



Outcome Document on
International Migration Review Forum (IMRF)
Preparatory Consultation

Priorities for



30 March 2022, Dhaka, Bangladesh



Bangladesh United Nations
Network on Migration
Working Better Together



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SUMMARY OF THE CONSULTATION

Overview

The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) established the International Migration Review Forum (IMRF), a quadrennial meeting at the highest political level to measure progress made, while identifying persistent or emerging challenges to the full implementation of the GCM. The inaugural IMRF will take place during 17-20 May 2022 in New York.

This first IMRF is a unique opportunity to help establish the Forum as an influential and principled body to monitor GCM implementation progress, uphold the guiding principles of the Compact, and contribute to the delineation of concrete recommendations for the following four years. The IMRF and its preparations will also be an opportunity to demonstrate the ability of the UN Network on Migration to provide effective and coherent support to GCM implementation, and its follow-up and review. In addition, Champion countries are encouraged to set a tone of ambition at the upcoming IMRF.¹

The Government of Bangladesh (GoB) in collaboration with the Bangladesh UN Network on Migration (BDUNNM) organized a preparatory consultation for the IMRF on 30 March 2022 in Dhaka. The preparatory consultation served as a stock taking exercise on implementation of the GCM. More than 60 representatives from the government entities, the BDUNNM, civil society organizations (CSOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) participated in the consultation.



¹ Champion countries are identified on the basis of several criteria including geographical balance; respect for the GCM 360-degree vision; commitment of the host government; existence of a UN Migration Network; compatibility and synergies with other processes.



OPENING SESSION

Ms. Nusrath Ghazzali, Officer in Charge of IOM Bangladesh and Acting Coordinator of the BDUNNM welcomed all participants to the consultation. She congratulated the GoB for their leadership in the implementation and review of the GCM as a “Champion” country. She acknowledged the intensive engagement of multiple stakeholders throughout the various processes related to GCM, showcasing the GoB’s continuous commitment to adhere to the principles of “whole of society” and “whole of government” approaches. She highly appreciated the proactiveness of the GoB in updating the voluntary GCM review; and committing to the “pledging” initiative and the commitment to operationalize an inter-ministerial coordination committee called the “Bangladesh Migration Compact Taskforce.”

On behalf of the BDUNNM and its TWGs, Ms Ghazzali reiterated continued support to the GoB to support them in protecting the rights of the migrants; and strengthening the governance of migration to unlock the full development potential of migration.



Ms Nusrath Ghazzali,
Officer in Charge, IOM Bangladesh
and Acting Coordinator, BDUNNM



Mr Shabarinath Nair,
Regional Migration Specialist,
ILO Decent Work Team for South Asia

Mr. Shabarinath Nair, Regional Migration Specialist, ILO Decent Work Team for South Asia presented a statement on behalf of the Regional UN Network on Migration for Asia and the Pacific. He stated there is a clear commitment from stakeholders to take on additional concrete actions in implementing the Compact. He added that the Regional Network welcomes this timely national consultation to take stock of the progress, challenges, and opportunities in implementing the GCM in line its vision on international migration. He welcomed the GoB’s energy as a champion country including taking on the key role as co-facilitator of the progress declaration for the IMRF. He added that champion countries can serve as powerful voices to foster the implementation of the GCM and to represent a migration narrative drawing from the values and principles of the GCM, increasing its visibility as a crucial framework for well-managed migration governance. He reiterated the commitment of the Regional Network for Migration to continue to support and integrate migration as a core, cross-cutting priority area that is required to achieve the GCM and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.





Mr. Tanvir Shakil Joy, Honorable Member of the Parliament gave remarks on behalf of the Parliamentarians' Caucus on Migration and Development. He recognized the valuable contribution of migrants in accelerating the economic and social progress of the country. He emphasized the need to have migrant-friendly tools and frameworks in place so that the benefits of migration can be maximized.



Professor Shahidul Haque, Senior Advisor to IOM Bangladesh and Former Foreign Secretary, as the Chair of the consultation highlighted the development context and contemporary migration narrative which needs to be considered in the discussions at the up-coming IMRF for paving the way forward. He mentioned the transforming context of migration particularly with the rising conflicts leading to forced movements. He highlighted the new challenges in the field of migration, including the COVID-19 pandemic. As the GCM is rooted in the Sustainable Development Goal (SDGs) and part of the 2030 Agenda, instilling the principles of “leaving no one behind” and “ensuring rights” for all migrants irrespective of status are important principles to cater to the needs of migrants in all circumstances. He also highlighted that involuntary migration has been identified as a risk in the next five to ten years and reiterated the need to mitigate the challenges considering the different dimensions.



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Dr Nashid Rizwana Monir, Deputy Secretary of Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment (MoEWOE) presented a summary of key milestones initiated by the GoB in the four thematic clusters of GCM:

1. Ensuring that migration is voluntary, regular, safe and orderly

- Fixing migration costs for 16 countries including Malaysia, Singapore and Saudi Arabia to minimize cost of migration
- Participating in Regional Consultative Processes including Chairing the Thematic Area Working Group (TAWG) on fostering Ethical Recruitment Practices of Colombo Process

2. Protecting migrants through rights-based border governance and management measures

- Digitalizing migration services including introduction of Ami Probashi App, Probash Bondhu to ease the access of services to migrants
- Initiating National Reintegration Policy for Migrants

3. Supporting migrants' protection, integration and contribution to development

- Initiating drafting of Strategy for Diaspora Engagement
- Incentivizing remittance through formal channels in 2019

4. Strengthening evidence-based policymaking, public debate and cooperation for safe, orderly and regular migration

- Drafting an action plan for implementation of Eighth Five Year Plan
- Updating the Overseas Employment and Migrants Act (OMEA); formulation of WEWB Rules 2022

As per the guiding notes, the participants were divided in groups to discuss the progress, challenges and way forward for each of the thematic clusters. The summary of group discussions is available in Annex 1.





CLOSING SESSION

Mr. Syed Saiful Haque, Chairman, WARBE Development Foundation shared his perspectives on behalf of the civil society. He acknowledged the leading role of the GoB in the initiatives related to the implementation and review of GCM despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19. He also shared the Global Civil Society Priorities towards the IMRF 2022 (Annex 2) and emphasized on the need to focus on the recovery from pandemic, mitigating the challenges related to climate-induced migration, protecting rights and ensuring safe and regular pathways.



Ms. Farida Yasmeen, Director (Multilateral Economic Affairs), Ministry of Foreign Affairs reiterated the importance of addressing the challenges related to climate-induced migration. She highlighted that this has also been prioritized by Honorable Prime Minister at the recent United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of the Parties (COP), where she outlines the exemplary initiatives of Bangladesh including the formulation of the 'Mujib Climate Prosperity Plan' – which will look into the journey from climate vulnerability to climate resilience and then to climate prosperity. She reassured that GoB is committed to launching the Bangladesh Migration Compact Taskforce, which will be co-chaired by MoEWOE and MoFA and bring together multiple ministries to ensure that the multidimensional aspects of migration are considered during planning and implementing various interventions.

Ms. Farida read out a statement on behalf of the Mr. Masud Bin Momen, Honorable Foreign Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who could not be present in the consultation due to other engagement. The Honorable Foreign Secretary appreciated the significant role of the BDUNNM in supporting the GoB, including organizing the preparatory consultation for IMRF. He acknowledged the remarkable role of migrants in terms of technological progress and innovation, which are critical for global growth. He added that migrants continue to face inequalities, xenophobia and other types of vulnerabilities which were heightened during the COVID-19 pandemic. He reiterated the importance of governance in the implementation of GCM and underscored the need to strengthen partnerships to create synergies. He acknowledged the dynamic role of Bangladesh in the GCM process including ensuring the multi-dimensional aspects of migration in the framework. He also recalled his role as the Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations co-facilitating the modalities of the IMRF in 2019. He is pleased that Bangladesh is co-facilitating the Progress Declaration, to be adopted at IMRF under the auspices of the General Assembly.





Dr. Ahmed Munir Saleheen, the Honorable Secretary of the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment in his closing statement acknowledged the pioneering role of Bangladesh in the formulation and implementation of the GCM. He said Bangladesh has approached migration issues in a holistic and comprehensive manner and was committed to the implementation of GCM contributing to the 2030 Agenda. He added that multi-stakeholder consultations at a national level ahead of the IMRF was another example of the commitment to ensure “whole of government” and “whole of society” approach. He highlighted some of the priorities of the MoEWOE to advance the agenda of GCM including enhancing awareness through massive campaigns; developing skills of migrants contributing to quality migration; strengthening policy and legal frameworks in alignment with the principles of GCM and working through partnerships with shared responsibilities for the betterment of migrants.

Mr. Ahsan Adelur Rahman, Honorable Member of the Parliament gave closing remarks in which he emphasized the need to address the challenges related to crisis, climate change, irregular practices by middlemen. He stressed the need to develop demand driven curriculum and trainings with particular focus on skills recognition (Recognition of Prior Learning or RPL). He reiterated the importance of creating pathways for safe migration and ensure the rights of migrants through standardized memorandum of understanding (MoU) with countries of destinations (CoDs). He added the need to strengthen consulates and decentralize the various services so as to reach all migrants.

Professor Shahidul Haque, thanked all participants for their valuable contributions. He added that the summary of discussions would be prepared and submitted on behalf of the BDUNNM to the GoB prior to the IMRF in order to contextualize discussions at the forum.

Based on the discussions and the context, a summary of the key priorities for Bangladesh leading up to the IMRF is provided below.



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KEY PRIORITIES FOR BANGLADESH TOWARDS THE 2022 IMRF

Based on the discussions and the country context, Bangladesh will prioritize the following in light of GCM implementation:



1. Pathways for safe and regular migration

Ensuring pathways for safe, orderly and regular migration is critical for preventing and addressing vulnerabilities throughout the migration cycles. Migration pathways need to protect the rights of migrants so that they can contribute to economies and societies. Many migrants face constraints associated with a lack of training, skills, as well as discrimination.

The COVID-19 has exacerbated inequalities, with migrants disproportionately impacted. This has also led to an increase of migrants in need of return, readmission, and reintegration assistance.

2. Protection of rights

Migrants are often vulnerable to human rights violations as they are outside their home country and often live in precarious situations. Women migrants often deal with additional challenges based on gender vulnerabilities. The protection of the rights of migrants and ensuring their welfare irrespective of their status needs to be at the centre of all interventions. Placing individuals at the fore enables the strengthening of migration governance through respecting state sovereignty, while aligning with international frameworks. With the upholding of the rights of migrant workers, migrants can further leverage the development of the nation.

3. Climate change and displacement

Sudden-onset events such as flooding, droughts and extreme weather events and slow-onset events and processes, such as desertification, coastal erosion, sea level rise, ocean acidification, ecosystem loss and deforestation influence migration decisions and human mobility patterns both directly and indirectly. It is estimated that by 2050, one in every seven people in Bangladesh will be displaced by climate change.



Specifically, with a projected 19.6 inch (50 cm) rise in sea level, Bangladesh stands to lose 11 per cent of its land, and up to 18 million people will be forced to migrate.² Given this context, it is important for Bangladesh to delineate concrete actions to address climate-induced migration.

4. Governance

The COVID-19 pandemic disproportionately affected people and communities who were already in vulnerable and marginalized situations, including migrants. However, while there has been a profound impact on human mobility with short-, medium- and long-term effects, the pandemic has reinforced the need for well governed migration mechanisms. To maintain and strengthen implementation of the GCM to improve migration governance and cooperation at all levels, it is important for Bangladesh to finalize the GCM National Action Plan that will be overseen by the Bangladesh Migration Compact Taskforce. The GCM NAP will consider existing legal and policy frameworks and be aligned with global frameworks and tools. In addition, for proper implementation, it is important to include effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. The Migration Governance Indicators (MGI) have proven to be effective in assisting governments' efforts to strengthen their migration governance and work towards the implementation of GCM objectives. To date, 90 countries and over 45 local authorities have participated in the process. Thus, the MGI is therefore a solid basis which the BDUNNM can utilize to monitor GCM implementation and feed into review processes.

Governing migration well includes promoting stability, education and employment opportunities and reducing the drivers of migration, including by promoting resilience. Thereby, enabling individuals to make the choice between staying and migrating. A coherent, comprehensive and balanced vision for migration governance for Bangladesh is vital integrating development with due regard for social, economic and environmental dimensions and respecting human rights.



² <https://www.climaterealityproject.org/blog/how-climate-crisis-impacting-bangladesh#:~:text=It%20has%20been%20estimated%20that,of%20sea%2Dlevel%20rise%20alone;page%20accessed%20April%202022>



ANNEX 1: SUMMARY OF GROUP WORK

THEMATIC AREAS	PROGRESS	KEY CHALLENGES	GOOD PRACTICES	WAY FORWARD
1. Ensuring that migration is voluntary, regular, safe and orderly	Framework related to climate change (Bangladesh Delta Plan (BDP), 2100	Inadequate policy and legal frameworks addressing the challenges related to climate-induced migration	Adaptation measures taken by the GoB	<p>Formulation of policy and legal frameworks covering aspects related to climate-induced migration</p> <p>Designing interventions for protecting the rights of climate-induced migrants</p> <p>Advocating for ensuring loss and damage compensation to Bangladesh</p> <p>Designing monitoring mechanisms for programmes linked to climate induced vulnerabilities</p>
	Recognition of Prior Learning Systems for Returnee Migrants: Core elements of BLA-MOU for G2G cooperation	<p>Insufficient mechanisms for skills matching, categorization, and mutual recognition of skills</p> <p>Need to for regularization migrants to ensure their rights</p>	Development of the Bangladesh National Qualification Framework	<p>Simplify the regularization process of irregular migrants in country of destination</p> <p>Reform of sponsorship of 'Kefala' system (Highlight zero migration cost/Employers-pay model)</p> <p>Mutual Recognition of Skills and skills passports</p>



THEMATIC AREAS	PROGRESS	KEY CHALLENGES	GOOD PRACTICES	WAY FORWARD
	<p>Recruitment Agencies (RAs) Code of Conduct Rule 2019</p> <p>RAs classification Rule 2020</p> <p>Recruiting Agencies Information Management System (RAIMS) by BMET</p>	<p>Monitoring of RAs</p> <p>Role of sub-agents and legalizing them through legal frameworks</p>	<p>Consultative approaches in the legal reform for fair and ethical recruitment</p>	<p>Strengthen the monitoring of RAs and labour inspection</p> <p>Minimize cost of migration</p>
	<p>Revision of OEMA 2013 and WEWB Act 2018 creates provision for women migrant workers</p>	<p>Lack of access to legal remedies in CoDs</p> <p>Arbitrary detention</p>		<p>Establish access to legal remedies in CoDs</p> <p>Remedies for Arbitrary detention</p>
<p>2. Protecting migrants through rights-based border governance and management measures</p>	<p>Proof of legal identity documentation</p>	<p>Documentation is not synced with international database of the CoDs.</p> <p>Bangladesh consulates in the CoDs cannot take action against the labour suppliers</p>	<p>Bangladesh has the established database system for the migrant workers which includes information of returnee migrants</p>	<p>Central database needs to be maintained linking the various portals of different government agencies and collating those from non-state actors.</p>



THEMATIC AREAS	PROGRESS	KEY CHALLENGES	GOOD PRACTICES	WAY FORWARD
	Bilateral agreements and MoUs in place	Lack of specific guidelines and MoUs	Palermo Protocol has been ratified by many countries	Ratified and signatory countries should take initiatives to protect the rights of migrants
	Interventions for sustainable reintegration	Lack of documentation and adequate resources for re/integration	GoB is supported by various stakeholders like on interventions related to sustainable reintegration	Model reintegration system based on international good practices need to be developed
3. Supporting migrants' protection, integration and contribution to development	Establishment of 29 new labour welfare wings and 5 shelter homes for women migrants in destination countries	Less manpower, budget and few shelter homes. Legal support should be migrant friendly	Model Consulate services in Jordan Legal services provided to the migrants at the destination	Public-private Partnerships need to be established with UN support Monitoring systems should be strengthened by the MoEWOE
	Initiated the development of National Reintegration Policy for Migrants	Policy development has a short time frame and required more engagement/ inputs from grassroots levels	GO-NGO-UN collaboration	Proper action plan and implementation
	4% rehabilitation loan through PKB	Loan is not migrant-friendly Need to reach to the grassroots levels Lack of awareness	On-going discussions between government and NGOs for designing comprehensive referral mechanism	Need to work in collaborative manner



THEMATIC AREAS	PROGRESS	KEY CHALLENGES	GOOD PRACTICES	WAY FORWARD
	Government, NGOs provided support to the returnees during COVID (emergency support, cash support, psycho-social counseling, tele-counseling, In-kind support)	COVID-19	Coordination	Be prepared for emergency situation
	2.5% incentives have been provided for remittances	Workers are not aware	In-flow increased	This information should be circulated among the migrants
	Engaging Diaspora community to support development at both COOs and CoDs	Need to be well-coordinated	Diaspora's interest to invest in Bangladesh	Encourage Diaspora-friendly investment
	Decentralization of services at the district level	Reduced manpower and budget resources	Mainstreaming in the system	Services need to be decentralized through UDCs
4. Strengthening evidence-based policymaking, public debate and cooperation for safe, orderly and regular migration	Data is scattered and collected by different authorities (SB, BMET, WEWB, CSOs, PID, CID)	Bangladesh yet to develop a comprehensive, centralized data system for migrants	Right to Information Act ensures the right to access data. CSO, GoB or anybody should access it easily.	Need to develop integrated data system under govt authority at a single platform.



THEMATIC AREAS	PROGRESS	KEY CHALLENGES	GOOD PRACTICES	WAY FORWARD
	GoB and CSOs are providing pre-departure, pre-orientation trainings to migrants	Need to provide user friendly and timely information.	Pre-departure modules, pictorial, audio-visual content is available.	Information to be disseminated prior to departure. Digitalized community-based awareness campaigns.
	Availability of acts and policies related to migration, including integration of migration in the 8th Five Year Plan	Undocumented and irregular migrants and women face exploitation	Labour Wings are available in many countries. National Plans and policies available which are aligned with SDGs.	Inclusive and gender-based services, mechanism, consular services, legal aids, rescue emergency supports, safe homes Strengthen and establish more labour wings.
	Implementation of national and international policies	Violence, discrimination, racism, abuse and exploitation	Regional Cooperation through various fora	Enforce and enact laws and international conventions against all forms of discrimination. Familiarization with laws in destination countries. Develop and promote audio visual docu-fiction to raise awareness against forms of discrimination.
	Bangladesh participates in various regional and global platforms.	Institutional capacity and lack of common understanding between COOs and CODs Absence of standardized bi-Lateral agreements	Actively Participating in Colombo Process, Abu Dhabi Dialogue, COP, GFMD, IMRF, etc.	Need to strengthen platform to address the vulnerabilities and discrimination against migrants



ANNEX 2: GLOBAL CIVIL SOCIETY PRIORITIES TOWARDS THE 2022-INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION REVIEW FORUM (IMRF)

