better employment;</li> <li>• To provide various facilities for the recreation of the local Bangladeshi residents and their children in the interest of social welfare to improve a better &amp; quality of life.</li> <li>• To assist the local students, research projects or any other organisation working or developing the Bangladeshi community in the area.</li> </ul>
20.	Islington Bangladeshi Association	United Kingdom (UK)	71 Caledonian Road, Islington, London N1 9BT Phone: 020 7833 2608, 020 7833 0591 E-mail: asad@ibal.org.uk Website: <a href="http://www.ibal.org.uk/">www.ibal.org.uk/</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To provide advice on welfare benefits, employment and housing for Bangladeshi and other Black and minority ethnic (BME) people;</li> <li>• To advise on education and curriculum support.</li> </ul>
21.	Manchester Bangladeshi Women's Organization- Ananna	United Kingdom (UK)	360 Dickenson Road, Longsight, M13 0NG Phone: 0161 257 3867/ 2122 E-mail: info@mbwo.org.uk Website: <a href="https://www.mbwo.org.uk/">https://www.mbwo.org.uk/</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To educate them in life skills formally and informally;</li> <li>• To increase their confidence and resilience;</li> <li>• To improve their physical and mental well-being;</li> <li>• To reduce their social isolation;</li> <li>• To improve employability and increase volunteering;</li> <li>• To support access to statutory services;</li> <li>• To influence and change local and national strategy; and policy that affects women and girls.</li> </ul>

Sl no.	Organisation name	Country	Contact details	Focus area
22.	Northampton Bangladeshi Association	United Kingdom (UK)	NBA Gateway Resource Centre, Mill Road, Northampton NN2 6AX Phone: 01604 624930 E-mail: nba_bangla@hotmail.com Website: <a href="https://nbagateway.co.uk/">https://nbagateway.co.uk/</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To promote any charitable purposes for the general benefit of the inhabitants of Northampton, in particular for the benefit of those inhabitants who are from Bangladesh or Bangladeshi origin;</li> <li>• To advance education and training, including education in the traditions and culture of Bangladesh to advance religion;</li> <li>• To promote equality and good relations between persons and organisations of different racial groups;</li> <li>• To relieve unemployment for the public benefit in such ways as may be thought fit, including assistance to find employment;</li> <li>• To relieve persons in need, which include women, the elderly and young persons, by providing advice, information and support on subjects including housing, health and recreational activities;</li> <li>• To assist in playing a full role in the community.</li> </ul>
23.	Sunderland Bangladesh International Centre	United Kingdom (UK)	30 Tatham Street, Hendon, Sunderland, SR1 2QD Phone: 0191 564 0888 E-mail: <a href="mailto:info@sb-international.org.uk">info@sb-international.org.uk</a> Website: <a href="http://sb-international-org-uk.stackstaging.com/">http://sb-international-org-uk.stackstaging.com/</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To provide a safe, well managed and convenient meeting place for the Bangladeshi and broader local community to meet and engage in activities and cultural events;</li> <li>• To provide training and activities for public sector Organisations.</li> </ul>
24.	British Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce & Industry (BBCCI)	United Kingdom (UK)	Business Development Centre Unit-16, 7-15 Greatorex Street London E1 5NF Phone: +44-(0) 20 7247 5525 E-mail: <a href="mailto:info@bbcc.org.uk">info@bbcc.org.uk</a> Website: <a href="http://www.bbcc.org.uk/">http://www.bbcc.org.uk/</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To promote, protect and strengthen bi-lateral trade and commerce between Bangladesh and the United Kingdom and between them and the European Community;</li> <li>• To promote investment, joint ventures, research and development in both countries;</li> <li>• To maintain close ties with traders in the United Kingdom and Bangladesh, including the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry and relevant government ministries.</li> </ul>

Sl no.	Organisation name	Country	Contact details	Focus area
<b>North America</b>				
25.	Association of Bangladeshi Engineers of Alberta, Canada (ABEAC)	Canada	Calgary, Canada Phone: 587-719-4905, 403-667-5430 Website: <a href="https://abeac.ca/">https://abeac.ca/</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To provide Professional Development through training, workshop, mentorship, seminar, and symposium;</li> <li>• To provide support for obtaining Professional Membership in the province of Alberta and other jurisdictions;</li> <li>• To support networking, job search, and career enhancement endeavours;</li> <li>• To collaborate with other technical Institutions and professional bodies;</li> <li>• To motivate members to develop fellowship in building a vibrant community;</li> <li>• To facilitate social interaction among the members and their families;</li> <li>• To engage with other non-profit organisations in various social development endeavours.</li> </ul>
26.	Bangladeshi-Canadian Community Services (BCS)	Canada	2899 Danforth Ave, Toronto, ON M4C 1M3 Phone: (416) 699-4484 E-mail: <a href="mailto:info@bangladeshi.ca">info@bangladeshi.ca</a> Website: <a href="https://www.bangladeshi.ca/">https://www.bangladeshi.ca/</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To provide information, referrals, skills development, and settlement services to diverse communities across the Greater Toronto Area (GTA);</li> <li>• To help people help themselves through advocacy, referrals, skill development and partnerships.</li> </ul>
27.	Bangladesh Canada Association of Calgary (BCAOC)	Canada	Unit # 211, 3770 Westwinds Drive N.E. Calgary, AB, T3J 5H3 Phone: 403-453-1800, 403-827-0875 E-mail: <a href="mailto:bcaoc@bcaoc.ca">bcaoc@bcaoc.ca</a> Website: <a href="https://bcaoc.ca/">https://bcaoc.ca/</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To foster better understanding between the Bangladeshis and Canadians, in general, Represent the interest of the Bangladeshi community at various levels of government and other ethnic groups and/or organisations;</li> <li>• To acquire and maintain necessary facilities for achieving the objectives of the association.</li> </ul>

Sl no.	Organisation name	Country	Contact details	Focus area
28.	National Bangladeshi-Canadian Council (NBCC)	Canada	Montreal, Quebec H3N 2L1 Phone: 438-922-9250 E-mail: nbcc@primus.ca Website: <a href="https://www.nbcac.org/">https://www.nbcac.org/</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be a proactive, national, united and self-sustaining body that provides a high standard of leadership in developing the destiny of Bangladeshi Canadians;</li> <li>To represent the Bangladeshi Canadian community before the people and Government of Canada;</li> <li>To promote linkages with Bangladesh and identify and address the needs of the Bangladeshi community in Canada to ensure its continued existence and development for enhancing Canada's socio-cultural fabric.</li> </ul>
29.	America Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce U.S.A Inc.	United States of America (USA)	Phone: +17188643245 E-mail: info.abccusa@gmail.com Website: <a href="https://www.abccusa.org/">https://www.abccusa.org/</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To provide leadership and bridge ties between Bangladesh and American businesses by implementing advocacy, business development, cultural awareness, networking events and direct services to members which stimulate economic growth and enhance the quality of life in the USA;</li> <li>To bridge ties between Bangladesh and American businesses and create an entrepreneurial environment where companies grow, individuals succeed and the community benefits.</li> </ul>
30.	American Association of Bangladeshi Engineers & Architects, Inc. (AABEA) [AABEA has chapters in Arizona, Washington DC, Michigan, New England, New Jersey, New York, Central Ohio, South California, South East, Silicon Valley, North Texas and Washington]	United States of America (USA)	1338 Fifth Avenue, New Hyde Park, NY 11040 Phone: 408-865-0340, 310-367-6202 E-mail: aabeatrstate@aol.com, Nazmul.Ula@lmu.edu Website: <a href="https://www.aabea.org/">https://www.aabea.org/</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To bring together and share ideas, technology, and experiences between engineering and architectural professionals of Bangladesh and North America;</li> <li>To work towards the advancement of engineering and architectural professions in Bangladesh;</li> <li>To work towards the advancement of engineering and architectural professions of Bangladeshis in North America;</li> <li>To assist in job search and career enhancement for its members and affiliates;</li> <li>To conduct seminars and other educational programmes;</li> </ul>

Sl no.	Organisation name	Country	Contact details	Focus area
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To provide mutual assistance and cooperation between AABEA and other non-political associations/societies and institutions;</li> <li>To help develop feasibility studies of various engineering and technological concerns of Bangladesh;</li> <li>To collaborate with public bodies and other organisations for the benefit of the engineering and architectural professions as a whole;</li> <li>To honour any individual/group who has made significant and outstanding contributions to the discipline of Engineering, Architecture and Computer Science.</li> </ul>
31.	American Institute of Bangladesh Studies	United States of America (USA)	235 Dale Dr Silver Spring Maryland, USA 20910 Phone: +1 812-929-2149 E-mail: sudiptaroy.aibs@gmail.com, ariaz@ilstu.edu Website: <a href="https://aibs.net/">https://aibs.net/</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To financially contribute to funding fellowships for US scholars to research in Bangladesh;</li> <li>To promote educational exchange among the scholarly communities of Bangladeshi origin locally, regionally, and internationally.</li> </ul>
32.	Agami Inc.	United States of America (USA)	PO Box 3178, Fremont, CA 94539 Email: education@agami.org, hassan@agami.org, sarah@agami.org Website: <a href="https://www.agami.org/">https://www.agami.org/</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To create lasting socio-economic change in Bangladesh with education;</li> <li>To create a holistic solution of primary education for underprivileged children, skills training for adults, and families' public health and economic initiatives.</li> </ul>
33.	Bangladesh American Chamber of Commerce (Florida)	United States of America (USA)	21118 Sweetwater Lane North Boca Raton, FL 33428 Phone: (954) 818-2970 Website: <a href="https://www.bangladeshchamber.org/">https://www.bangladeshchamber.org/</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To create trade opportunities and strengthen the regional, national and industrial commercial relationships between the United States and Bangladesh;</li> <li>To empower its members to create and promote trade while strengthening economic and cultural opportunities between Bangladesh and the United States.</li> </ul>

Sl no.	Organisation name	Country	Contact details	Focus area
34.	Bangladesh Association of America (BAAIDC)	United States of America (USA)	13113 Brushwood Way, Potomac, MD 20854 Phone: 301-258-0088, 703-300-0870 E-mail: p2013@baaidc.com, s2013@baaidc.com Website: <a href="https://baaidc.org/">https://baaidc.org/</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To promote Bangladeshi social, literary, cultural, educational, religious activities, and relief and welfare programmes, including Bangladesh.</li> </ul>
35.	Bangladesh Association, Houston (BAH)	United States of America (USA)	Bangladesh American Center (BAC) 13415 Renn Road, Houston, TX 77083 Phone: 832-352-332, 832-352-3329, 832-866-6949, 832-293-5832 Website: <a href="https://www.bangladesh-association.com/">https://www.bangladesh-association.com/</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To provide cultural, intellectual. Social, physical, spiritual and charitable welfare to the people of Bangladeshi origin;</li> <li>To promote goodwill, understanding and appreciation of cultures of Bangladesh among all persons regardless of colour, creed, race, religion and national origin;</li> <li>To promote Bangladesh-American friendship;</li> <li>To promote cultural exchange with any other group or organisation, or institution interested in Bangladeshi culture;</li> <li>To facilitate the activities of any other professional, student, woman or any other group of Bangladeshis, provided that such groups or Organisations are also non-profit and non-political Organisations duly organised under any state law.</li> </ul>
36.	Bangladesh Association of Nashville	United States of America (USA)	P.O. Box 249, 37029 Hermitage, TN 37076 E-mail: BAN2021@BANashville.org Website: <a href="https://banashville.org/">https://banashville.org/</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To exchange goodwill and cooperation among members of the community;</li> <li>To promote Bangladesh and its unique culture in the United States of America.</li> </ul>

Sl no.	Organisation name	Country	Contact details	Focus area
37.	Bangladesh Association of Central Ohio (Ohio)	United States of America (USA)	P.O. Box 20535 Columbus, OH 43220 Website: <a href="http://bacosite.org/">http://bacosite.org/</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To represent Bangladesh and Bangalee Culture &amp; Literature in Central Ohio and the United States;</li> <li>• To develop cooperation and harmony within the Bangladesh community in central Ohio and the United States;</li> <li>• To expose Bangalee culture and heritage to the youths of Bangladesh origin;</li> <li>• To build mutual goodwill, understanding, and respect between the general people of North America and Bangladesh and to contribute to social peace, harmony, and economic growth;</li> <li>• To represent, protect, and promote the interests of persons of Bangladesh origin;</li> <li>• To act as an organisation to collect and transfer charities, donations at local, national, and international levels for social, cultural, educational, economic, and humanitarian causes;</li> <li>• To organise and participate in the regional and national events which promote Bangladesh and Bangalee culture; To promote friendship and cultural exchange with other Organisations.</li> </ul>
38.	Bangladesh Expatriate Society of Texas (BEST)	United States of America (USA)	2560 King Arthur Blvd, Suite 124-49, The Colony, TX 75056-5921 Phone: 817-300-7407 E-mail: <a href="mailto:info@bestdfw.org">info@bestdfw.org</a> Website: <a href="https://bestdfw.org/">https://bestdfw.org/</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To help the community with social services;</li> <li>• To support recent immigrants with their assimilation into mainstream American society;</li> <li>• To promote general goodwill, friendship and unity among the Bangladeshi American community;</li> <li>• To promote Bangladeshi heritage for the benefit of Bangladeshi origin younger community.</li> </ul>



Sl no.	Organisation name	Country	Contact details	Focus area
39.	Bangladesh Society Inc.	United States of America (USA)	86-24 Whitney Avenue Elmhurst, New York 11373 Phone: 347-738-5183 E-mail: info@bangladeshsocietyinc.com Website: http://bangladeshsocietyinc.com/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To open the door of mutual assistance and cooperation assimilating all the Bangladesh-origin Bangladeshi expatriates;</li> <li>• To maintain and promote friendly relations between the Bangladeshis and with other nationalities living in the USA;</li> <li>• To celebrate national days along with all the Bangladeshi expatriates;</li> <li>• To cement and solidify the foundation of our national unity through adopting, initiating and implementing religious and social projects/programmes;</li> <li>• To convey clear and distinct ideas and knowledge to our next generation regarding the tradition, culture, heritage and values of Bangladesh; viz., teaching them the Bangla language, directly involve them with the Bangladeshi culture and give them accurate knowledge regarding the value of family bondage of Bangladesh;</li> <li>• To highlight before our current and next-generation the positive aspects of this country by assimilating them with the related social and financial issues of all communities of the country (America);</li> <li>• To keep all the Bangladeshis informed about the political, social and economic changes of our country;</li> <li>• To collect relief and funds (money) for the distressed and affected people of various natural calamities in Bangladesh;</li> <li>• To protest whenever any Bangladeshis living in this country are illegally victimised or harassed by anyone in any way and prevent such trend and help the victims.</li> </ul>

Sl no.	Organisation name	Country	Contact details	Focus area
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To motivate the Bangladeshis to be directly involved and participate in the social and political activities of the USA;</li> <li>• To assist and cooperate with the Bangladeshis regarding immigration issues;</li> <li>• To stand beside the newly immigrated Bangladeshis to redress their problems and provide them required suggestions;</li> <li>• To provide all-out support to the Bangladeshis to protect their national/ community rights.</li> <li>• To provide information to low-income Bangladeshis regarding various types of medicating insurances so that they can avail themselves suitable ones suiting them;</li> <li>• To take the step to provide borough-based English education to the adult Bangladeshis living in New York City;</li> <li>• To provide counselling regarding psychiatric and mental problems;</li> <li>• To organise computer training to make the Bangladeshis skilled to get a better job.</li> </ul>
40.	Bangladesh Development Initiative (BDI)	United States of America (USA)	4280 Breckenridge Court Presto, PA 15142 Website: <a href="https://bdiusa.org/">https://bdiusa.org/</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To energise/motivate the intellectual community to use BDI/JBS as a platform to generate ideas through research to help shape policy and specific action;</li> <li>• To Disseminate intellectually sophisticated and policy-relevant ideas through the Journal of Bangladesh Studies (JBS), books, conferences and other publications incorporating expert opinion and relevant research;</li> <li>• To generate a body of policy-relevant ideas and research relevant to issues of development in Bangladesh and archive them (Issues of JBS, books, conference proceedings, and other written</li> </ul>

Sl no.	Organisation name	Country	Contact details	Focus area
				<p>material) so that they are available to the public, researchers and policymakers;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To engage in development by participating in civil society, nurturing women's empowerment, devising mechanisms to fight corruption, building schools and hospitals, providing scholarships and research support, and installing Chair-positions in the universities.</li> </ul>
41.	Bangladesh Medical Association of North America (BMANA)	United States of America (USA)	207-07 Hillside Avenue, Jamaica, NY 11427 Phone: 904-803-7395 E-mail: <a href="mailto:info@www.bmana.org">info@www.bmana.org</a> Website: <a href="https://www.bmana.org/">https://www.bmana.org/</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To bring together and to improve communication between the physicians who are of Bangladeshi origin or have trained in the various Medical and Dental Colleges of Bangladesh, and are currently residents of North America, and other physicians;</li> <li>To aid and assist medical students and physicians in obtaining specialised medical training and in post-training job placement in North America;</li> <li>To institute and provide specific services to meet the needs of the members of the association and Bangladeshi physicians' community in North America at large;</li> <li>To conduct seminars and other educational programmes which acquaint members in North America and physicians in Bangladesh of newer developments in the field of medicine;</li> <li>To render medical assistance to the indigent people in North America and Bangladesh, whenever possible;</li> <li>To provide mutual assistance and cooperation between this association and other medical societies in North America.</li> </ul>

Sl no.	Organisation name	Country	Contact details	Focus area
42.	Bangladeshi American Pharmacists' Association (BAPA) (New York)	United States of America (USA)	Phone: 516-650-7937, 347-239-7512 E-mail: bapapresident2012@gmail.com; enamulkab@yahoo.com Website: <a href="https://bapainfo.org/">https://bapainfo.org/</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To organise Bangladeshi-American Pharmacists in a professional and robust platform so they can be more successful in their career and have a fulfilling experience in this country;</li> <li>• To get the members involved in the socio-political process that determines their future;</li> <li>• To motivate everyone to contribute their time and talent to the betterment of the pharmacy profession here at home and in Bangladesh.</li> </ul>
43.	Bangladeshi-American Professional & Academic Network (BAPAN)	United States of America (USA)	6240 Woodward, Suite 219, Amarillo, TX 79106 Phone: 806-335-6188 Website: <a href="http://www.bapan.org/index.php">http://www.bapan.org/index.php</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To create a network among Bangladeshis living and working in different states and cities in the USA;</li> <li>• To help its members get an education, work, life-related information through workshops, seminars, video talks, interviews, websites.</li> </ul>
44.	Bangladesh Unity Federation of Los Angeles (BUFLA)	United States of America (USA)	1133 South Vermont Ave, Suite 20, Los Angeles, CA 90006, USA Phone: 888-380-1909 E-mail: <a href="mailto:info@bufla.com">info@bufla.com</a> Website: <a href="http://bufla.com/">http://bufla.com/</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To promote Unity, Harmony and Discipline, and to synergise the mutual benefits among the multi-talented and healthy diversity of our Bangladeshi community in the greater Los Angeles area and beyond;</li> <li>• To lift motherland Bangladesh and homeland USA in front of the broader Society of this great Nation.</li> </ul>
45.	Educational Charitable Humanitarian Organization (ECHO)	United States of America (USA)	PO Box 4120 Santa Clara, CA 95056 Phone: (408) 238-1457 E-mail: <a href="mailto:echo@echo-usa.org">echo@echo-usa.org</a> Website: <a href="https://www.echo-usa.org/">https://www.echo-usa.org/</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To bring aid and assistance to the straitened countries of the world;</li> <li>• To serve the underprivileged through different programmes, including education, income-generating skills training, healthcare services, improved sanitation, and support for small-scale entrepreneurial activities.</li> </ul>

Sl no.	Organisation name	Country	Contact details	Focus area
46.	Charity Organization of Bangladeshi Arizonans (COBA)	United States of America (USA)	3171 W Genoa Way, Chandler, AZ 85226 Phone: (480)-703-7094 E-mail: ymfaruque@yahoo.com, support@my-coba.org, Website: <a href="https://www.my-coba.org/">https://www.my-coba.org/</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To provide financial assistance to the underprivileged people of Bangladesh in the areas of basic education, social and health services on a long term basis;</li> <li>To assist (shelter, food) to the needy people living in the County of Maricopa, Arizona;</li> <li>To provide support for local community activities and voluntary services like Habitat for Humanity, Citrus Gleaning, Food Cup;</li> <li>To provide relief assistance to people of any national heritage, wherever they may be, in extraordinary emergencies.</li> </ul>
47.	Federation of Bangladeshi Associations in North America (FOBANA) [FOBANA has chapters in Atlanta, California, Georgia, New York, Texas, Washington DC]	United States of America (USA)	4 Adelpia Rd. Wayne, NJ, USA Phone: (646) 226-7144; (512) 413-9193; (818) 730-1020; (678) 696-8105; (770) 722-5369 E-mail: fobanachairman@gmail.com; zareefc@yahoo.com; masudchowdhury@sbcglobal.net; ahmedarif07@yahoo.com; khannahidul@gmail.com Website: <a href="https://www.fobanaonline.com/">https://www.fobanaonline.com/</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To increase the awareness of Bangalee culture and heritage in the United States;</li> <li>To provide the opportunity for Bangladeshi-Americans together in a fun and exciting environment highlighting contributions of Bangalee culture to the diversity in North America;</li> <li>To recognise the contributions that Bangladeshi-Americans/Canadians make through their many professional, religious, cultural, social, educational, political and civic organisations.</li> </ul>
48.	Hridoya Bangladesh	United States of America (USA)	2329 Cimarron Dr Santa Clara, CA 95051 E-mail: <a href="mailto:info@hridoyabangladesh.org">info@hridoyabangladesh.org</a> Website: <a href="https://www.hridoyabangladesh.org/">https://www.hridoyabangladesh.org/</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To facilitate that process by building a community where everyone shares similar views and serves Bangladesh in various aspects;</li> <li>To provide scholarships to brilliant and financially challenged students to continue their education.</li> </ul>

Sl no.	Organisation name	Country	Contact details	Focus area
49.	SpaandanB	United States of America (USA)	P.O. Box 64183 Sunnyvale, CA 94088 Phone: (408) 836-4534 E-mail: info@SpaandanB.org, projects@SpaandanB.org Website: <a href="http://www.spaandanb.org/">http://www.spaandanb.org/</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To build a better Bangladesh through changes in the quality of life of the less advantaged;</li> <li>• To establish just and equitable access to health and education for the general population of Bangladesh;</li> <li>• To bring the disadvantaged multitude under a framework of holistic education and lifestyle practices, if needed, by prosecuting novel methods;</li> <li>• To make essential health services accessible to the impoverished and underprivileged common masses;</li> <li>• To provide income-generating, self-sustained opportunities for the impoverished population;</li> <li>• To provide food, medical, shelter and rehabilitation support to distressed humanity during a time of emergency;</li> </ul>
50.	US-Bangladesh Advisory Council	United States of America (USA)	15 Queensberry Street, Boston, MA 02215 Phone: 202-258-6897 E-mail: shamarukh@usbac.org, USABAC@aol.com Website: <a href="http://www.usbac.org/">http://www.usbac.org/</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To enhance the social, economic and political ties between the United States and Bangladesh and strengthen collaboration between the people of the two countries;</li> <li>• To work with the U.S. and Bangladesh governments, non-governmental organisations and the private sector to enact public policy to promote social and economic development in Bangladesh;</li> <li>• To provide critical insights, analyses, and research to policymakers in the United States and Bangladesh to enable them to make informed decisions;</li> <li>• To facilitate the participation of Bangladeshi residents in the United States in U.S. social, political and economic institutions.</li> </ul>

## **Annexe B**

### **Data Collection Instruments**





## Ensuring active inclusion of diaspora in Bangladesh's national development

### *Data Collection Instrument 1*

### In-Depth Interview (IDI) Schedule for First-Generation and Second-Generation Diaspora Members

#### Introduction

The Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Policy 2016 defines diaspora as the expatriates who are staying abroad for a more extended period and have taken nationality of the host country or are willing to take the nationality, but at the same time willing to keep relation with Bangladesh and want to contribute to this country's socio-economic development. The Eighth Five Year Plan desires to engage the Bangladeshi expatriate professionals in the relevant endeavours. The earlier Seventh Five Year Plan stressed that the purview of expatriates' welfare must include Bangladeshi diaspora and migrant workers. It also recognised the diaspora as agents as well as beneficiaries of the country's development.

Despite the Bangladesh Government's various attempts at integrating the diaspora population into national development, it still requires a comprehensive mechanism and specific institutional structure to ensure their active engagement in national development. Against this backdrop, the IOM Bangladesh has commissioned the Human Development Research Centre (HDRC) — one of the country's leading research organisations — to carry out this study. The overall objective of this study is to identify measures to ensure the active inclusion of the Bangladeshi diaspora in the national development of Bangladesh. The European Union (EU) supports the research through a project titled "Bangladesh: Sustainable Reintegration and Improved Migration Governance (Prottasha).

As an informed person on the subject, we want to take your interview to obtain relevant information and invaluable insights, which would enhance our understanding of the relevant issues. There are different modules in this data collection instrument; please respond only against the module applicable to you. The interview/discussion will be kept confidential. We shall not use the information provided by you for any purpose other than this research. Your identity shall remain anonymous.

Professor Dr Abul Barkat leads the research on behalf of the Human Development Research Centre (HDRC). For any further information, you can contact directly to the concerned member of the HDRC research team: Mr Sk Ali Ahmed, Research Consultant, HDRC; Contact: (+88) 01711548187; aliahmed@hdrc-bd.com

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E-mail: info@hdrc-bd.com; hdrc.bd@gmail.com; Web: www.hdrc-bd.com

Informant's Profile	
Name	
Age	
Sex	Male = 1      Female = 2
Academic Specialisation	
Occupation	
Professional Specialisation	
Host Country	
Duration of stay (in the month)	
Former Host Country (if any)	
Affiliation with diaspora association (if any)	
Duration of attachment	
Phone	
Email	
Address	

Interview Information	
Mode of interview (multiple modes can be used, as per the convenience of the informant)	Face-to-face=1; Telephonic=2; Online interview=3; Email=4; Hardcopy written response=5
Place of interview	
Date(s) of interview	
Interview start time(s)	
Interview start time(s)	
Name of the interviewer	
Name of the note taker	

## Modules

**Module A:** First Generation Diaspora Members

**Module B:** Second Generation Diaspora Members

## In-depth Interview Issues

### Module A

#### First Generation Diaspora Members

1.	a)	How many Bangladeshi diaspora people are living in this host country, as you know?
	b)	Would you tell us about the Bangladeshi diaspora? People living in this country are generally and mainly involved in what kind of professions? What is their overall socio-economic status in this host country?
2.	a)	Would you delineate the sufferings of the Bangladeshi diaspora community living in this country due to the COVID-19 Pandemic?
	b)	Do you think the government and non-government agencies from Bangladesh could play any role in restoring and rehabilitating the Bangladeshi diaspora living in this host country affected by the COVID-19 Pandemic?
3.	a)	Do you feel the need to support Bangladesh to address the COVID-19 induced challenges?
	b)	What kind of support does Bangladeshi diaspora individual, community and associations from your host country provide to people and organisations of Bangladesh?
4.	a)	Do you feel Bangladeshi diaspora individuals and the communities are interested in being included in the development process of Bangladesh?
	b)	How could the Bangladeshi diaspora be involved in Bangladesh's development process?
5.	a)	Do you feel the development of Bangladeshi diaspora members social, political and economic positioning will open the scope of contributing to the development process of Bangladesh?
	b)	What role would the government and non-government agencies from Bangladesh promote and strengthen the Bangladeshi diaspora community's social, political, and economic positioning in this host country?
6.	a)	Do you think Bangladeshi diaspora people living in your host country are mobilised and organised? How to make them more unified?
	b)	Who are the key diaspora community mobilisers (organisation or personnel) in this host country?
	c)	How the diaspora associations/interlocutors can uphold the image of Bangladesh abroad? Can you pinpoint some good examples of such initiatives?

7.	a)	Would you tell us about the role of mass media, communication media, and social media in facilitating the mutual exchange of ideas, thoughts, knowledge, skills, and experience between Bangladeshi diaspora members and the genealogical community?
	b)	How to strengthen the role of mass media, communication media, and social media in facilitating the mutual exchange of ideas, thoughts, knowledge, skills, and experience between Bangladeshi diaspora members and the genealogical community?
8.	a)	In your opinion, what is the importance of heritage education (promotion, popularising and facilitating) for the diaspora's second generation? Can you pinpoint some good examples of such initiatives?
	b)	Would you tell us the role of Bangladesh's diaspora associations, government, and non-government agencies in this regard?
9.	a)	Would you tell us how the Bangladeshi diaspora could invest their knowledge, skills, and financial capital in Bangladesh's science and technology sectors? Can you pinpoint some good examples of such initiatives?
	b)	What initiatives will the Government of Bangladesh and local private entrepreneurs (individual and company) take to make Bangladeshi diaspora members interested in investing in Bangladesh?
	c)	How can Bangladeshi diaspora communities contribute/participate in the community development initiatives in Bangladesh? Can you pinpoint some good examples of such initiatives?
	d)	How can Bangladeshi diaspora communities extend philanthropy activities in Bangladesh? Can you pinpoint some good examples of such initiatives?
	e)	Are there any scopes to facilitate ethical worker migration from Bangladesh to this country by the diaspora communities?
10.	a)	Does the Bangladeshi diaspora community prefer Bangladeshi products (if any) for personal, family, and community consumption?
	b)	How could such nostalgia products produced in Bangladesh be marketed (production, promotion, supplying) in the host countries of the Bangladeshi diaspora?
11.	a)	Do you think Bangladeshi diaspora members are interested in holiday trips, adventure trips, and heritage tours to Bangladesh?
	b)	Do you know about any initiatives government and non-government agencies from Bangladesh to promote, popularise and facilitate diaspora Tourism in Bangladesh? What are those initiatives?
	c)	Would you tell us what actions are required from Bangladesh's government and non-government agencies to promote, popularise, and facilitate diaspora tourism in Bangladesh?
12.	a)	Are you aware that the Government of Bangladesh has issued some bonds/savings schemes for non-resident Bangladeshis?
	b)	Have you already invested or planning to invest in such opportunities?

	c)	What could make you interested in purchasing such bonds?
13.	a)	Do you like to keep your and your inheritors' Bangladeshi citizenship? If yes, do you think existing laws/policies are supportive of your citizenship status quo?
	b)	Do you feel a need to review and rearrange the existing Bangladeshi diaspora's citizenship rights (legality, legislation, and logistics) to ensure your and your inheritors' citizenship rights?
14.	a)	Do you like voting rights for yourself and your inheritors to be part of Bangladesh's state and local governments?
	b)	Do you feel a for a review and rearrangement of the existing Bangladeshi diaspora's voting rights (legality, legislation, and logistics) to ensure your and your inheritors' voting rights?
	c)	Would you suggest reforming the current voting rights facilitating mechanism to be compatible with you and your inheritors voting rights?
15.		Do you have any plans to come back to Bangladesh at any point in time? Please, let us know some thoughts on it.

## Module B

### Second Generation Diaspora Members

1.	a)	Do you feel belonging to Bangladesh even after living in this host country since childhood? Please tell us a bit of detail about your pattern of affiliation with Bangladesh.
	b)	Do you feel Bangladeshi diaspora individuals (particularly those from the second generation) and the community are interested in being included in the development process of Bangladesh?
	c)	How could the Bangladeshi diaspora involve in the development process of Bangladesh?
2.	a)	Do you feel the development of Bangladeshi diaspora members' social, political and economic positioning will open the scope of contributing to the development process of Bangladesh?
	b)	What role would the government and non-government agencies from Bangladesh play in promoting and strengthening the social, political, and economic positioning of Bangladeshi diaspora communities living in this host country?
3.		How the diaspora associations/interlocutors can uphold the image of Bangladesh abroad? Can you pinpoint some good examples of such initiatives?
4.		Would you tell us about the role of mass media, communication media, and social media in facilitating the mutual exchange of ideas, thoughts, knowledge, skills, and experience between Bangladeshi diaspora members and second-generation Bangladeshi diaspora members genealogical community? How to strengthen their role?

5.	a)	In your opinion, what is the importance of heritage education (promotion, popularising and facilitating) for the diaspora's second generation? Can you pinpoint some good examples of such initiatives?
	b)	Would you tell us the role of Bangladesh's diaspora associations, government, and non-government agencies in this regard?
6.	a)	Would you tell us about how second-generation Bangladeshi diaspora could invest their knowledge, skills, and financial capital in Bangladesh's science and technology sectors? Can you pinpoint some good examples of such initiatives?
	b)	What initiatives will the Government of Bangladesh and local private entrepreneurs (individual and company) take to make Bangladeshi diaspora members interested in investing in Bangladesh?
	c)	How can Bangladeshi diaspora communities contribute/participate in the community development initiatives in Bangladesh? Can you pinpoint some good examples?
	d)	How can Bangladeshi diaspora communities extend philanthropy activities in Bangladesh? Can you pinpoint some good examples of such initiatives?
	e)	Are there any scopes to facilitate ethical worker migration from Bangladesh to this country by the diaspora communities?
7.	a)	Does the second generation Bangladeshi diaspora community like to consume Bangladeshi products?
	b)	How can such products be popularised among the second-generation Bangladeshi diaspora?
8.	a)	Are the second-generation Bangladeshi diaspora members interested in holiday, adventure, and heritage tours to Bangladesh?
	b)	Do you know about any initiatives government and non-government agencies from Bangladesh to promote, popularise and facilitate diaspora tourism in Bangladesh? What are those initiatives?
	c)	Would you tell us what actions are required from Bangladesh's government and non-government agencies to promote, popularise, and facilitate diaspora tourism in Bangladesh?
9.	a)	Are you aware that the Government of Bangladesh has launched some bonds/savings schemes for non-resident Bangladeshis?
	b)	Have you already invested or planning to invest against such opportunities?
	c)	What could make you interested in purchasing such bonds?
10.		Do you like to keep your Bangladeshi citizenship? If yes, do you think existing laws/policies are supportive of your citizenship status quo?
11.		Do you like to have voting rights to be part of the state and local governments of Bangladesh?
12.		Do you have any plans to settle in Bangladesh at any point in time? Please, let us know some thoughts on it.

**Conclusion**

We are at the end of the interview:

- Did we miss anything you deem necessary?
- Are there any other recommendations/suggestions/comments from your side which could be significant in harnessing the potentials of the Bangladeshi diaspora towards the development of the country?
- Do you have any questions/queries for us? We shall be happy to respond.

We humbly express our deep sense of gratitude for providing us with valuable information through this interview. These will undoubtedly enrich our study. Furthermore, we hope the information will help ensure the active inclusion of the Bangladeshi diaspora in national development. Many thanks for your invaluable cooperation.

In final, we ever pray for your gracious life and prosperity.

Be healthy and be well.





## Ensuring active inclusion of diaspora in Bangladesh's national development

### Data Collection Instrument 2

#### Key Informant Interview (KII) Schedule for Diaspora Association, Interlocutors/Spokespersons, and Investors

##### Introduction

The Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Policy 2016 defines diaspora as the expatriates who are staying abroad for a more extended period and have taken nationality of the host country or are willing to take the nationality, but at the same time willing to keep relation with Bangladesh and want to contribute to this country's socio-economic development. The Eighth Five Year Plan desires to engage the Bangladeshi expatriate professionals in the relevant endeavours. The earlier Seventh Five Year Plan stressed that the purview of expatriates' welfare must include Bangladeshi diaspora and migrant workers. It also recognised the diaspora as agents as well as beneficiaries of the country's development.

Despite the Bangladesh Government's various attempts at integrating the diaspora population into national development, it still requires a comprehensive mechanism and specific institutional structure to ensure their active engagement in national development. Against this backdrop, the IOM Bangladesh has commissioned the Human Development Research Centre (HDRC) — one of the country's leading research organisations — to carry out this study. The overall objective of this study is to identify measures to ensure the active inclusion of the Bangladeshi diaspora in the national development of Bangladesh. The European Union (EU) supports the research through a project titled "Bangladesh: Sustainable Reintegration and Improved Migration Governance (Prottasha).

As an informed person on the subject, we want to take your interview to obtain relevant information and invaluable insights, which would enhance our understanding of the relevant issues. There are different modules in this data collection instrument; please respond only against the module applicable to you. The interview/discussion will be kept confidential. We shall not use the information provided by you for any purpose other than this research. Your identity shall remain anonymous.

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2020 – 2021

Informant's Profile	
Name	
Age	
Sex	Male = 1      Female = 2
Academic Specialisation	
Occupation	
Professional Specialisation	
Host Country	
Duration of stay (in the month)	
Former Host Country (if any)	
Affiliation with diaspora association (if any)	
Duration of attachment	
Phone	
Email	
Address	

Interview Information	
Mode of interview (multiple modes can be used, as per the convenience of the informant))	Face-to-face=1; Telephonic=2; Online interview=3; Email=4; Hardcopy written response=5
Place of interview	
Date(s) of interview	
Interview start time(s)	
Interview start time(s)	
Name of the interviewer	
Name of the note taker	

## Modules

**Module A:** Diaspora Association Representatives

**Module B:** Diaspora Interlocutors/Spokespersons

**Module C:** Diaspora Investors

## Key Informants' Interview Issues

### Module A

#### Diaspora Association Representatives

1.	a)	Your diaspora association is working on which specific areas related to the Bangladeshi diaspora?
	b)	What is the purpose and goal of forming your diaspora association?
2.	a)	Do you think Bangladeshi diaspora people living in your host country are mobilised and organised?
	b)	What role does your diaspora association play or could play in unifying Bangladeshi diaspora members living in your host country?
3.	a)	How many Bangladeshi diaspora people are living in this host country, as you know?
	b)	Would you tell us about the Bangladeshi diaspora? People living in this country are generally and mainly involved in what kind of professions? What is their overall socio-economic status in this host country?
4.	a)	Would you tell us whether it is necessary to develop a Bangladeshi diaspora database?
	b)	How to prepare such a database, and what role do diaspora associations could play in this regard?
5.		What role did diaspora associations play or could play in popularising and expanding heritage education for diaspora's second generation?
6.		What role did diaspora associations play or could play in organising ancestral socio-cultural activities and transmit among new-generation in the host country?
7.		What role did diaspora associations play in promoting diaspora tourism towards Bangladesh among the Bangladeshi diaspora?
8.		What role did diaspora associations play in promoting indigenous/nostalgia products among the Bangladeshi diaspora?
9.		How can Bangladeshi diaspora communities contribute/participate in the community development initiatives in Bangladesh? Can you pinpoint some good examples of such initiatives?

10.	How can Bangladeshi diaspora communities extend philanthropy activities in Bangladesh? Can you pinpoint some good examples of such initiatives?
11.	What role did diaspora associations play or could play in lobbying/guarding for Bangladeshi diaspora members and their inheritors' Bangladeshi citizenship rights protection?
12.	What role did diaspora associations play or could play in lobbying/guarding Bangladeshi diaspora members and their inheritors' voting rights protection?
13.	What role do diaspora associations like yours alone and jointly played or could play in facilitating the development of social, political, and economic positioning of Bangladeshi diaspora members in your host country?
14.	Do you think diaspora organisations in association with government and non-government agencies from Bangladesh could protect the interests of Bangladeshi diaspora in the host country and the ancestral land-Bangladesh?
15.	a) Do diaspora associations of Bangladeshi diaspora living in different countries have any network? If yes, please delineate about it.
	b) Would you tell us about the importance of a strong network of associations of Bangladeshi diaspora living in different countries and how to form it?
16.	What kind of support did Bangladeshi diaspora individuals, communities and associations from your host country provide to people and organisations of Bangladesh to address challenges induced by the COVID-19 Pandemic?

## Module B

### Diaspora Interlocutors/Spokespersons

1.	a)	How many Bangladeshi diaspora people are living in this host country, as you know?
	b)	Would you tell us about the Bangladeshi diaspora? People living in this country are generally and mainly involved in what kind of professions? What is their overall socio-economic status in this host country?
2.	a)	Do you think Bangladeshi diaspora people living in your host country are mobilised and organised?
	b)	What role did diaspora organisations and organisers play or could play in unifying Bangladeshi diaspora members living in your host country?
3.	a)	Would you tell us whether it is necessary to develop a Bangladeshi diaspora database?
	b)	How to prepare such a database, and which government and non-government agencies need to assign?

4.	a)	In your opinion, what is the importance of heritage education (promotion, popularising and facilitating) for the diaspora's second generation? Can you pinpoint some good examples of such initiatives?
	b)	Would you tell us the role of Bangladesh's diaspora associations, government, and non-government agencies in this regard?
5.	a)	Would you tell us about the importance of organising ancestral socio-cultural activities and transmitting new-generation in the host country?
	b)	What role did diaspora associations, government and non-government agencies from Bangladesh play or could play in organising ancestral socio-cultural activities and transmit among new-generation in the host country?
6.	a)	What kind of initiatives would make the Bangladeshi diaspora members interested in holiday, adventure, and heritage tours to Bangladesh?
	b)	Do you know about any initiatives government and non-government agencies from Bangladesh to promote, popularise and facilitate diaspora tourism in Bangladesh? What are those initiatives?
7.	a)	Does the Bangladeshi diaspora community prefer Bangladeshi products (if any) for personal, family, and community consumption?
	b)	How could such nostalgia products produced in Bangladesh be marketed (production, promotion, supplying) in the host countries of the Bangladeshi diaspora?
8.	a)	How could Bangladeshi diaspora living in this host country invest in indigenous/nostalgia products and diaspora tourism?
	b)	Would you tell us how the Bangladeshi diaspora could invest their knowledge, skills, and financial capital in Bangladesh's science and technology sectors?
	c)	Do you think Bangladeshi diaspora investors and Bangladeshi local investors jointly could invest in which areas at Bangladesh, host country or any other third country? Can you pinpoint some good examples of such initiatives?
	d)	Do you think existing legal, policy, infrastructural facilities are helpful for interested non-resident Bangladeshi investors?
	e)	Are you aware of any incentives offered by the Government of Bangladesh to the Bangladeshi diaspora investors?
	f)	What actions will the Government of Bangladesh and local entrepreneurs and companies make Bangladeshi diaspora investors interested in investing in Bangladesh?
9.		How can Bangladeshi diaspora communities contribute/participate in the community development initiatives in Bangladesh? Can you pinpoint some good examples of such initiatives?
10.		How can Bangladeshi diaspora communities extend philanthropy activities in Bangladesh? Can you pinpoint some good examples of such initiatives?

11.	What role did diaspora associations, government, and non-government agencies play or could play in protecting the Bangladeshi citizenship rights of Bangladeshi diaspora members and their inheritors?
12.	What role did diaspora associations, government, and non-government agencies play or could play in protecting the voting rights of Bangladeshi diaspora members and their inheritors?
13.	Do you think the development of the social, political, and economic positioning of Bangladeshi diaspora members in your host country will contribute to the development of Bangladesh? What could be the role of government and non-government agencies from Bangladesh in this regard?
14.	Would you tell us about the role of mass media and social media, or could it facilitate the mutual exchange of ideas, thoughts, knowledge, skills, and experience between Bangladeshi diaspora members and the genealogical community?
15.	Does any network connect Bangladeshi diaspora from different countries? Please express your opinion about the importance of such a network.
16.	What kind of support did Bangladeshi diaspora individuals, communities and associations from your host country provide to people and organisations of Bangladesh to address challenges induced by the COVID-19 Pandemic?

### Module C

#### Diaspora Investors

1.	a)	Would you tell us in which sector you invested? Why did you choose that sector?
	b)	Why were you interested in investing in Bangladesh? Did any incentives influence you in this regard?
	c)	Did you increase your investment in Bangladesh or plan to do so?
2.	a)	Would you tell us from experience that Bangladeshi diaspora investors could invest in which sectors of Bangladesh?
	b)	Can you tell us how to make Bangladeshi diaspora investors and entrepreneurs interested in investing in nostalgia products, diaspora tourism to Bangladesh, and the science and technology sectors?
	c)	As a non-resident Bangladeshi investor, what is your overall assessment of the investment environment of Bangladesh?
	d)	What kind of legal, policy, infrastructural facilities are available for non-resident Bangladeshi and foreign investment?
	e)	Do you feel Bangladesh's import and export policies (particularly custom duty and tax affairs) are helpful for non-resident Bangladeshi investors?
	f)	Do import and export policies of Bangladesh (particularly custom duty and tax affairs) have some limitations or ambiguities that create obstacles for non-resident Bangladeshi investors?

	g)	Do Bangladeshi diaspora investors face any problems or obstacles to transferring the capital investment to Bangladesh and profits to the host country? How could such a problem or obstacle be overcome?
3.		Do you think Bangladeshi diaspora investors and Bangladeshi local investors jointly could invest? Can you pinpoint some good examples of such initiatives?
4.	a)	Are Bangladeshi diaspora investors associated with any cross border/inter-states (regional, international) business and trade network?
	b)	How does such a network function, and how beneficial is it?
	c)	Do you have any suggestions to strengthen the capacities of such a network?
	d)	How can such a business or trade network be affiliated with Bangladesh's national development process, and how would Bangladesh benefit?
5.		Do you feel the need for establishing any specialised body to create investment interest among Bangladeshi diaspora investors? What could be the framework of such an entity?
6.		Do you feel mass media and social media played or could play any role to facilitate communication between non-resident Bangladeshi investors and local and indigenous investors from Bangladesh?
7.	a)	Do you think Bangladesh's investment-dependent business and trade sectors are at risk, or will it be due to the COVID-19 Pandemic?
	b)	Do you believe Bangladesh's investment environment and the situation will change due to the COVID-19 Pandemic?
	c)	What kind of initiatives Government of Bangladesh should take to make Bangladeshi diaspora investors interested in investing and safeguarding their investments considering the changing environment and situation due to the COVID-19 Pandemic impact?

Conclusion	We are at the end of the interview:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did we miss anything you deem necessary?</li> <li>• Are there any other recommendations/suggestions/comments from your side which could be significant in harnessing the potentials of the Bangladeshi diaspora towards the development of the country?</li> <li>• Do you have any questions/queries for us? We shall be happy to respond.</li> </ul>

We humbly express our deep sense of gratitude for providing us with valuable information through this interview. These will undoubtedly enrich our study. Furthermore, we hope the information will help ensure the active inclusion of the Bangladeshi diaspora in national development. Many thanks for your invaluable cooperation.

In final, we ever pray for your gracious life and prosperity.

Be healthy and be well.





## Ensuring active inclusion of diaspora in Bangladesh's national development

### *Data Collection Instrument 3*

#### Key Informants' Interview (KII) Schedule for Government Agency

##### Introduction

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As an informed person on the subject, we want to take your interview to obtain relevant information and invaluable insights, which would enhance our understanding of the relevant issues. There are different modules in this data collection instrument; please respond only against the module applicable to you. The interview/discussion will be kept confidential. We shall not use the information provided by you for any purpose other than this research. Your identity shall remain anonymous.

Professor Dr Abul Barkat leads the research on behalf of the Human Development Research Centre (HDRC). For any further information, you can contact directly to the concerned member of the HDRC research team: Mr Sk Ali Ahmed, Research Consultant, HDRC; Contact: (+88) 01711548187; [aliahmed@hdrc-bd.com](mailto:aliahmed@hdrc-bd.com)

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Phone: (+88 02) 58150381, 58157621, 8101704, Fax: (+88 02) 58157620

E-mail: [info@hdrc-bd.com](mailto:info@hdrc-bd.com); [hdrc.bd@gmail.com](mailto:hdrc.bd@gmail.com); Web: [www.hdrc-bd.com](http://www.hdrc-bd.com)

2020 – 2021

About the Key Informant	
Name	
Designation	
Division/Department/Section	
Organisation	
Contact number	
E-mail	

Interview Information	
<b>Mode of interview</b> (multiple modes can be used, as per the convenience of the informant)	Face-to-face=1; Telephonic=2; Online interview=3; Email=4; Hardcopy written response=5
<b>Place(s) of interview</b> (applicable, only if face-to-face interview held)	
<b>Date(s) of interview</b>	
<b>Interview start time(s)</b>	
<b>Interview start time(s)</b>	
<b>Name of the interviewer</b>	
<b>Name of the note taker</b>	

## Modules

**Module A:** Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment

**Module B:** Wage Earners' Welfare Board

**Module C:** Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training

**Module D:** Probashi Kallyan Bank

**Module E:** Ministry of Foreign Affairs

**Module F:** Economic Relations Division, Ministry of Finance

**Module G:** Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism

**Module H:** Ministry of Planning

**Module I:** Bangladesh Investment Development Authority

**Module J:** Bangladesh Bank

**Module K:** Bangladesh Election Commission

**Module L:** National Identity Registration Wing

## Key Informants' Interview Issues

### Module A

### Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment

1.	a)	Would you please shed some light on the Bangladeshi diaspora spread across the globe (i.e., population by country/region)?
	b)	What is the status of developing a comprehensive, inter-connected, and dynamic overseas migration-related database—including the diaspora population?
	c)	What are the challenges in preparing and updating such a database?
	d)	How could this complete successfully within a minimum time?
2.	a)	Do you feel for a comprehensive mechanism and institutional structure to ensure the active engagement of the diaspora community in the national development process?
	b)	If you feel the need for such a tool, what could be the significant issue-based features and basic terms covered within that mechanism?
	c)	Do you feel for a designated entity to carry out the tasks successfully? Please, explain.
3.	a)	Does your Ministry have a mechanism to maintain a functional relationship with the diaspora associations and the mobilisers/opinion interlocutors among the diaspora communities (including engaging notable Bangladeshi diaspora as goodwill/country ambassadors; giving an award to the successful diaspora so on)?
	b)	If you have such an arrangement, would you please elaborate a bit (ongoing and planned)?

	c)	What would be your suggestions for maintaining/establishing a vibrant and functional relationship between your Ministry and diaspora association and the mobiliser/opinion interlocutors among the diaspora communities?
4.	a)	Do your Labour Welfare Wings have some functional mechanism to extend proper support to the diaspora communities?
	b)	If you have such an arrangement, would you please elaborate a bit?
	c)	What would be your suggestions regarding maintaining/establishing a vibrant and functional mechanism in the Labour Welfare Wings to extend welfare support to the diaspora communities?
5.	a)	Do you feel that the diaspora network and their social capital in the host countries can facilitate decent worker migration from Bangladesh? Please share your thoughts on it.
	b)	Does your Ministry have any initiative regarding utilising the diaspora network in facilitating worker migration?
	c)	If you have such an initiative, would you please elaborate on that a bit (ongoing and planned)?
	d)	What would be your suggestions in this regard?
6.	a)	What impacts have you observed over the diaspora communities due to the COVID-19 Pandemic?
	b)	Does your Ministry has taken any initiative to overcome the COVID-19 relevant crisis among the diaspora communities?
	c)	Would you kindly delineate those initiatives (ongoing and planned)?
	d)	What would be your recommendations regarding extending support for the welfare of the Bangladeshi diaspora during this COVID-19 crisis?
	e)	What measures must be taken as a priority so that Bangladesh can sustain the diaspora contribution in developing the country amidst the COVID-19 crisis?
7.	a)	What is the current capacity of your Ministry (i.e., policy frameworks, the overall system of service delivery, human and other resources, monitoring and evaluation) to facilitate the diaspora communities in contributing to the country's development?
	b)	Do you feel the need for any specific interventions from other Government agencies/Intergovernmental organisations/Development partners/Private Sector/Civil Society Organisations to facilitate your relevant initiatives/plans/ envisions?
8.		Do you have any suggestions regarding establishing a more functional coordination/partnership mechanism with other stakeholders—the Government, intergovernmental Organisations, development partners, private sector, and civil society Organisations—to ensure the diaspora contribution to the country's development?

## Module B

## Wage Earners' Welfare Board

1.	a)	Does your Board have some functional mechanism to extend proper welfare support to the diaspora communities?
	b)	If you have such an arrangement, would you please elaborate a bit?
	c)	What would be your suggestions regarding maintaining/establishing a functional mechanism in your Board to extend welfare support to the diaspora communities?
2.	a)	What impacts have you observed over the diaspora communities due to the COVID-19 Pandemic?
	b)	Does your Board have taken any initiative to overcome the COVID-19 relevant crisis among the diaspora communities?
	c)	Would you kindly delineate those initiatives (ongoing and planned)?
	d)	What would be your recommendations regarding extending support for the welfare of the Bangladeshi diaspora during this COVID-19 crisis?
	e)	What measures are to be taken as a priority so that Bangladesh can sustain the diaspora contribution to the country's development amidst the COVID-19 crisis?
3.	a)	What is your board's capacity (i.e., policy frameworks, the overall service delivery system, human and other resources)?
	b)	Do you feel the need for any specific interventions from other Government agencies/Intergovernmental Organisations/Development partners/Private Sector/Civil Society Organisations to facilitate your relevant initiatives/plans/visions?
4.		Do you have any suggestions regarding establishing a more functional coordination/partnership mechanism with other stakeholders—the Government, intergovernmental Organisations, development partners, private sector, and civil society Organisations—to ensure the diaspora contribution to the country's development?

## Module C

### Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training

1.	a)	What is the status of developing a comprehensive, inter-connected, and dynamic overseas migration-related database—including the diaspora population?
	b)	What are the challenges in preparing and updating such a database?
	c)	How could this complete successfully within a minimum time?
2.	a)	Does your Bureau have a plan to focus on the diaspora communities living across the world?
	b)	If you have such a plan, please elaborate on that a bit (ongoing and planned).
	c)	What would be your suggestions in this regard?
3.	a)	Is there any initiative from your Bureau to ensure proper accreditation of the certificates/skills training of the Bangladeshi diaspora in the host countries?
	b)	If there are some initiatives, would you please elaborate a bit (ongoing and planned)?
	c)	What would be your suggestions in this regard?
4.	a)	Do you feel that the diaspora network and their social capital in the host countries can facilitate decent worker migration from Bangladesh? Please share your thoughts on it.
	b)	Does your Bureau have any initiative regarding utilising the diaspora network in facilitating worker migration?
	c)	If you have such an initiative, would you please elaborate on that a bit (ongoing and planned)?
	d)	What would be your suggestions in this regard?
5.	a)	What is the current capacity of your Bureau (i.e., policy frameworks, the overall system of service delivery, human and other resources, monitoring and evaluation) to facilitate the needs of the diaspora communities?
	b)	What would be your suggestions in this regard?

## Module D

### Probashi Kallyan Bank

1.	a)	Can we disaggregate the remittance by type of remitter—temporary migrant workers and diaspora communities? (Nationally, and in your bank)
	b)	Suppose that can be disaggregated at least to some extent. What would be the approximate portion of remittance sent by the diaspora communities by year and shared by origin? (Nationally, and in your bank)
2.	c)	What are the steps taken to attract more remittances? (Nationally, and in your bank)
	d)	What could be done more to attract more remittances? (Nationally, and in your bank)
2.	a)	What are financial investment opportunities available in your bank for the diaspora communities—current ones and those in planning?
	b)	Can you please disaggregate the investment amount by type of investor—temporary migrant workers and diaspora communities?
	c)	Suppose that can be disaggregated at least to some extent. Then, what would be the approximate portion invested by the diaspora communities by year and share by origin?
3.	a)	What are the steps taken to attract more investments in financial products from the diaspora communities?
	b)	How can you facilitate more such investment from the diaspora communities?
4.	a)	Would you please identify the critical challenges in promoting diaspora investment?
	b)	What are the priority areas where the immediate focus is required to enable the diaspora investments?
5.	a)	Do you feel the need for a strategy or policy modifications to increase such investments by the diaspora communities?
	b)	If you think so, what could be the guiding principles/vital elements in that strategy or what possible policy modifications could be helpful?
6.	a)	What is the current capacity of your bank (i.e., policy frameworks, the overall system of service delivery, human and other resources, monitoring and evaluation) to carry out the current/planned activities targetting the diaspora communities?
	b)	Do you feel the need for any interventions from other agencies to facilitate your relevant initiatives/plans/ envisions?
7.	a)	Suppose a Bangladeshi diaspora is interested in making a financial investment in Bangladesh. Is there any particular mechanism in your bank to facilitate that?
	b)	Would you kindly let us know about the process/steps to follow that potential investor, diaspora?



8.	a)	Does your bank take any measure to sustain and promote the diaspora investment in Bangladesh amidst the COVID-19 crisis?
	b)	If you have taken any such step, please elaborate a bit (ongoing and planned).
	c)	What would be your suggestions in this regard?
9.		To facilitate/attract the diaspora investments, do you have any suggestions regarding establishing a more functional coordination/ partnership mechanism among the stakeholders—the Government, intergovernmental Organisations, development partners, private sector, and civil society Organisations—to facilitate/attract the diaspora investments?

## Module E

### Ministry of Foreign Affairs

1.	a)	Would you please shed some light on the Bangladeshi diaspora spread across the globe (i.e., population by country/region)?
	b)	What is the status of developing a comprehensive, inter-connected, and dynamic overseas migration-related database—including the diaspora population?
	c)	What are the challenges in preparing and updating such a database?
	d)	How could this be completed successfully within a minimum time?
2.	a)	Do you feel for a comprehensive mechanism and institutional structure to ensure the active engagement of the diaspora community in the national development process?
	b)	If you feel the need for such a tool, what could be the central issues/content/structure within that mechanism?
	c)	Do you feel for a separate entity to carry out the tasks successfully? Please, explain.
3.	a)	What are the endeavours in mapping existing and probable crises applicable to the Bangladeshi diaspora by countries and regions by your Ministry?
	b)	What are the challenges in preparing and updating such a crisis mapping?
	c)	How could this mapping be completed successfully within a minimum time?
4.	a)	Does your Ministry have a mechanism to maintain a functional relationship with the diaspora associations and the mobilisers/opinion interlocutors among the diaspora communities (including engaging notable Bangladeshi diaspora as goodwill/country ambassadors; giving an award to the successful diaspora so on)?
	b)	If you have such an arrangement, would you please elaborate a bit (ongoing and planned)?
	c)	What would be your suggestions for maintaining/establishing a vibrant and functional relationship between your Ministry and diaspora association and the mobiliser/opinion interlocutors among the diaspora communities?

5.	a)	Would you please share the process and outcomes of your foreign missions and diplomatic endeavours to establish the welfare and rights of the Bangladeshi diaspora communities in the host countries?
	b)	What would be your suggestions regarding maintaining/establishing a more vibrant and functional mechanism in the Embassies/High Commissions/Consular Offices to extend welfare support to the diaspora communities?
6.	a)	Does your Ministry have any initiative to utilise the diaspora networks in strengthening bilateral economic diplomacy?
	b)	If you have such an arrangement, would you please elaborate a bit (ongoing and planned)?
	c)	What would be your suggestions regarding utilising the diaspora networks in strengthening bilateral economic diplomacy?
7.	a)	What impacts have you observed over the diaspora communities due to the COVID-19 Pandemic?
	b)	Does your Ministry has taken any initiative to overcome the COVID-19 relevant crisis among the diaspora communities?
	c)	Would you kindly delineate those initiatives (ongoing and planned)?
	d)	What would be your recommendations regarding extending support for the welfare of the Bangladeshi diaspora during this COVID-19 crisis?
	e)	What measures must be taken as a priority so that Bangladesh can sustain the diaspora contribution in developing the country amidst the COVID-19 crisis?
8.	a)	What is the current capacity of your Ministry (i.e., policy frameworks, the overall system of service delivery, human and other resources, monitoring and evaluation) to facilitate the diaspora communities in contributing to the country's development?
	b)	Do you feel the need for any specific interventions from other Government agencies/Intergovernmental Organisations/Development partners/Private Sector/Civil Society Organisations to facilitate your relevant initiatives/plans/ envisions?
9.		Do you have any suggestions regarding establishing a more functional coordination/partnership mechanism with other stakeholders—the Government, intergovernmental Organisations, development partners, private sector, and civil society Organisations—to ensure the country's development?

## Module F

### Economic Relations Division, Ministry of Finance

1.	a)	<p>If a Bangladeshi diaspora is interested in contributing to the socio-economic development of Bangladesh in the following areas, what policy provisions will be there for him/her?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Investment in the financial market</li> <li>▪ Investment in enterprise development</li> <li>▪ Joint venture</li> <li>▪ Funding in philanthropic initiatives</li> <li>▪ Funding/Matching grant in community development projects</li> </ul>
	b)	What would be your suggestions regarding facilitating the diaspora's potential contribution to the country's socio-economic development through your Ministry?
2.	a)	Do you feel that any particular strategy/planning/policy will help ensure the diaspora's contribution to the country's development?
	b)	What could be the guiding principles/vital elements in those potential policy documents, if you think so?
3.	a)	Do you feel for a comprehensive mechanism and dedicated institutional structure to ensure the active engagement of the diaspora in the national development process?
	b)	If you feel the need for such a tool, what could be the significant issue-based features and basic terms covered within that mechanism?
	c)	Do you feel for a designated entity to carry out the tasks successfully? Please, explain.
4.	a)	Is there any initiative in establishing a system towards ensuring active participation of the Bangladeshi diaspora in developing the national policies, strategies, and plans related to the country's economic development?
	b)	If there are relevant initiatives, would you kindly delineate those (ongoing and planned)?
	c)	What would be your suggestions in this regard?
5.	a)	Does your Ministry have any initiatives to utilise the diaspora networks in strengthening the bilateral economic relations?
	b)	If you have such an arrangement, would you please elaborate a bit (ongoing and planned)?
	c)	What would be your suggestions regarding utilising the diaspora networks in strengthening bilateral economic relations?
6.	a)	Would you please identify the key challenges (policy, institutional, resource) for engaging diaspora in the development process?
	b)	What are the priority areas where the immediate focus is required?
7.	a)	What is the current capacity of your Ministry (i.e., policy frameworks, the overall system mechanism, human and other resources, monitoring and evaluation) to facilitate the diaspora communities in contributing to the country's development?
	b)	Do you feel the need for any specific interventions from other Government agencies/Intergovernmental Organisations/Development partners/Private Sector/Civil Society Organisations to facilitate your relevant initiatives/plans/visions?
8.		Do you have any suggestions regarding establishing a more functional coordination/partnership mechanism with other stakeholders—the Government, intergovernmental Organisations, development partners, private sector, and civil society organisations—to ensure the diaspora contribution to the country's development?

## Module G

### Ministry of Planning

1.	a)	Is there any initiative in establishing a system towards ensuring active participation of the Bangladeshi diaspora in developing the national policies, strategies and plans?
	b)	Would you kindly delineate those initiatives (ongoing and planned)?
	c)	What is the current capacity of your Ministry (i.e., policy frameworks, the overall system of planning, human and other resources) to carry out the current/planned activities?
	d)	Do you feel the need for any interventions from other government and non—government agencies to facilitate your relevant initiatives/plans/ envisions?
2.	a)	Would you please share with us your informed judgment about the need for a particular strategy/planning/policy to ensure the diaspora's contribution to the country's development?
	b)	What could be the guiding principles/vital elements in those potential policy documents if you feel so?
3.	a)	Would you please identify the key challenges (policy, institutional, resource) for engaging diaspora in the development process?
	b)	What are the priority areas where the immediate focus is required?
4.		What measures must be taken as a priority— in developing strategy and action plan— so that Bangladesh can sustain the diaspora contribution in the country's development amidst the COVID-19 crisis?
5.		Do you have any suggestions regarding establishing a more functional coordination/ partnership mechanism among the stakeholders—the Government, intergovernmental Organisations, development partners, private sector, and civil society organisations—to ensure the diaspora contribution to the country's development?

## Module H

### Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism

1.	a)	Does your Ministry have taken any particular initiative to facilitate a smooth journey of the Bangladeshi diaspora towards Bangladesh?
	b)	Would you kindly delineate those initiatives (ongoing and planned)?
	c)	What is the current capacity of your Ministry (i.e., policy frameworks, the overall system of service delivery, human and other resources, monitoring and evaluation) to carry out the current/planned activities?
	d)	Do you feel the need for specific interventions from other government and non—government agencies to facilitate your relevant initiatives/plans/ envisions?
2.	a)	Does your Ministry have taken any particular action to promote, popularise, and facilitate diaspora tourism in Bangladesh?
	b)	Would you kindly delineate those initiatives (ongoing and planned)?
	c)	What is the current capacity of your Ministry (i.e., policy frameworks, the overall system of service delivery, human and other resources, monitoring and evaluation) to carry out the current/planned activities?
	d)	Do you feel the need for any specific interventions from other Government agencies/Intergovernmental Organisations/Development Partners/Private Sector/ Social and Cultural Forums/Civil Society Organisations to facilitate your relevant initiatives/plans/ envisions?
3.	a)	Suppose a Bangladeshi diaspora and/or his/her descendant is interested in travelling to Bangladesh and visiting her/his ancestral lands. Is there any mechanism in your Ministry to facilitate that?
	b)	Would you kindly let us know about the process/steps to be followed by that diaspora?
	c)	What would be your suggestions regarding facilitating such travel and visits through your Ministry?
4.	a)	What challenges are you facing regarding diaspora travel and tourism due to the COVID-19 Pandemic?
	b)	Does your Ministry has taken any initiative to overcome the COVID-19 relevant crisis on diaspora travel and tourism?
	c)	Would you kindly delineate those initiatives (ongoing and planned)?
	d)	What measures must be taken as a priority so that Bangladesh can overcome the problems regarding diaspora travel and tourism due to the COVID-19 crisis?
5.		To facilitate vibrant diaspora tourism in Bangladesh, do you have any suggestions regarding establishing a more functional coordination/ partnership mechanism with other stakeholders—the Government agencies/ intergovernmental Organisations, development partners, private sector, social and cultural forums, and civil society organisations —to facilitate vibrant diaspora tourism in Bangladesh?

## Module I

### Bangladesh Investment Development Authority

1.	Would you please share with us the available details about the current status and dynamics of diaspora investments in Bangladesh—the amount by year, share by origin, sectors of investments, success stories/cases (including the investments from the second generation diaspora)?
2.	<p>a) What are the relevant Laws/Policies regarding diaspora investment?</p> <p>b) Would you please share with us your informed judgment about the need for a particular strategy/planning/policy to facilitate diaspora investment?</p> <p>c) What could be the guiding principles/vital elements in those potential policy documents if you feel so?</p>
3.	<p>a) Are there any added benefits/special incentives to attract diaspora investment?</p> <p>b) If there are such benefits/incentives, what are those?</p>
4.	<p>a) Does your Authority has taken any initiative in facilitating diaspora investment?</p> <p>b) Would you kindly delineate those initiatives (ongoing and planned)?</p> <p>c) What is the current capacity of your Authority (i.e., policy frameworks, human and other resources) to carry out the current/planned activities?</p> <p>d) Do you feel the need for interventions from other government and non—government agencies to facilitate your relevant initiatives/plans/ envisions?</p>
5.	<p>a) Would you please identify the key challenges (policy, institutional, resource) for facilitating diaspora investment?</p> <p>b) What are the priority areas where the immediate focus is required?</p>
6.	<p>a) What, according to you, are the potential areas/sectors of diaspora investment?</p> <p>b) What could the other steps be to attract diaspora investment in those areas/sectors?</p>
7.	<p>a) Suppose a Bangladeshi diaspora is interested in investing in Bangladesh. Is there any particular mechanism in your Authority to facilitate that?</p> <p>b) Would you kindly let us know about the process/steps to be followed by that diaspora?</p> <p>c) What would be your suggestions regarding facilitating the potential diaspora investment through your Authority?</p>
8.	What measures must be taken as a priority so that Bangladesh can ensure the diaspora investment in Bangladesh amidst the COVID-19 crisis?
9.	To facilitate/attract the diaspora investments, do you have any suggestions regarding establishing a more functional coordination/ partnership mechanism among the stakeholders—the Government, intergovernmental organisations, development partners, private sector, and civil society organisations—to facilitate/attract the diaspora investments?

## Module J

### Bangladesh Bank

1.	a)	Can we disaggregate the remittance by type of remitter—temporary migrant workers and diaspora communities?
	b)	Suppose that can be disaggregated at least to some extent. What would be the approximate portion of remittance sent by the diaspora communities by year and origin-wise share of the same?
	c)	What are the steps taken by the Central Bank to attract more remittances?
	d)	What more can be done to attract more remittances?
2.	a)	What are the financial investment opportunities available for the diaspora communities—current ones and planned ones?
	b)	Would you please share the relevant statistics of financial investment by the diaspora communities by year and share by origin?
	c)	What are the repatriation and tax policies on the returns?
3.	a)	What are the steps taken by the Central Bank to attract more investments in the financial products from the diaspora communities?
	b)	How can Bangladesh facilitate more such investment from the diaspora communities?
4.	a)	Would you please identify the critical challenges in promoting diaspora investment?
	b)	What are the priority areas where the immediate focus is required to enable the diaspora investments?
5.	a)	Do you feel the need for a strategy to increase such investments by the diaspora communities?
	b)	If you think so, what could be the guiding principles/critical elements in that strategy?
6.	a)	What is the current capacity of the Central Bank (i.e., policy frameworks, the overall system of policy planning, human and other resources, monitoring and evaluation) to carry out the current/planned activities targetting the diaspora communities?
	b)	Do you feel the need for interventions from other government and non—government agencies to facilitate your relevant initiatives/plans/ envisions?
7.	a)	Suppose a Bangladeshi diaspora is interested in making a financial investment in Bangladesh. Is there any particular mechanism in the Central Bank to facilitate that?
	b)	Would you kindly let us know about the process/steps to follow that potential investor, diaspora?
	c)	What would be your suggestions regarding facilitating the potential diaspora investment through the Central Bank?



8.	a)	Does the Central Bank take any measure to sustain and promote the diaspora investment in Bangladesh amidst the COVID-19 crisis?
	b)	If you have taken any such step, please elaborate a bit (ongoing and planned).
	c)	What would be your suggestions in this regard?
9.		To facilitate/attract the diaspora investments, do you have any suggestions regarding establishing a more functional coordination/ partnership mechanism among the stakeholders—the Government, intergovernmental Organisations, development partners, private sector, and civil society organisations—to facilitate/attract the diaspora investments?

## Module K

### Bangladesh Election Commission

1.		What are the relevant laws/policies regarding the participation of the Bangladeshi diaspora members in the elections held in Bangladesh at different tiers?
2.	a)	Does your Commission has taken any initiative in facilitating the voting process of the Bangladeshi diaspora?
	b)	Would you kindly delineate those initiatives (ongoing and planned)?
	c)	What challenges do you foresee in ensuring the participation of the diaspora members in the elections held in Bangladesh?
	d)	What is the current capacity of your Commission (i.e., policy frameworks, human and other resources, monitoring and evaluation and so on) to implement the existing/planned activities?
	e)	Do you feel the need for specific interventions from other government and non—government agencies to facilitate your relevant initiatives/plans/ envisions?
3.	a)	Do you feel for any actions (law/policy, structure, mechanism) to ensure the participation of the diaspora members in the elections in Bangladesh?
	b)	If you feel so, what initiatives could be instrumental?
4.	a)	What impacts have the COVID-19 brought in your service rendering related to the Bangladeshi diaspora?
	b)	Has your Commission taken any initiative to overcome the COVID-19 relevant crisis in your service rendering to the diaspora?
	c)	Would you kindly delineate those initiatives (ongoing and planned)?
	d)	What measures are to be instituted to facilitate the smooth rendering of your services to the diaspora?
5.		Do you have any suggestions regarding establishing a more functional coordination/ partnership mechanism among the stakeholders—the Government, intergovernmental Organisations, development partners, private sector, and civil society organisations— to ensure the participation of the diaspora members in the elections held in Bangladesh?

## Module L

### National Identity Registration Wing

1.		What are the relevant Laws/Policies regarding getting a National Identity from your Wing by Bangladeshi diaspora?
2.	a)	Does your Wing has taken any initiative in facilitating the issuance of the National Identity to the Bangladeshi diaspora?
	b)	Would you kindly delineate those initiatives (ongoing and planned)?
	c)	What challenges do you foresee in the issuance of the National Identity to the Bangladeshi diaspora members?
	d)	What is the current capacity of your Commission (i.e., policy frameworks, human and other resources, monitoring and evaluation and so on) to implement the existing/planned activities?
	e)	Do you feel the need for specific interventions from other government and non—government agencies to facilitate your relevant initiatives/plans/ envisions?
3.	a)	Do you feel for any initiatives (law/policy, structure, mechanism) to facilitate the issuance of the National Identity to the Bangladeshi diaspora members?
	b)	If you feel so, what initiates could be instrumental?
4.	a)	What impacts have the COVID-19 brought in your service rendering related to the Bangladeshi diaspora?
	b)	Has your Commission taken any initiative to overcome the COVID-19 relevant crisis in your service rendering to the diaspora?
	c)	Would you kindly delineate those initiatives (ongoing and planned)?
	d)	What measures are required to facilitate the smooth rendering of your services to the diaspora?
5.		Do you have any suggestions regarding establishing a more functional coordination/ partnership mechanism among the stakeholders—the Government, intergovernmental Organisations, development partners, private sector, and civil society organisations— in facilitating the issuance of the National Identity to the Bangladeshi diaspora members?

<b>Conclusion</b>	<p>We are at the end of the interview:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did we miss anything you deem necessary?</li> <li>• Are there any other recommendations/suggestions/comments from your side which could be significant in harnessing the potentials of the Bangladeshi diaspora towards the development of the country?</li> <li>• Do you have any questions/queries for us? We shall be happy to respond.</li> </ul>
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We humbly express our deep sense of gratitude for providing us with valuable information through this interview. These will undoubtedly enrich our study. Furthermore, we hope the information will help ensure the active inclusion of the Bangladeshi diaspora in national development.

Many thanks for your invaluable cooperation.

In final, we ever pray for your gracious life and prosperity.



## Ensuring active inclusion of diaspora in Bangladesh's national development

### *Data Collection Instrument 4*

#### Key Informants' Interview (KII) Schedule for Forum of Knowledgeable Persons and Experts

##### Introduction

The Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Policy 2016 defines diaspora as the expatriates who are staying abroad for a more extended period and have taken nationality of the host country or are willing to take the nationality, but at the same time willing to keep relation with Bangladesh and want to contribute to this country's socio-economic development. The Eighth Five Year Plan desires to engage the Bangladeshi expatriate professionals in the relevant endeavours. The earlier Seventh Five Year Plan stressed that the purview of expatriates' welfare must include Bangladeshi diaspora and migrant workers. It also recognised the diaspora as agents as well as beneficiaries of the country's development.

Despite the Bangladesh Government's various attempts at integrating the diaspora population into national development, it still requires a comprehensive mechanism and specific institutional structure to ensure their active engagement in national development. Against this backdrop, the IOM Bangladesh has commissioned the Human Development Research Centre (HDRC) — one of the country's leading research organisations — to carry out this study. The overall objective of this study is to identify measures to ensure the active inclusion of the Bangladeshi diaspora in the national development of Bangladesh. The European Union (EU) supports the research through a project titled "Bangladesh: Sustainable Reintegration and Improved Migration Governance (Prottasha).

As an informed person on the subject, we want to take your interview to obtain relevant information and invaluable insights, which would enhance our understanding of the relevant issues. There are different modules in this data collection instrument; please respond only against the module applicable to you. The interview/discussion will be kept confidential. We shall not use the information provided by you for any purpose other than this research. Your identity shall remain anonymous.

Professor Dr Abul Barkat leads the research on behalf of the Human Development Research Centre (HDRC). For any further information, you can contact directly to the concerned member of the HDRC research team: Mr Sk Ali Ahmed, Research Consultant, HDRC; Contact: (+88) 01711548187; aliahmed@hdrc-bd.com

##### Study conducted by



#### Human Development Research Centre

humane development through research and action

Road 8, House 5, Mohammadia Housing Society, Mohammadpur, Dhaka-1207, Bangladesh

Phone: (+88 02) 58150381, 58157621, 8101704, Fax: (+88 02) 58157620

E-mail: info@hdrc-bd.com; hdrc.bd@gmail.com; Web: www.hdrc-bd.com

2020 – 2021

About the Key Informant	
Name	
Designation For the former officials, please write both the current and earlier one	
Division/Department/Section For the former officials, please write both the current and earlier one	
Organisation For the former officials, please write both the current one and the earlier one	
Contact number	
E-mail	

Interview Information	
Mode of interview (multiple modes can be used, as per the convenience of the informant)	Face-to-face=1; Telephonic=2; Online interview=3; Email=4; Hardcopy written response=5
Place(s) of interview (applicable, only if face-to-face interview held)	
Date(s) of interview	
Interview start time(s)	
Interview start time(s)	
Name of the interviewer	
Name of the note taker	

## Modules

Module A: Academician, Researchers, Activists, Journalists, Social Media Platform

Module B: Former Foreign Mission Official

## Key Informants' Interview Issues

### Module A

### Academician, Researchers, Activists, Journalists, Social Media Platform

1	How do you feel about the need to include the diaspora community in the development process of Bangladesh?
2.	<p>Would you please share with us the existing situation and dynamics of Bangladeshi diaspora across the regions in the world regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number/concentration by host country/region</li> <li>• Socio-economic position in the host countries</li> <li>• Socio-cultural and political involvement in the host countries</li> <li>• Diaspora association/platform/forum</li> <li>• Mobiliser/opinion interlocutors among the diaspora communities</li> </ul>
3.	a) Would you please share with us your informed judgment about the need for any particular strategy/planning/policy to ensure the diaspora's contribution to the development of Bangladesh?
	b) What could be the guiding principles/vital elements in those potential policy documents if you feel so?
	c) Do you think for a separate entity to carry out the tasks successfully? Please, explain.
4.	a) Have you been observed any initiatives in facilitating diaspora potentials for the development of Bangladesh?
	b) Would you kindly delineate those initiatives (ongoing and in the pipeline)?
	c) Do you feel the need for any specific interventions from the concerned agencies — both Government and non-government — to facilitate relevant initiatives/plans?
5.	a) Would you please identify the key challenges (policy, institutional, resource, coordination, leadership) for engaging diaspora in the development process?
	b) What are the priority areas where the immediate focus is required?
6.	a) What impacts have you observed over the diaspora communities due to the COVID-19 Pandemic?
	b) Have you noticed any initiative to overcome the COVID-19 relevant crisis among the diaspora communities?
	c) Would you kindly delineate those initiatives (ongoing and in the pipeline)?

	d)	What would be your recommendations regarding extending support for the welfare of the Bangladeshi diaspora during this COVID-19 crisis?
	e)	What measures must be taken as a priority so that Bangladesh can sustain the diaspora contribution in developing the country amidst the COVID-19 crisis?
7.	a)	Would you tell us ongoing ancestral social and cultural events/activities/programmes that contribute to the Bangladeshi diaspora's socio-economic culture in the national socio-culture of Bangladesh?
	b)	Would you delineate how to incorporate Bangladeshi diaspora socio-culture as an integral part of the national socio-culture of Bangladesh?
8.	a)	Would you tell us about existing media platforms and networks that could interconnect Bangladeshi diaspora communities from different host countries and the home community of Bangladesh?
	b)	Do you feel the need to create any new platform or reactivate any network that could strengthen the intra-communication and intercommunication of Bangladeshi diaspora communities from different host countries and the home community of Bangladesh?
9.		Do you have any suggestions regarding establishing a more functional coordination/partnership mechanism among the stakeholders—the Government, intergovernmental Organisations, development partners, private sector, civil society organisations, journalists, activists, academicians, researchers, and experts — to ensure the diaspora contribution in the country's development?

## Module B

### Former Foreign Mission Official

1.	a)	According to your knowledge, what are the initiatives and status of developing a comprehensive, inter-connected, and dynamic overseas migration-related database—including the diaspora population?
	b)	What are the challenges in preparing and updating such a database?
	c)	How could this be completed successfully within a minimum time?
2.	a)	Would you please share with us your informed judgment about the need for a particular strategy/planning/policy to ensure the diaspora's contribution to the country's development?
	b)	What could be the guiding principles/vital elements in those potential policy documents if you feel so?
3.	a)	How do you feel for a comprehensive mechanism and specific institutional structure to ensure the active engagement of the diaspora community in the national development process?
	b)	If you feel the need for such a tool, what could be the central issues/content/structure in that mechanism?
	c)	Do you think for a separate entity to carry out the tasks successfully? Please, explain.
4.	a)	Do the Foreign Missions have a mechanism to maintain a functional relationship with the diaspora associations and the mobilisers/opinion interlocutors among the diaspora communities (including <i>engaging notable Bangladeshi diaspora members as goodwill/country ambassadors; giving an award to the successful diaspora, and so on</i> )?

	b)	If they have such an arrangement, would you please elaborate a bit?
	c)	What would be your suggestions regarding maintaining/establishing a vibrant and functional relation between the Foreign Missions and the diaspora association and the mobiliser/opinion interlocutors among the diaspora communities?
5.	a)	Would you please share your experience with us about the process and outcomes of the foreign missions and diplomatic endeavours to establish the welfare and rights of the Bangladeshi diaspora communities in the host countries?
	b)	Do the Foreign Missions have some functional mechanism to extend proper support to the diaspora communities?
	c)	If they have such an arrangement in the Foreign Missions, would you please elaborate a bit?
	d)	What would be your suggestions regarding maintaining/establishing a vibrant and functional mechanism in the Foreign Missions to extend welfare support to the diaspora communities?
6.	a)	Have you been observed initiatives in facilitating diaspora potentials for the development of Bangladesh?
	b)	Would you kindly delineate those initiatives (ongoing and in the pipeline)?
	c)	Do you feel the need for any specific interventions from the concerned agencies — both Government and non-government — to facilitate relevant initiatives/plans?
7.	a)	Would you please identify the key challenges (policy, institutional, resource, coordination, leadership) for engaging diaspora in the development process?
	b)	What are the priority areas where the immediate focus is required?
8.	a)	What impacts can you foresee over the diaspora communities due to the COVID-19 Pandemic?
	b)	What would be your recommendations regarding extending support for the welfare of the Bangladeshi diaspora during this COVID-19 crisis?
	c)	What measures must be taken as a priority so that Bangladesh can sustain the diaspora contribution in developing the country amidst the COVID-19 crisis?

Conclusion	We are at the end of the interview:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did we miss anything you deem necessary?</li> <li>• Are there any other recommendations/suggestions/comments from your side which could be significant in harnessing the potentials of the Bangladeshi diaspora towards the development of the country?</li> <li>• Do you have any questions/queries for us? We shall be happy to respond.</li> </ul>

We humbly express our deep sense of gratitude for providing us with valuable information through this interview. These will undoubtedly enrich our study. Furthermore, we hope the information will help ensure the active inclusion of the Bangladeshi diaspora in national development.

Many thanks for your invaluable cooperation.

In final, we ever pray for your gracious life and prosperity.





## Ensuring active inclusion of diaspora in Bangladesh's national development

### *Data Collection Instrument 5*

#### Key Informants' Interview (KII) Schedule for Private Sector

##### Introduction

The Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Policy 2016 defines diaspora as the expatriates who are staying abroad for a more extended period and have taken nationality of the host country or are willing to take the nationality, but at the same time willing to keep relation with Bangladesh and want to contribute to this country's socio-economic development. The Eighth Five Year Plan desires to engage the Bangladeshi expatriate professionals in the relevant endeavours. The earlier Seventh Five Year Plan stressed that the purview of expatriates' welfare must include Bangladeshi diaspora and migrant workers. It also recognised the diaspora as agents as well as beneficiaries of the country's development.

Despite the Bangladesh Government's various attempts at integrating the diaspora population into national development, it still requires a comprehensive mechanism and specific institutional structure to ensure their active engagement in national development. Against this backdrop, the IOM Bangladesh has commissioned the Human Development Research Centre (HDRC) — one of the country's leading research organisations — to carry out this study. The overall objective of this study is to identify measures to ensure the active inclusion of the Bangladesh diaspora in the national development of Bangladesh. The European Union (EU) supports the research through a project titled "Bangladesh: Sustainable Reintegration and Improved Migration Governance (Prottasha).

As an informed person on the subject, we want to take your interview to obtain relevant information and invaluable insights, which would enhance our understanding of the relevant issues. There are different modules in this data collection instrument; please respond only against the module applicable to you. The interview/discussion will be kept confidential. We shall not use the information provided by you for any purpose other than this research. Your identity shall remain anonymous.

Professor Dr Abul Barkat leads the research on behalf of the Human Development Research Centre (HDRC). For any further information, you can contact directly to the concerned member of the HDRC research team: Mr Sk Ali Ahmed, Research Consultant, HDRC; Contact: (+88) 01711548187; aliahmed@hdrc-bd.com

##### *Study conducted by*



#### Human Development Research Centre

humane development through research and action

Road 8, House 5, Mohammadia Housing Society, Mohammadpur, Dhaka-1207, Bangladesh

Phone: (+88 02) 58150381, 58157621, 8101704, Fax: (+88 02) 58157620

E-mail: info@hdrc-bd.com; hdrc.bd@gmail.com; Web: www.hdrc-bd.com

2020–2021

About the Key Informant	
Name	
Designation	
Division/Department/Section	
Organisation	
Contact number	
E-mail	

Interview Information	
<b>Mode of interview</b> (multiple modes can be used, as per the convenience of the informant)	Face-to-face=1; Telephonic=2; Online interview=3; Email=4; Hardcopy written response=5
<b>Place(s) of interview</b> (applicable, only if face-to-face interview held)	
<b>Date(s) of interview</b>	
<b>Interview start time(s)</b>	
<b>Interview start time(s)</b>	
<b>Name of the interviewer</b>	
<b>Name of the note taker</b>	

## Modules

**Module A:** Business Forum/Association/Chamber

**Module B:** Tour Operators/Association

## Key Informants' Interview Issues

### Module A

### Business Forum/Association/Chamber

1	How do you feel about the need to include the diaspora community in the country's business/economic development process?
2.	Would you please share the available details about the status and dynamics of diaspora investments in Bangladesh—the amount by year, share by origin, sectors of investments, success stories/cases and so on (including the investments from the second generation diaspora)?
3.	a) Has there been any initiative in facilitating diaspora investment in Bangladesh?
	b) Would you kindly delineate those initiatives (ongoing and planned)?
	c) Do you feel the need for any specific interventions from the concerned agencies — both Government and non-government — to facilitate relevant initiatives/plans?
4.	a) What, according to you, are the potential areas/sectors of diaspora investment?
	b) What possible steps could be taken to attract diaspora investment in those potential areas/sectors?
5.	a) If a Bangladeshi diaspora is interested in investing in Bangladesh, is there any particular mechanism to be followed?
	b) Would you kindly let us know about the process/steps to be followed by that diaspora?
	c) What would be your suggestions regarding facilitating the potential diaspora investment?
6.	What measures are to be adopted as a priority so that Bangladesh can ensure the diaspora investment in Bangladesh amidst the COVID-19 crisis?
7.	To facilitate/attract the diaspora investments, do you have any suggestions regarding establishing a more functional coordination/ partnership mechanism among the stakeholders—the Government, intergovernmental Organisations, development partners, private sector, and civil society organisations—to facilitate/attract the diaspora investments?

## Module B

### Tour Operators/Association

1.	How do you feel about the potentials of tourism by the diaspora community in Bangladesh?
2.	Would you please share with us the available details about the current status and dynamics of diaspora tourism in Bangladesh—the number of diaspora tourists by year, share by origin, places visited, cases, and so on (including tourism by the second generation diaspora)?
3.	a) Has there been any particular initiative in facilitating a smooth journey of the Bangladeshi diaspora towards Bangladesh?
	b) Would you kindly delineate those initiatives (ongoing and planned)?
	c) Do you feel the need for any specific interventions from the concerned agencies — both Government and non-government —to facilitate the relevant initiatives/plans/?
4.	a) Has there been any particular action in promoting, popularising, and facilitating diaspora Tourism in Bangladesh?
	b) Would you kindly delineate those initiatives (ongoing and planned)?
	c) Do you feel the need for any specific interventions from the concerned agencies — both Government and non-government —to facilitate the relevant initiatives/plans/?
5.	a) Suppose a Bangladeshi diaspora and/or his/her descendant is interested in travelling to Bangladesh and visiting her/his ancestral lands. Is there any mechanism to facilitate that?
	b) Would you kindly let us know about the process/steps to be followed by that diaspora?
	c) What would be your suggestions regarding facilitating such travel and visits?
6.	a) What challenges are you facing regarding diaspora travel and tourism due to the COVID-19 Pandemic?
	b) Has there been any initiative to overcome the COVID-19 relevant crisis on diaspora travel and tourism?
	c) Would you kindly delineate those initiatives (ongoing and planned)?
	d) What measures must be taken as a priority so that Bangladesh can overcome the problems regarding diaspora travel and tourism due to the COVID-19 crisis?

#### Conclusion

We are at the end of the interview:

- Did we miss anything you deem necessary?
- Are there any other recommendations/suggestions/comments from your side which could be significant in harnessing the potentials of the Bangladeshi diaspora towards the development of the country?
- Do you have any questions/queries for us? We shall be happy to respond.

We humbly express our deep sense of gratitude for providing us with valuable information through this interview. These will undoubtedly enrich our study. Furthermore, we hope the information will help ensure the active inclusion of the Bangladeshi diaspora in national development.

Many thanks for your invaluable cooperation.

In final, we ever pray for your gracious life and prosperity.



## Ensuring active inclusion of diaspora in Bangladesh's national development

### *Data Collection Instrument 6*

#### Key Informants' Interview (KII) Schedule for Development Partners/Intergovernmental Organisation

#### Introduction

The Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Policy 2016 defines diaspora as the expatriates who are staying abroad for a more extended period and have taken nationality of the host country or are willing to take the nationality, but at the same time willing to keep relation with Bangladesh and want to contribute to this country's socio-economic development. The Eighth Five Year Plan desires to engage the Bangladeshi expatriate professionals in the relevant endeavours. The earlier Seventh Five Year Plan stressed that the purview of expatriates' welfare must include Bangladeshi diaspora and migrant workers. It also recognised the diaspora as agents as well as beneficiaries of the country's development.

Despite the Bangladesh Government's various attempts at integrating the diaspora population into national development, it still requires a comprehensive mechanism and specific institutional structure to ensure their active engagement in national development. Against this backdrop, the IOM Bangladesh has commissioned the Human Development Research Centre (HDRC) — one of the country's leading research organisations — to carry out this study. The overall objective of this study is to identify measures to ensure the active inclusion of the Bangladesh diaspora in the national development of Bangladesh. The European Union (EU) supports the research through a project titled "Bangladesh: Sustainable Reintegration and Improved Migration Governance (Prottasha).

As an informed person on the subject, we want to take your interview to obtain relevant information and invaluable insights, which would enhance our understanding of the relevant issues. There are different modules in this data collection instrument; please respond only against the module applicable to you. The interview/discussion will be kept confidential. We shall not use the information provided by you for any purpose other than this research. Your identity shall remain anonymous.

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2020 - 2021

About the Key Informant	
Name	
Designation	
Division/Department/Section	
Organization	
Contact number	
E-mail	

Interview Information	
<b>Mode of interview</b> (multiple modes can be used, as per the convenience of the informant)	Face-to-face=1; Telephonic=2; Online interview=3; Email=4; Hardcopy written response=5
<b>Place of interview</b> (applicable, only if face-to-face interview held)	
<b>Date(s) of interview</b>	
<b>Interview start time(s)</b>	
<b>Interview start time(s)</b>	
<b>Name of the interviewer</b>	
<b>Name of the note taker</b>	

## Key Informants' Interview Issues

1.		How do you feel about the need to include the diaspora community in the development process of Bangladesh?
2.	a)	Do you feel for a particular strategy/planning/policy to ensure the diaspora's contribution to the country's development?
	b)	What could be the guiding principles/vital elements in those potential policy documents if you feel so?
	c)	Do you think for a separate entity to carry out the tasks successfully? Please, explain.
3.	a)	Are you informed about any initiatives in facilitating diaspora potentials for the development of Bangladesh?
	b)	Would you kindly delineate those initiatives (ongoing and in the pipeline)?
	c)	Do you feel the need for any specific interventions from the concerned agencies — both Government and non-government — to facilitate relevant initiatives/plans?
4.	a)	Would you please identify the key challenges (policy, institutional, resource, coordination, leadership) for engaging diaspora in the development process of Bangladesh?
	b)	What are the priority areas where the immediate focus is required?
5.	a)	What impacts do you foresee over the Bangladeshi diaspora communities due to the COVID-19 Pandemic?
	b)	What would be your recommendations regarding extending support to the Bangladeshi diaspora during this COVID-19 crisis?
	c)	What measures must be taken as a priority so that Bangladesh can sustain the diaspora contribution in developing the country amidst the COVID-19 crisis?
6.		Do you have any suggestions regarding establishing a more functional coordination/partnership mechanism among the stakeholders—the Government, intergovernmental Organisations, development partners, private sector, civil society organisations, journalists, activists, academicians, researchers, and experts — to ensure the diaspora contribution in the country's development?

### Conclusion

We are at the end of the interview:

- Did we miss anything you deem necessary?
- Are there any other recommendations/suggestions/comments from your side which could be significant in harnessing the potentials of the Bangladeshi diaspora towards the development of the country?
- Do you have any questions/queries for us? We shall be happy to respond.

We humbly express our deep sense of gratitude for providing us with valuable information through this interview. These will undoubtedly enrich our study. Furthermore, we hope the information will help ensure the active inclusion of the Bangladeshi diaspora in national development.

Many thanks for your invaluable cooperation.

In final, we ever pray for your gracious life and prosperity.



## **Annexe C**

### **Data Collection Schema by Respondent Category**

### Data Collection Schema by Respondent Category

Demand-side		
	Number of interviews	
	First-generation	Second-generation
<b><i>Diaspora members</i></b>		
Australia	3	-
Canada	3	2
France	2	2
Germany	2	-
Italy	3	2
Japan	2	1
Russia	2	1
Spain	1	-
The Netherlands	2	-
UK	6	3
USA	8	3
<i>Total interviews</i>	<i>34</i>	<i>14</i>
<b><i>Diaspora associations</i></b>		
America Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce (ABCC), USA		
Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Japan (BCCIJ), Japan		
Bangladesh Medical Association of North America (BMANA), New York, USA		
BASUG-Diaspora and Development, Netherlands		
British Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BBCCI), UK		
Japan Bangladesh Society, Tokyo, Japan		
Muktodhara Foundation, New York, USA		
Probashi Parishad (Diaspora Association), Moscow, Russia		
<b><i>Diaspora-invested business entities</i></b>		
SciTech Consulting and Solution Limited ( <i>investment comes from Australia</i> )		
FinEngine ( <i>investment comes from the USA</i> )		

<b>Supply-Side</b>
<b><i>Government</i></b>
Bangladesh Bank
Bangladesh Election Commission
Bangladesh Investment Development Authority
Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training
Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism
Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment
Ministry of Finance
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Planning
National Identity Registration Wing
Probashi Kallyan Bank
Wage Earners' Welfare Board
<b><i>Business associations</i></b>
Bangladesh Association of Software and Information Services (BASIS)
Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI)
Tour Operators Association of Bangladesh (TOAB)
<b><i>Ambassadors</i></b>
Former High Commissioner to the UK
Former Ambassador to the USA
<b><i>Development partners</i></b>
BRAC, Migration Programme
ILO Bangladesh
IOM Bangladesh
UN Women
<b><i>Civil society, media, academia</i></b>
Bangladesh Economic Association
Bangladesh Enterprise Institute
Department of Japanese Studies, University of Dhaka
<i>Probash Kotha</i> —an online news platform

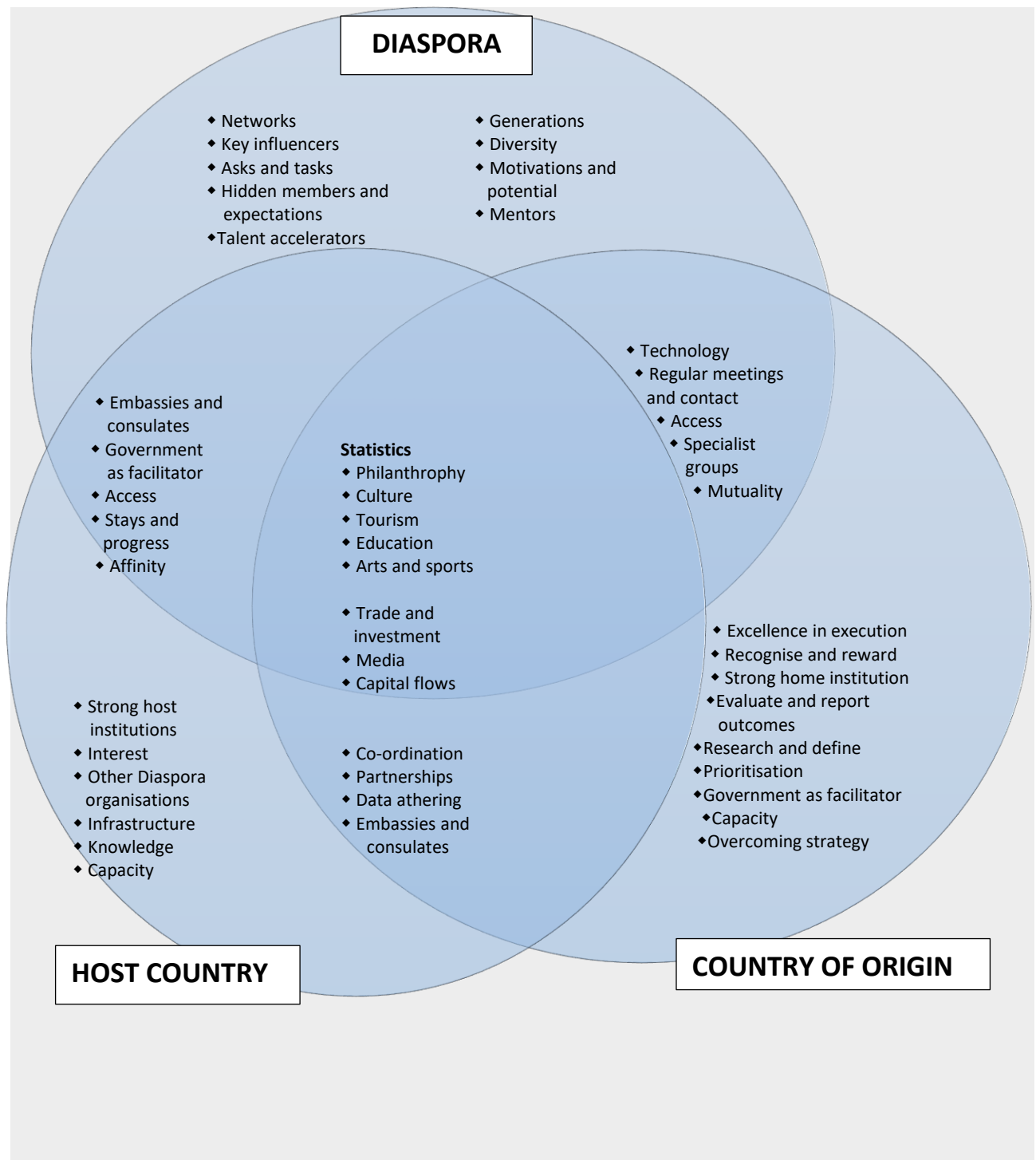
## **Annexe D**

### **Relevant Details about Selected International Instruments**

## A. Global Diaspora Strategies Toolkits

The DiasporaMatters developed the "Global Diaspora Strategies Toolkit" to coincide with the Hillary Clinton Global Diaspora Forum in Washington. According to the Aikins and White (2011), the critical steps for "Diaspora Inclusion" includes: *Appreciate changing migration patterns*, *Define the diaspora*, *Segment the diaspora*, *Understand the 'mile wide – inch deep, versus inch wide – mile deep' conundrum*, and *Build a mutually beneficial relationship with the diaspora*. Bangladesh's relevant policies and institutional mechanism are yet to adequately appreciate the changing migration pattern—in particular, the newer generations of the diaspora are not explicitly addressed. It does "Segmentation of the diaspora" sporadically, based on the needs; it lacks a research-based systematic framework. Countries sometimes try to engage as many diaspora members as they can and often use online portals. However, it is evident that although many people may fall into the catchment of the diaspora, not all of them resonate or relate to being a member of the diaspora. A member of a diaspora does not mean they have a sense of belonging. Many diaspora initiatives failed because they could not identify the individuals willing to stick with the efforts for a long time. Many Bangladeshi diaspora organisations across the host countries with a sharp political and ideological divide make the task difficult for the concerned authorities. Particularly the Bangladeshi Missions in the host countries face challenges to pinpoint the key organisations and interlocutors. Also, the "diaspora" is a complicated issue to define. The "Time", "Place of Birth", and "Citizenship" remain vital factors in determining the diaspora. Ideally, to include the second and third generations of the diaspora in the national development, "Place of Birth" should not act as a bar. For those who have acquired Citizenship in the host country, "Citizenship" should not define diaspora. With necessary policy changes, Bangladesh requires to re-define the "diaspora" considering the changing migration patterns. Diagram 1 shows the components for diaspora engagement circularly, which resembles the Bangladeshi diaspora issue.

Diagram 1: Diaspora circles for engagement



Source: (Aikins and White, 2011:203)

## B. The Diaspora Engagement Self-Assessment Tool (DESAT)

The Diaspora Engagement Self-Assessment Tool (DESAT) allows the African Union Member States to review and assess their current diaspora engagement environment systematically. The DESAT allows identifying strengths and weaknesses in diaspora engagement environments, the ability to monitor scoring over time, and facilitate Member State comparison and benchmarking. It has six pillars that reflect the diaspora engagement.

*Political will* shows the diaspora that their origin country's Government is committed to creating, developing and sustaining a relationship. A *diaspora-friendly environment* emphasises efforts to encourage and support the Diaspora in Citizenship, political participation, migration and investment in their country of origin. The National *Diaspora Strategy* showcases the craving for diaspora outreach and collaboration. *Diaspora Consultation Mechanisms* are a measure of communication and consultation with the diaspora and support this. An *Outreach Mobilising Strategy* reflects the commitment to understanding their diaspora, where they are located, the visibility of diaspora activities and the availability of information on available diaspora opportunities. *Diaspora-oriented programmes* show consideration and commitment to diaspora focused initiatives individually and in collaboration with external stakeholders.

## C. Toolkit for Understanding Diaspora Investment

A Toolkit has been designed, primarily for the African governments, to assess the diaspora's viability back at the country of origin and determine the best approach for attracting investment. Theoretically, '*Diaspora Investment*' often includes human capital investment – such as knowledge and skills transfer. However, this Toolkit focuses only on financial investments from the diaspora.

This Toolkit sketches the user's procedure to understand the opportunities for diaspora investment in their origin country. The Toolkit expects to provide a systematic guide for the Governments to work through. The findings and recommendations could form the basis for a robust diaspora investment strategy. Diagram 2 shows the assessment process at a glance.

Diaspora Investment Readiness Index (DIRI) of this Toolkit comprises indicators from three Pillars:

- 1) the Government's diaspora engagement strategy
- 2) financial environment
- 3) the diaspora's investment readiness.

This Index captures the financial attractiveness of the investment proposition (risk and reward). It overlays the diaspora's craving and willingness to invest. It also captures the country's level of diaspora engagement because it affects the diaspora's desire to invest. It is a tool to guide users to understand weaknesses and strengths concerning potential diaspora investment.

Financial Profile has three sub-indexes:

- 1) Financial robustness
- 2) Financial track record
- 3) Financial attractiveness.

Diaspora Profile has two sub-indexes:

- 1) Diaspora investment ability
- 2) Diaspora investment willingness.

The Toolkit also has a user-friendly Assessment Template in the Excel workbook.

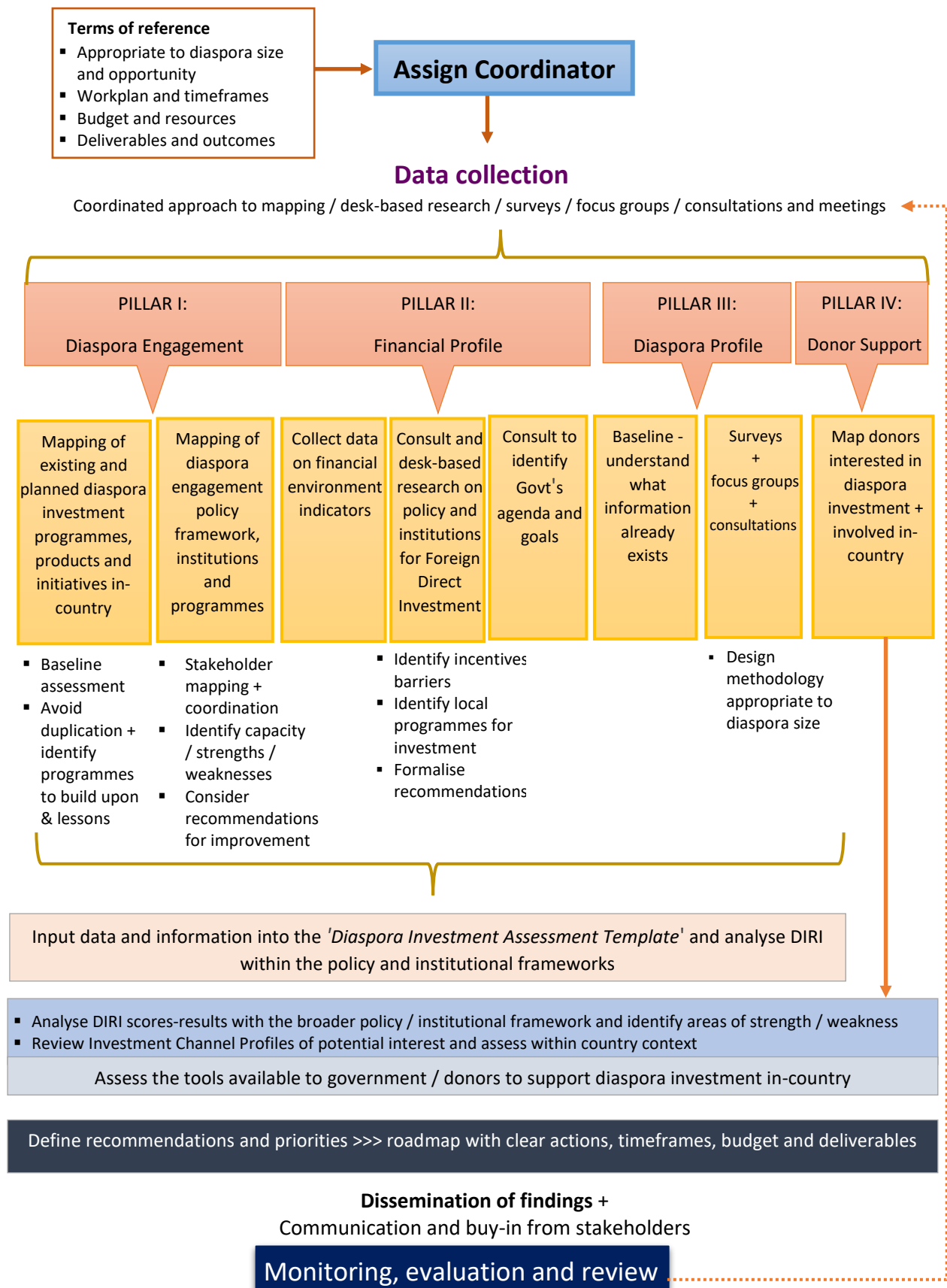


Once the information is ready, a consultation expects to engage all the key stakeholders, especially the Government departments. The purpose will be to review the results and develop a plan or roadmap to move ahead.

The *Diaspora Investment Readiness Index (DIRI)* seems a helpful tool for Bangladesh, requiring necessary modifications to become country-specific. It requires a thorough assessment of it through a systematic study engaging the key stakeholders to modify or design an index with a similar aim.

Nonetheless, it is mention-worthy no formula in definitive is analysing diaspora investment that produces guaranteed outputs. Inputs are nuanced and case-specific, while outputs are both multifaceted and flexible. There will be subjectivity involved in the analysis and the formation of the recommendations for diaspora investment. Nonetheless, it will help the diaspora members in taking evidence-based decisions with a relatively higher precision level. Also, this whole process must remain dynamic for incorporating necessary changes considering the need for time and the development of knowledge over time.

Diagram: 2: The diaspora investment process



Source: DMA Global, 2019. Toolkit or Understanding Diaspora Investment in Africa.

## D. Emigrant Policies Index (EMIX)

Pedroza and Palop-García (2017) made diaspora policy comparisons for the 22 states in the Latin American and Caribbean Region by applying the "Emigrant Policies Index (EMIX)".

The EMIX proposes a helpful tool to condense and compare a broad spectrum of policies across countries. Table 2 shows the broad issues and components analysed to get the index results.

Table 2: Broad issues and components analysed in the EMIX

Broad issue		Components
POLICY		
1	Citizenship	Citizenship for nationals by birth Citizenship for nationals by naturalisation
2	Suffrage	Active and passive electoral rights: — Presidential — Legislative: the lower and upper house Passive electoral rights (Presidential, legislative: lower and upper house)
3	Political Competition	Political offices abroad Political campaigns abroad Emigrant membership to parties in origin
4	Institutional Participation	At the <i>national</i> and <i>consular</i> level: — Structural consultation — Composition of the advisory body — Chair of the consultative body — Rights to get a response — Rights of initiative
5	Economic policies	Remittance: — Programme to foster remittances — Improvement of banking channels — Fee control of remittances — Remittances for co-development Investment programmes Return programmes: — Recognition of academic qualifications obtained abroad — Communication campaign to foster the return — Tax exemption to bring in household goods — Integration programmes for returnees — Brain-gain programmes Brain circulation networks
6	Obligations	Military services Social service Declare taxes in the origin Special tax for the emigrants
7	Cultural	Cultural institutes abroad Promotion offices in consulates Cultural programmes
8	Exit and transit policies	Information campaign about rights and duties Information campaign to foster safe transit
9	Social policies	Retirement benefit after emigration Healthcare

Broad issue		Components
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Targeted services for emigrants</li> <li>— Bilateral agreements with other countries</li> </ul>
		Education programme for emigrants
10	Symbolic policies	Awards
		Communication campaigns
		Emigrant conferences
		A National day devoted to the emigrants
		Explicit reference in the Constitution
		Creation of a new symbolic territorial entity
<b>ADMINISTRATION</b>		
11	Administration of the country of origin	
12	External administration	Consular network: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Size</li> <li>— Dispersion</li> </ul>
		Consular services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Online services</li> <li>— Weekends</li> <li>— Mobile consulates</li> </ul>
		Consular functions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Legal services</li> <li>— Financial services</li> <li>— Psychological consultancy</li> </ul>

For more details of the project, please contact:  
Phone: +880-25504481-13, Email: DhakaProttasha@iom.int, IOMDhaka@iom.int

**Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare & Overseas Employment**  
71-72 Old Elephant Road, Eskaton Garden, Dhaka-1000  
Website: <https://probashi.gov.bd/>

**International Organization for Migration  
Bangladesh Country Office**  
House # 13A, Road # 136, Gulshan-1, Dhaka-1212  
Website: <https://bangladesh.iom.int/>