

Details Case Study on Problems of Women Migration Based on Lebanon

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Under any circumstances, using content of this report is strictly prohibited without the concern of the author. Please be informed that, Tamzid Bin Ahamed generated this report under supervision of WARBE DF, BOMSA. For any queries please email to: tamzid.bu@gamil.com.

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Introduction:

Labour Migration has become a typical and important feature of Bangladesh over the past few years, having both positive and negative repercussions on the country and its inhabitants. The official interpretation mainly focuses on the positive impacts at the macro and micro level. But the interpretation of negative impact is slightly different and unobserved too. As migrants of Bangladesh are mostly uneducated poor people who think that by any means, going abroad will bring them socio-economic solvency. The dream of a better day makes them totally unwise and leads them unscrupulous and fraudulent activities of local powerful middlemen and recruiting agents. In most of the cases it happens just because these people have no idea about informal and formal ways of migration. This unacquainted scene continues to be in affect even when they reach abroad. Torture, paying less, unhealthy accommodation, insufficient food and other means humiliations are normal cases. And due to legislative gaps of both the countries, these issues are largely remaining unresolved.

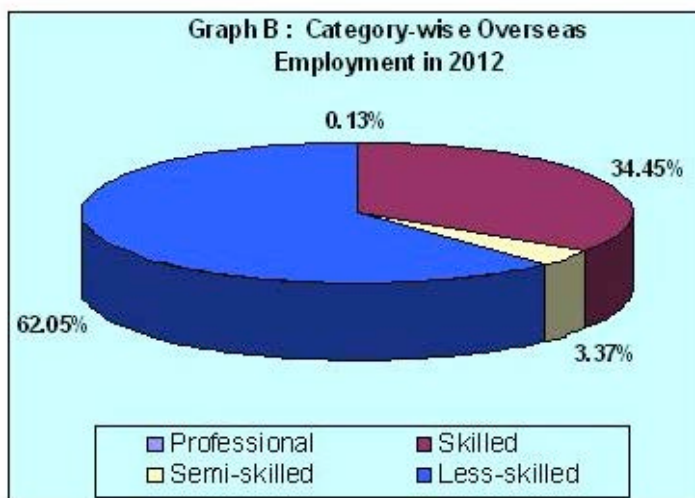
Excavating deep we found that most of these migrations taking place due to lack of work in Bangladesh. Astonishingly sometimes international migration takes place as a culture that believed to be the best option at a youthful age structure even knowing the risks and costs involved. Trying to figure out the reason behind it, we found that in most of cases people have information on safe migration next to zero. There is kind of a social barring of exchanging or sharing information of the right practices, which occurs out of jealousy or insecurity complex. The areas affected this migration agitation are mostly the extreme rural parts of the country. Where the functions of government enforcing manpower to control such propaganda of illegal systems seem to be futile. As a result lack of information is taking more severe picture.

Despite of such scary picture, numbers of internal migrants have grown significantly in last years. In an official estimation over 10million international migrants are now working in different parts of the world sending over 14 billion USD in remittances (World Bank, 2012). However it is often said by various NGO's and iNGO's working in this sector that, almost similar ratio of the migrants are working as an unskilled labour unofficially. It means these unofficial migrants have taken a channel that is illegal and therefore they are not included in the database. Studying problems we found that most of the complaints received are from people who have migrated through unofficial channel. In the root level for any kind of organization these people becomes a burden. Because they can not be included into the formal system which has the mechanism to support these people with possible gateway. As a result

in prolonged bureaucratic negotiations to solve this leads the victim to the ultimate suffering of in-decision.

However governments in Bangladesh have taken many steps to secure and expand outflows of labor migrants through diplomatic negotiations with labor receiving countries. It is expected that these steps will extend a new opportunity to safe migration. Organizations attached with government are also continuously working to make people aware of issues related to migration.

Migration a Mirage:



In the year of 2012, around 607,798¹ Bangladeshis left the country for overseas employment. Among them 62.05% of Bangladeshi migrant workers are less skilled (e.g. domestic workers, agricultural workers, etc.), 3.37% are semi-skilled (e.g. tailors and masons), 34.45% are skilled (e.g. garment workers, drivers,

electricians, etc) and only 0.13% are professionals (e.g. doctors, engineers, teachers and nurses)². In 2012, migrant workers have sent 14 billion Dollar³ through legal channel to Bangladesh, contributing significantly to the socio-economic development of Bangladesh. However, this amount is underestimated because almost same amount of the migrants of stated above migrates through an informal channel and their remittances are often sent through “Hundi”, a risky and illegal channel. Over the past decade, remittances from migrant workers have proved to be the mainstay of the Bangladeshi economy and not enough is being done to protect

¹ BMET, 1976-2012 (www.bmet.org.bd/BMET/statisticalDataAction)

² BMET, 1976-2012 (www.bmet.org.bd/BMET/statisticalDataAction)

³ Central Bank of Bangladesh (www.bangladesh-bank.org)

their rights who uphold the economic growth of Bangladesh with their hard work abroad.

Bangladesh with over 10 million official migrants is one of the leading labor sending countries of the world. Currently around 132 countries are receiving migrants from Bangladesh with many potential countries on the row. The contributions of these migrants in the national economy of Bangladesh are huge. Roughly over 14% this migrant community constitutes GDP, which is 12 times than the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). Among these migrants 45% of the migrants are women migrants. In 2012 around 37,304⁴ women migrants migrated to foreign counties. Their employment opportunity in the overseas labor market is mainly confined to some specific occupations like house keeping, garment workers and caregivers. In the year of 2012 the highest number of women migration took place in Lebanon. The average wages of Bangladeshi women workers ranges from \$ 100.00 to US \$ 300.00. This amount is very less then other women migrant sending countries average wage.

Investigating further on the issue we found that majority of the migrant population often hold very low level of education and few professional skills. Although the BMET (Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training), the branch of the Ministry of Expatriate's Welfare and Overseas Employment (MEOWE) organize skill-training courses for the outgoing migrants, these courses are often overcrowded and located far away from the prone migration areas. BMET is also organizing pre-departure briefings, which are mandatory for any migrant before leaving Bangladesh. However, these briefings are limited to two hours session, certainly not sufficient to address all the issues required for a safe and aware departure to a foreign country.

Lack of involvement of government officials and not giving people the right information on safe migration from the government side is not only lack of capacity, but also neglect and in some cases outright non willingness due to the possibilities of corruption. The centralized policy on the issue of migrant workers rights is a problem, as the local governments have no involvement on this issue. This means that the government does not use their extended arms through local government to reach out to the single largest group of people, who generates great contribution to the economy. The lack of research prohibits government institution to initiate targeted and collaborative intervention aimed at promoting safe migration and capacity building of Migrant Workers.

⁴ BMET, 1976-2012 (www.bmet.org.bd/BMET/statisticalDataAction)

Objective of the study:

The objectives of this study are aimed at discovering the inner voice of the violence that our women migrants were exposed in Lebanon. Analyzing their stories we would determine the depth of the problem dividing it into categories and sub categories. We will also share recommendations based on analyze, which could be included into the agenda of the migrant rights movement.

Main objectives of the Study:

- To understand the scale and scope of migration of women from Bangladesh to Lebanon
- To understand about the present status or situation of women migrants according of procedure and safe migration.
- Ascertain the magnitude of the violence-taking place in Lebanon as well as ascertain the reasons of that violence.
- To assess the role of relevant government offices in ensuring the well being of the migrant women workers and addressing the violence and discrimination faced by the migrant workers in Lebanon.
- To understand the impact of such migration on women empowerment process
- To identify the gap of relevant policy and laws
- To recommend input for the development of the platform of civil society in terms of safe migration development.
- To share the data with BMET, MEWOE (Ministry of Expatriate Welfare) and other stakeholders for policy advocacy and lobbying.

Methodologies of the study:

The study was designed to assess conditions, procedure and life style of the migrants of Lebanon. To obtain the above-mentioned purpose in the study we have used quantitative and qualitative data and information. The sample 53 Female Migrant Workers (27 from WARBE DF and 26 from BOMSA) and Area were selected by using appropriate sampling procedure with the help of WARBE Development Foundation and BOMSA. The study covered eleven district or working areas of WARBE DF and BOMSA. Name of the Eight Districts covered by WARBE DF: Narshindi, Keranigong, Rupgonj, Rangpur, Mithapukur, Fultola, Rupsha and Narayangonj. Three district covered by BOMSA: Dhaka, Manikgonj and Singair. As per ToR fifty three female migrant workers list prepared but we interviewed 53 female workers according to their interest. The key dimensions qualitative study methods are presented below:

Qualitative study:

Qualitative and quantitative techniques were used to collect in-depth information. Different methods have been used as reliable methods of data collection, which can be transformed into a credible source of qualitative outcome. They provide clear insights into people perception and deeper understanding of local context, complex coping strategies, major priorities and solution used by people. The methodology of the study can be divided into three steps.

- Story collection
- Interview with NGO officials
- FGD with returnee migrant workers

▪ Story Collection:

First step of the methodology involved an in-depth study of migration experience of selected female migrants. This study decided to interview 53 returnee female migrants. A detail questionnaire (Annex-2) was prepared to collect information based on the objective. The questionnaire was later transformed into a story format and into a qualitative format to provide with the research outcomes. Focus points of the questionnaire are as following:

- Personal information

Questions on personal information are to find out her socio-economic status in the society and information on family members

- Background of the reason of migrating to Lebanon

Questions on background information are to determine the reason behind choosing migration as a livelihood option.

- Information on jobs at Lebanon

Questions on the job information of Lebanon are to find out basic job information.

- Information on the owner's / employer's family

In this segment questions are designed to have an understanding on the employer's and his / her family's behavior towards the migrant worker.

- Migration process and migration preparation related information

In this part questions were set to have an understanding on the support from the process that our respondent could enjoy. It was also to identify mishandlings and misuse of the respondents' lack of information by the brokers / agents.

- Information on the consulate / embassy of Bangladesh

This set of questions was designed to identify if our respondents have any idea of such system and if yes, how they wish it to function.

- Information on sickness and torture

This set of questions was set to identify the level of violence our respondents had to go through.

- Information on the social life

- Respondents' recommendations

▪ Interviews of NGO Officials:

Second step of the methodology involved an in-depth study of migration experience of selected NGO officials. The study covered 11 working area of WARBE DF and BOMSA. This study decided to interview total eight officials from both organizations, who work with the women migrant community. A detail questionnaire (Annex – 3) was prepared to collect data based on the objective.

Focus points of the questionnaire are as following:

- Interpretation of safe migration
- Reason of migration and working situation at Lebanon
- Required Skill or competencies to migrate in Lebanon
- Natures of abuses/torture and responsible person

- Behavior of the recruiting agency
- Government role or interaction
- Training details
- Recommendation for wellbeing of female migrant workers

Through these questionnaires' the present study generated both qualitative and quantitative information from the interviewees. Quantitative data was needed on general experiences of migration at home and host countries, treatment received from recruiting agencies and employers, work conditions, income earned, remittance sent methods used for communication, nature and percentage of violence/abuses, level of interaction with Bangladesh missions/consoler offices etc. Such information gathered by the quantitative questionnaires'. Qualitative data needed to be gathered to understand who took this decision, why the women decided to migrate, how it was affected she and understand the economic and social impact. The questionnaires contained structured and open-ended questions and also pre-tested.

- Focus Group Discussion (FGD):

Third step of the methodology is to conduct Focus group is the best participatory way for gathering qualitative data. For FGDs, a specific set of question was designed (Annex – 2). Facilitators were provided guide with key issues to steer the discussion and probe into issues. Then summary statements about the comments were prepared. FGDs were organized for two groups such as:

- Among returned migrants of Lebanon in the field of WARBE DF
- Among returned migrants of Lebanon in the field of BOMSA

Bangladeshi women migration and Lebanon:

Women migrant workers of Bangladesh also have a significant contribution in the country's economic expansion. It is estimated that women are accountable for roughly 14% of the GDP of the country. Women migrants moving to different countries especially through irregular channels, find themselves in vulnerable positions before, during and after their journey due to the lack of information, high transaction costs and exploitation which open the way to unscrupulous recruiting agents, middlemen, smugglers and traffickers. This unpleasant process encourages many potential women migrants to seek alternative and undocumented means of migration. Their low professional profile is also exposing them to further troubles and risks since they normally have little education and less professional skills.

In the year of 2012 around 37,304⁵ women migrated to many countries. Out of this number around 12,496⁶ women migrants migrated to Lebanon, which made Lebanon is most expected destination for women migrants of Bangladesh. But with the number of women migrating to Lebanon, authorities also continuously receiving complaints of violence and humiliations on Lebanon. In spite of this, large number women migrants therefore come back to Bangladesh and try to start the migration process all over again. Because our conservative societal system refuses to ratify their acceptance in the society. This injustice pushes them to an extreme situation where they can not cope-up much. In some other cases families of the female migrants don't remain intact till she comes. Their husbands normally run away and sometimes their families misuse the remittances. These also create impact on the women migrants since they are usually accepted in our society as a weaker sex. So humiliation continues to execute their human rights.

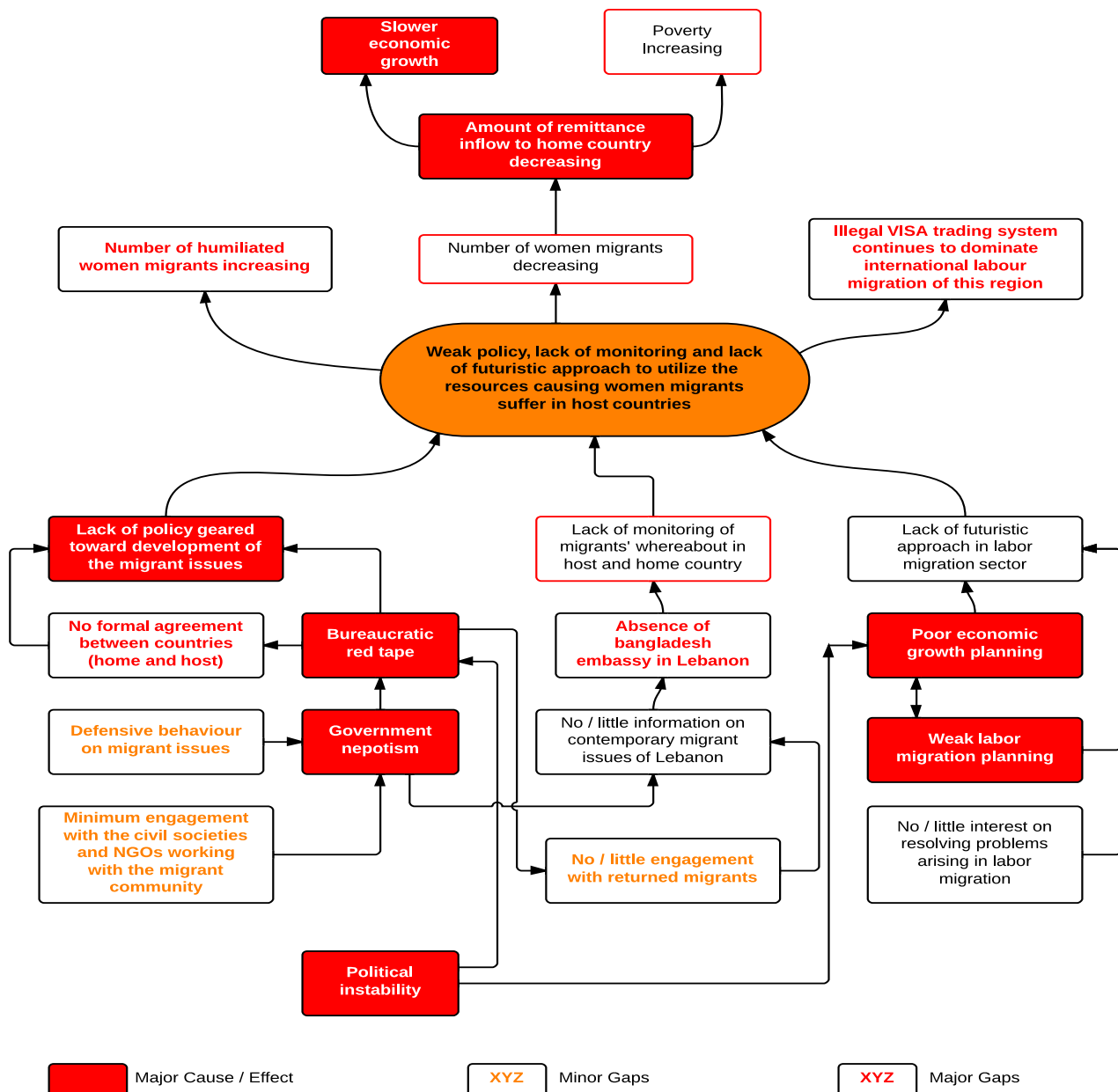
Initial Problem Analysis (Government End):

Government of Bangladesh has many gaps in addressing migration related issues. Problems in government start with poor economic growth planning. Government of Bangladesh has failed to incorporate a futuristic approach to bring out the best of the outflow of migration. Since migration has not been given much importance in government's agenda, therefore government is very little concerned about the situations of returned and current migrants. Also government has no favorable agreement with Lebanon, which could be helpful, incase of addressing problems arising in this sector.

⁵ BMET, 1976-2012 (www.bmet.org.bd/BMET/statisticalDataAction)

⁶ BMET, 1976-2012 (www.bmet.org.bd/BMET/statisticalDataAction)

Government of Bangladesh and its concerned ministries paly a defensive role in case of any pressure comes up from civil society to take necessary steps. They are very much behind in designing an up-to-date policy design, which could condense problems of migration to a tolerable level. Moreover not having an embassy in Lebanon is hampering the monitoring of the overall situation of the migrants in Lebanon. Apart from this, red-tapism, nepotism and political instability keep on influencing governments' steps to a not favorable working condition, which is ultimately hampering migrant community. The analysis is as following:



Consequence:

Problems and gaps stated above lead to a decrease of the total number of women migrants of Lebanon. As result amount of inflow of the remittance is also decreasing causing a slower economic growth. However due to problems stated above, brokers and agents continues to dominate labor migration of Bangladesh. Sincere they are is judicial system to address the disputes taking place in migration sector; many illegal organizations are being engaged with the system to earn quick money. Women choosing those illegal / informal ways of migration, and being exposed to possible persecute arising from illegal migration.

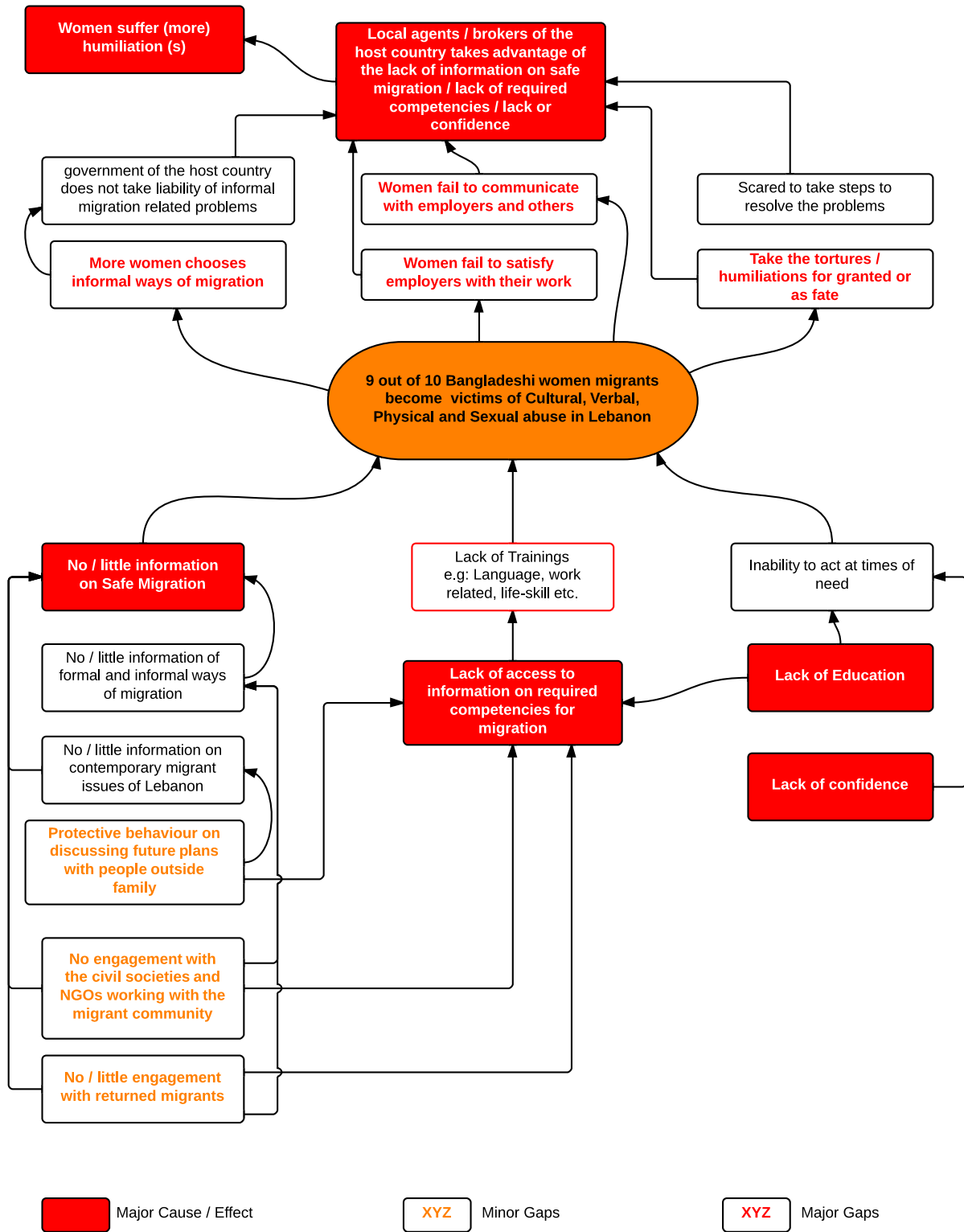
Initial Problem Analysis (Migrant End)

Problem with women migrants start with the lack of information on required competencies for migration. They think everything will be in their favor after migrating. Moreover, they portray a protective behavior talking about migration with others. These women have a very little engagement with the returned migrants. Therefore they are never up-to-date about contemporary migration issues. These lead them (women) to migration blindly. These women barely know about safe migration fact. As a result they can not differentiate the formal and informal ways of migration. Brokers and agents of illegal VISA trading take this advantage leading them to a total uncertainty. Later which results in exposure to distress, tortures etc.

Lack of trainings of these migrants is also a problem behind women running into troubles after migration. Such as without proper language training it becomes really hard for a house worker to understand their language and work efficiently. Moreover, women who migrants, they are normally less educated. This explains their incapability to learn the language living at the host country without anyone to make them understand within their comfortable zone. Similarly not having knowledge about operation of work related machineries also degrade their position at the work place. And when a dissatisfied employer looses control over himself / herself than it becomes tough for our women migrants to tolerate.

However lack of education also plays a vital role in acquiring knowledge on how to tackle situation in the host country. Most of the migrants are less educated. So by default they lack confidence on themselves. This becomes a problem when these women face problems in Lebanon and get afraid to tackle the problem. Moreover, due to lack of education they sometimes can not plan their defense / gateway smoothly.

According to our research we found that, there are nine out ten women migrants are exposed to distress in Lebanon. The analysis is as following:



Challenges and problems:

Migration to an unknown country brings in multifaceted challenges to any person. We know after migration a person has to go through a process of cultural adaptation. In many cases language barrier has to be overcome, homesickness and loneliness also have to be coped with. Along with this general challenges a significant section of the temporary migrant female workers are increasingly subjected to unacceptable treatment from their employers in Lebanon. In this respect the female migrants are doubly exploited – first as migrant workers and second as women. Under the study we following gender dimension of migrant workers

- A large number of female now a days are going abroad as migrant workers
- The increase of overseas female workers meant an increase in such problems as maltreatment, poor working conditions and verbal, physical as well as sexual abuse from employers
- Women tend to be more vulnerable because of their jobs are segregated to the socially marginalized sector like domestic workers.

Common problems faced by female migrant house workers:

Women migrants of Bangladesh are also get exposed to violence at the workplace in Lebanon. Based on the reported complaints and analysis there are ample evidence of physical and sexual harassment on these women migrants. Paying less, sending them back without clearing the payment, torture through not giving enough food, making them work in more than one house and for longer hours is common among those complaints. Moreover, not having opportunity to go outside and send money is a vital risk for the migrants' family back in the country. Under the present study female migrant domestic workers reported that they faced a number of problems.

As per their statement common problem of female migrant workers (domestic) are:

- Paid below contract wage to the female migrant workers comparatively other countries migrant workers⁷
- Nature of the works are different as per contract or as she promised
- Do not receive regular time off/leave
- Work for long hours (15-18 hours)
- Make them work in more than one house

⁷ Under the study the incidence of paying wages lower than promised/contract was a general problem.

- Different natures work such as cleaning, caregiver, cooking, gardening etc.
- Insufficient food⁸
- Neglected of health problem
- Some of them do not receive any private space
- Most of them do not have social life while abroad
- They led a life of physical, social and cultural isolation⁹
- Their movement are restricted¹⁰
- Most of them orally and physically abused (as per study out of 10 female workers 8 are abused)
- Some of them sexually abused/raped (as per study out of 10 female workers 2 are sexually abused)

According to the study following significant problems are main reasons for female migrant house workers vulnerable situation:

1) Language problem:

In our study a good number of migrants expressed their concern about the problems they faced due to lack of proficiency in the communication skill, as they did not have proper training on language. They learnt some Arabic word but local language of Lebanon is different. This led them to confusion, as they are unable to understand the command of the employer. Some identified this lacking as failure to communicate with responsible authority, where they could file complaints against the harassment they endured. Failing to understand the language of Lebanon had many more implication in making our migrant's life trouble some. Some specific problems were identified as following:

- Unable to understand the contract leading them to a total confusion of what they are signing on. As some stated freedom? Or life?
- Unable to communicate with the agency responsible at Lebanon
- Unable to ask for help in case of emergency medical situation

⁸ At first almost all the female migrant workers had problems with regards to food. Under the study some of them complained that the amount of food served was lower than their need and hard labour. Few of them stated that they are allowed to cook their own food once in a while.

⁹ They do not have right to contract with other people. When they were homesick, they wanted to speak to some one in their own language. However, they were not even allowed to post letters, buy essentials from corner shops and meet their known ones even once in a while.

¹⁰ Interestingly the opinion of female migrant workers about restriction on their movement varies from person to person. Some took such restriction positively; others viewed them as fetters on freedom of movement.

- Inability to identify the employers' house or work place where they were the victims of violence. Several times victim migrants were rescued from the roadside, bank of rivers and forests at Lebanon by the local authority. They were all asked about the reason and if they (women migrant) could identify the person or the place. But our women migrants were not able to identify that place, neither the person due to a lack of language understanding proficiency.

Sometime recruiting agency requested their owner that they want to send some money for their sick children/father/mother and received their advance salary from their employee but due to language barrier they do not understand.

2) Health problem:

Under this study most of the female migrant house workers stated that their health problems were neglected. In some cases they took serious turn and the migrant female workers had to come back Bangladesh. Jaundice, peptic ulcer, temporary insanity has been some of the health and mental conditions with which those women migrant female workers came back home.

3) Verbal and Physical Abuses:

Most of the returnee migrant women domestic workers stated that the employers meted out verbal and physical abuse. Some of them were subjected to regular physical abuse, some times of extreme forms. Participants of one of the FGD stated that out of 10 female migrant domestic workers 8 were verbal and physical abused. Conditions of these abuses are as following:

(a) Tension arose from communication gap between the domestic workers and the head of the household, his wife and children. Due to language barrier she did not understand the order or demand and she would do something totally different from what was asked or ordered. Such situation created verbal abuse and gradually such abuses would transform into physical abuse. In most of the cases within three to four months the incidence of abuse would decline when domestic workers could pick up some key words of communication. However, for some, the form of behavior, which occurred in the first few months, would continue to persist.

(b) Some of the cases employers were ill tempered and ill mannered and they would resort to physical abuse on any reason.

(c) Some of them stated that wife of their employers verbal and physically tortured if they talk with their employer with laugh or the employer tried to ill treatment or sexually harassed. Their wife, instead of taking any action against their husband, handed over to the police or sent back to Bangladesh.

4) Sexual abuses and raped:

Four cases female migrant domestic workers were subjected to sexually abused and raped. It is noted that the method of the study did not allow collecting information forcefully or prolonged interaction with the returnee female domestic workers for understanding various forms of abuses including sexual abuse. Generally returnee female domestic workers would not be willing to share their very personal experience with the interviewer. In the case analysis we have found that employers regularly committed rape and wife of their employers ordered them that follow his order, other cases everyday employers took her in the hotel and committed rape with his one or two friend, as a result when she was mentally and physically sick her employers return her to the recruiting agency without paying her salary. Recruiting agency sent her back to Bangladesh. Still she is mentally and physically sick and do not have money for treatment. We also found a victim of gang rape. As per medical test in Lebanon (after raped) identified that she was under aged but her passport stated her age 28. In another case at first employers raped her than he changed her employer. But unfortunately her new employers also raped her and took her hotel regularly for engaging sex- business and earned money. After few moths she was mentally sick but her employee did not stop this business. When she was pregnant and became seriously mentally ill than police rescue her and sent her back to Bangladesh. After arriving Bangladesh she has given birth to a girl child and still she has the mental disorder.

Economic Impact

Under the study an attempt has been made to understand the economic impact of migration of women at the household level. Indicators, which have been used to assess this are the level of employment generated, the income earned, the significance of the remittance sent by the female migrants etc.

On the basis of the above indicators an attempt has been made to categories the economic impact of migration on 53 respondents into two heads:

1. Positives
2. Negative

The positive indicators are

- Substantially bearing the subsistence cost of family for a significant period

In the study we have found that women are becoming a significant financier in the family. Working abroad is bringing them fortune of earning, which they are sending to the family for expense.

- Improved living standard

Receiving a substantial amount of money in a semi-European country actually influencing the lifestyle of migrants' women. Many of the women of our country never step their foot outside of the country. These migrant women are now working in other countries and continuously experiencing the world moving forward. Moreover, these women are now seeing the better parts of being educated and capable which lead them to determination to provide a good lifestyle to their families as well.

- Generating savings

Earning a large amount of money, where they barely can spend some. A huge portion of the money therefore these women are saving. This saving is helping the family with the safety net.

- Educating children

Many of the women we interviewed went to abroad to bring economic solvency, which can ensure the well being of the family, food security and education of their children. Now that they have enough money, they are spending a large share of that money for paying their children for study.

- Buying land

Many of the migrants are now gained economic comfort and they are now able to plan for their future. It's a common practice of the country that when people have enough money, they want to buy assets. Land is in their list of preferences.

- Constructing a house

Constructing house is also practiced in the migrant community. It is a sign of financial wellbeing of the family. In the village sometimes people perform it as a sign, that they have a migrant in their family.

However some other positive impacts also have been seen in following points. It indicates that they are gratified with migration opportunity and are able to fulfill their objective of migration.

- Reasonable length of stay abroad and flow of remittance
- Paying back the loans borrowed for migration

Negative Indicators are:

- Returning home before one year of stay without any money

Many of the women migrants comes back to the country in a very short time since they fail to adapt the environment of the host country. Some migrants come back due to distress they had to face and some come back for not having necessary paperwork.

- Inability to repay the loan borrowed for migration

Migrants who come back to the country in a short time they are normally unable to pay the loan they had to make for migration, back. Because, these migrants can not earn back their expenses due to coming back early.

- Inability bear daily necessary cost

Since they could not work properly, their earnings become very low. Moreover back in the country if the migrant had some loan, the burden became more intolerable. With all these previous expenses at hand it becomes hard for these migrant women to bear the necessary costs or expenditure of the family.

- Inability bear medical expenses

Many of the migrants come back to the country in a very short time due to excessive torture they had to go through during their working period. Being sick they return back to the country. At that time it becomes really hard for those migrants to carry forward their medical expenses. With burden of the loan they had on their head it becomes hard for them to manage more loan for the medical expense.

However, in the case study I found that two of our respondents were pregnant who were forcefully deported from Lebanon. Now that they gave birth of their children who are to take responsibility of those children's medical expenses; it is still unclear.

Some other negative impacts of in the analysis have been seen. Those are as following:

- Inability bear educational cost of their children
- Inability to buy any land
- Inability to construct a house,
- Inability to invest in businesses
- Inability to generate much remittance

The economic impact of migration on a particular family is, in fact, a combination of all the indicators discussed above. Positive income does not necessarily entail that a family has experienced positive results in all the indicators mentioned above. A family might have experiences negative results in a few areas. Still the economic gain from other sectors may counter those negative impacts and thus produce a positive result accordingly, in the final analysis, families that may experience an overall negative economic impact of migration may actually have experienced positive results with respect to some of the above indicators.

Focus Group Discussion (FGD) on Female migrant workers

The FGD was carried out in Shingair Upazilla of Manikgonj district. Participants of the FGD were returned women migrants from Lebanon who were employed as a house worker/labor.

In the discussion our main focus were to find out what types of distresses they faced, why do they think those distresses took place and what can be done in order to tackle the situation. We also discussed the role of individual, family, society and government in the light to take steps to resolve such issues.

Summary of the note taken is as following:

1. What do you mean by safe migration? Why did you go to Lebanon for work?

In the discussion we found no one has clear idea about the means of 'Safe Migration'. Even though some of them attended the training provided by Bureau of Manpower, employment and Training (BMET), Technical Training Center (TTC) for migrating to Lebanon. But they were yet unaware of the meaning of safe migration.

Answering the second question, they all pointed out poverty as a main reason to migrate to other countries. Due to poverty they were unable to provide their families with food, education, health and other basic services. And they thought going abroad would bring them fortune to provide their families with basic needs. We have also seen that some of our respondents were divorced, which also had been a major cause for them to migrate to foreign countries.

2. What do you think of a woman working as a house worker in Lebanon? Do you think they can work safely with dignity?

Working as house worker in Lebanon is tough. Especially when there is no one to help or take care of you as families or friends would have been done. People of Lebanon are mostly brutal to their servants / workers working for them. We repeatedly heard complaints about poor work environment from our respondents. Some of them described the work as working in a jail not for a house. They had no permission to talk with their family members sometimes. Even though they tried their level best to satisfy their employer by working hard, but their employer were never happy. They suffered cultural shock through different food and language. Some of our respondents were deported back to the country since they could not have a grasp on their language.

In our discussion physical torture was the key complaint. According to our respondents it was Lebanese housewives / women who used to torture more. Physical tortures like rape was also another type of torture these women came across. But the percentages of such incidents were significantly less than the incidents occurring by Lebanese women.

According to our respondents, it is possible to work everywhere in world to work safely, if there is someone taking responsible. For women migrants working in Lebanon would be safe, if the employer is a good person, belongs to a good family. Even if there were any mechanism that could monitor these women migrant's whereabouts in a timely manner than the situation would have been much better.

3. In Lebanon or in any other country if a women worker wants to work than what types of competencies they should posses?

In the discussion our respondents were very loud about one competency, 'Language'. They identified having language training as a must. Otherwise understanding their commands and sustaining with a good workability may not be possible. However, our respondents in also said that gathering knowledge on the work they are going to do will help. Like if anyone is going Lebanon for household works than they should learn operating all the machineries related to household works. This will make them efficient in the work.

4-5. Do women working in Lebanon become a victim of distresses? What types of distresses women migrant suffers? If yes, out of ten how many of them become victims? Who are responsible for these troubles?

According to the respondents being a victim of distresses depends on employer. If employer is well behaved than problems does not take a severe picture. But they are brutal by nature than the real problem occurs. One of our respondents was a victim of extreme torture while she was working in Lebanon. She was beaten inhumanly and thrown in a river thinking that she died.

Other respondents' complaint about the halt their employer used to put on in the means of no communication with the family in the country or going outside for refreshment. They also talked about the food difference or lack of food during their stay in Lebanon. Even though they asked for food (Rice instead of Bread) respectfully, they were not given. This was a trouble for women migrants who went

from this (Bangladesh) region. They fell weak and eventually their efficiency at the work place decreased. This used to expose these women to more torture.

With the second question they replied saying that nine (9) out of ten (10) women migrants were victims of distresses one-way or other if we count every single definition of trouble. But in general, some of those troubles were tolerable and some of them were not.

6-7. How is the behavior of the recruiting agency? Do they listen your complaints? Do they try to resolve the problems the women migrants are suffering through discussing it with the employer?

Recruiting agencies play a safe role here. They try to keep all these women migrants in that country. If any victim contacts them to inform them the trouble she is facing in that country than they try to hide in by any means. According to our respondents the reason of this behavior is due to anxiety of loosing their business thinking if other migrants or interested migrants come to know about it than they will not go through that agency. By doing this these recruiting agencies actually putting all present and future migrants in danger.

Moreover, in the discussion, an 'Office' system were identified. This office was the other part of the recruiting agency from Lebanon. This office operates in the favor of Lebanese employer and never responds to a complaint of distresses coming from women migrants. In-fact some of our respondents informed us that they have witnessed the office itself torturing women migrants if they did not comply with what they are saying.

However, the victim who was the victim of brutality and was nearly killed, some government officials saved her. She was found near the bank of the river she was thrown into and was taken to hospital. She was in the hospital for over three months and Lebanese government paid all the expenses. Several times she was asked if she could identify who did this to her. But the victim was not able to say any relative clue. After treatment she was sent back to country. She yet suffers sickness for the torture she had to go through but she is at least alive.

8. Do you think government is keeping track of the migrants or working for the betterment of migrant community? What do you think government can do to keep track of the migrants and how they can do it?

According to the respondents government is not doing for the betterment of this community. They are trying to aware which barely ensures safety or a better environment for the women migrants going abroad. Even sometimes there is no

government office of Bangladesh where we could go ask for help. Like in Lebanon there is no consulate of Bangladesh. It means there is no one listen our words.

They also argued about the reason we were there to listen their words. They said, if all these talking are not actually helping us (Women Migrant Community) to resolve some their issues than there is no point of talking. They have requested some step to take in the country where women migrants are going.

They urged to open working environment monitoring services at the country where our migrants normally go. They believe having a special department dedicated to serve this migrant people can decrease the amount of incidents significantly.

9. Do you think taking training is helpful before going to Lebanon? Which training was the most helpful in case of you?

Taking training before going to Lebanon is always helpful. If women migrants master the language before going to Lebanon this is definitely going to save them from being harassed. Because when people of Lebanon see that the migrant understand the language than they act soberly with them. They do not want to get into trouble with the judiciary system for any harassment done with them.

Our respondents also identified the cost of availing training. They said that sometimes migrant do not attend the training because the training center is far from the place they live. So they miss classes in which case they lack perfection. Therefore they emphasized on organizing training somewhere near their residents.

Some other types of trainings were in the recommendations. Some of our respondents asked for a training on situations they feel insured of. Like if they ever get exposed to distresses than can they tackle the situation, what should they do adapting the situation.

However, some of the respondents also asked for training depending on the job they are going to. If it is housework, than they want to have trainings on using home appliances and machineries required for housework.

10. What do you think should be done for / by women workers to live without hassle in Lebanon or abroad?

- For Labor / Domestic workers:
According to our respondents for house workers it is necessary to learn the language and learn the work well before going. Try not to engage in incensed conversations with the employer while working. Because it will only increase the probability of being exposed to harassments. They advised to be patience

and finish the contract time period if it is manageable with the small problems occurring. But if it is tolerable then they should try contacting back to country before contacting the 'Office' there at Lebanon. Taking steps from Bangladesh to help the victim is easier and safer than seeking help from someone there.

They also recommended going through government-approved processes so than if any problem occurs they (Migrants) can take judicial steps here.

- For Family and Society:

Family:

According to our respondents family and society is the ultimate institutions from where these women migrants can receive help. Family can provide support with all the paper processing before migrating to Lebanon. They can also cross check the papers they have on hand with NGO's working in this sector.

After migrating family also plays a vital role. They should be alert for any misshapen taking place with the migrant. They can also play a role of counselor at this difficult time when migrants are experience such troubles. Families can keep a copy of their (Migrant's) papers so than of ever needed they can show these. And most importantly, they should never ever push migrants to choose an illegal channel even if it do or die situation.

Society:

For migrant society can also play a critical role. According to the respondents, society can always keep track of the migrant people, where they are going, when they are going, who they are taking help etc. Society can also keep the illegal mans of migration off I they really want to. Our respondents identified agents / brokers as a person who lives in the same society they (migrants) are living in. so it is not much hard for a society to keep them away from spoiling migrants through illegal channels.

Our respondents also said that, if there is any problem occurring with the migrant living abroad society can take a faster step to resolve the matter. Collective effort of the society can make the process of providing support to the victim faster than any individual trying to help.

- Government:

Government is the key factor in migration, as our respondents identified. Government can resolve any problem before even taking place. According to

our respondents, government should open separate section only to support migrants.

Government can start separate services to monitor the work environment of women migrants in Lebanon. Keeping track of their whereabouts would decrease the number of incidents significantly. Also providing a mobile phone with the migrant women regardless of the fact illegal or legal would also help in betterment of the situation.

Government can also run some awareness program not only about safe migration, but also on what migrants should tackle the situation if they ever come across any problems.

Focus Group Discussion (FGD) on NGO Officials:

We carried out another FGD on the officials who are engaged with the migrant community.

In the discussion our main focus were to find out how officials interpret the types of distresses women migrants faced in Lebanon and why do they think those distresses took place. We also focused on the expertise of possible solutions that could be done in order to tackle the situation. We also discussed the role of NGOs and INGOs in the light to take steps to resolve such issues.

Summary of the note taken is as following:

1. What do you mean by safe migration? Why did you think women migrants go to Lebanon for work?

According to officials safe migrations means

- Taking decision with the knowledge of profit and loss from this migration
- Secured migration process
- Reaching at the workplace safely
- Violence free environment and health care facility
- Getting appropriate salary / wage
- Coming back safely
- Security after coming

Talking about the second question officials pointed out that our women migrants go to Lebanon since there is a market for them. They informed us that this labor market was once under domination of Philippine and Indonesian workers. But since their average salary/ wage start from \$300 to \$500, which is high than the

Bangladeshi workers, therefore Lebanese people started hiring Bangladeshi migrants. So with the growing opportunity number of women migrants migrating to Lebanon also increased.

Generally, officials identified the reason for which women migrants get interested migrant is due to lack of employment opportunity for women here in Bangladesh. There is garments industry in our country, but wages at garments are not adequate enough for those women to run a family. Therefore to ensure a better life for her family these women migrants decide to migrate. Lebanon has been a prominent destination for women of Bangladesh, as it is a Muslim country. In the year of 2012 highest number of women migrants therefore migrated to Lebanon.

2. What do you think of a woman working as a house worker in Lebanon? Do you think they can work safely and with dignity at Lebanon?

Women working as house worker at Lebanon are not generally safe. Officials identified 'Kafala' system as a system with many flaws. They said, in kafala system worker herself / himself can not take decision independently. And under the kafal system employers treat workers as their slave. Kafala system is not covered by human rights or labor law of the country, therefore it gives the Kofil / Employer full freedom to do whatever they want with the migrants.

Bangladesh government had a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed with the government of Lebanon but that is not sufficient to address these issues through local law. Lebanon also did not ratify 1990 convention, which took Lebanon out of the jurisdiction of any international settlement to supervise. So as a labor receiving country they are still unsafe.

3. In Lebanon or in any other country if a women worker wants to work than what types of competencies they should posses?

According to the officials our women workers need efficiency at the work place. A lot of women workers migrate without having enough experience of usability of the appliances and electronic products Lebanese people use in daily life. As a result worker's work efficiency decreases drastically. This leads them to loosing their job. For women migrant this is a troublesome situation. They try to engage in argument, which leads to possible exposure to violence.

Language is also an efficiency officials addressed in the discussion. Lack of understanding of language leads these women workers towards failure to comply with the command. By not understanding the language all these women remain in

the confusion about her surrounding. This hampers their workability and sustainability at the work place.

However, many more competencies like smartness and maintaining a hygienic level were also identified in the discussion. Officials informed us that in many cases it has been that our migrants are losing their job under a good employer just because of they could not maintain a good hygienic life.

4-5. Do women working in Lebanon become a victim of distresses? What types of distresses women migrant suffers? If yes, out of ten how many of them become victims? Who are responsible for these troubles?

According to the officials even if the number of victim is one (1) that can not be acceptable. Sub-categorizing the level of humiliation official stated that around 95% of the victim undergoes embarrassments like lack of food, listening bad words, being locked down at home, beaten by the employer etc. around 3-5% of the migrants suffer sexual harassments. According to the officials out of 10 people at least one (1) are exposed to sexual harassment.

Mostly employers are responsible for the troubles all these migrant women get in. Employers see these migrants as a slave therefore give very tough jobs those our women can not handle. Some of these works required strong physical fitness, which also are lacking in South Asian women. Moreover they are sometimes asked to work more than two to three houses everyday spending long hours. And without having enough food for them it gets tough to maintain physical fitness they require for the job.

But if those employees act responsibly than these harassments can be reduced. All they need is to understand the culture difference and treat the house worker as a human. Nothing but their (employer's) willingness to help these migrants would be changing the scene of the violence; these women are going through.

6-7. How is the behavior of the recruiting agency? Do they listen your complaints? Do they try to resolve the problems the women migrants are suffering through discussing it with the employer?

According to officials, recruiting agencies are the institutions should be held responsible for those entire misshapen taking place in case of women migrants of Bangladesh. They are signing contracts with the agencies there in Lebanon and literally handing over the migrants as a disposable product. Moreover many of the recruiting agencies hired Bangladeshi people there in Lebanon in order to run the business smoothly with Bangladesh. Those Bangladeshi representatives sometimes

sell these migrants to the employers without the concern of the migrants. Officials claimed of receiving complaint saying that they (representative) sometime take advance wage of the worker from the employer without telling the worker. After a month when the worker see that she is getting the salary / wage than she get demotivated. Demotivation leads to efficiency at the workplace resulting in engagement with the employer in argument.

Apart from this, recruiting agencies never respond to complaints of the migrants. If they inform the agency here in Bangladesh, they overlook it saying they do not have any jurisdiction over the recruiting agency in Lebanon. And if the migrants complaints at the agency (Which is well-known as Office among migrant community) than they call those migrants to the office and torture them for complaining. This fact was even crosschecked by many migrants who were our respondents. There were some complaints of sexual harassment of the so-called office according to our officials. They informed us that, they have information on harassing many migrant workers sexually at their office. These migrants did not want to stay at Lebanon and they asked the office to send them back to the country. Therefore before sending these migrants, people over there used to force them to engage in physical relation.

However, there are also some positive feedbacks on the office. Many of our migrants got a better employer once the office replaced them to other employer on the list.

8. Do you think government is keeping track of the migrants or working for the betterment of migrant community? What do you think government can do to keep track of the migrants and how they can do it?

Officials say that government recently government is trying to improve the situation with Bangladeshi migrants. They have included migrant issues into their agenda. And it has all happened due to engagement of the civil society.

They identified few problems, which is troublesome for these migrants. According to officials, a free visa¹¹ is an individual visa trading system. Under this system, people can migrate to Lebanon without the concern of the government of Bangladesh. Officials think that it is time to incorporate some kind of mechanism to bring this system of visa trading under supervision. So than people migrating using this system can be under official supervision.

¹¹ There is nothing as Free Visa. This is a jargon created by local migrants, which means an individual visa trading system where the person migrates to the host country and can work anywhere they like with the concern of the sponsor. This is an illegal settlement between the migrant and the recruitment agency and the sponsor.

Officials also identified the need of opening a Bangladeshi consulate at Lebanon as early as possible. Lebanon has the highest number of women migrant with huge number male migrants. A consulate in Lebanon would reduce many of their issues within a very short period of time. At least Lebanese people would now know that there is a guardian of these migrants in the country who are monitoring the wellbeing of these migrants. This would help tackling the issue of humiliation a lot.

About the kafala system officials said that, invalidating such established system might be a problem for the market. Therefore they are proposing government to take the lead to build a task force, which will have the power to supervise and monitor the 'Kofil' working under the kafal system. Officials believe that such step would help to resolve the confusion of kafala system and bring the system under some sort of supervising. Officials also feel that opening a shelter house in Lebanon would also help the government to keep the track of our migrants. A shelter house could be a place where all the migrants will come and report their problems from which government can have some clue.

In the discussion need for an agreement was also identified. Officials believe that signing an agreement would provide our migrants with basic human rights. This will open opportunity to take judicial steps against Lebanese people and also Lebanese government can be held responsible for any misshapen.

9. Do you think taking training is helpful before going to Lebanon? Which training you think is most helpful for women migrants?

In the discussion taking language training was very much emphasized. Under the basic survival training this training should be compulsory for all migrants going for work in the foreign countries. Officials also emphasized on the training of the work, operating appliances (for house worker), operating medical machineries (for care givers) etc. They think that different training can be designed based on the work of the migrants to make them efficient in the workplace.

Apart from these officials also identified the need of the training on the life-skill or reproductive health to lead a hygienic lifestyle that could portray an image of a clean worker.

10. What do you think should be done for / by women workers to live without hassle in Lebanon or abroad?

- For Labor / House workers:

According to the officials, migrants should be aware of the contract they are signing. They should keep communication with the government of Bangladesh. They should

also not take any illegal means of migration while going abroad. They should learn and gather more knowledge about safe migration and migrant's rights.

Migrants are therefore recommended to visit NGOs and iNGOs who are working for the migrant community to learn more about migrant related issues.

- For Family and Society:

Family:

Our officials identified family as the ultimate institutions from where these women migrants can receive help. Family can provide support with all the paper processing before migrating to Lebanon. They can also cross check the papers they have on hand with NGO's working in this sector.

After migrating family also plays a vital role. They should be alert for any misshapen taking place with the migrant. They can also play a role of counselor at this difficult time when migrants are experience such troubles. Families can keep a copy of their (Migrant's) papers so than of ever needed they can show these. And most importantly, they should never ever push migrants to choose an illegal channel even if it do or die situation.

Society:

For migrant society can also play a critical role. According to the officials, society can always keep track of the migrant people, where they are going, when they are going, who they are taking help etc. Society can also keep the illegal mans of migration off I they really want to. Officials also identified agents / brokers as a person who lives in the same society they (migrants) are living in. so it is not much hard for a society to keep them away from spoiling migrants through illegal channels.

Moreover according to the officials, if there is any problem occurring with the migrant living abroad society can take a faster step to resolve the matter. Collective effort of the society can make the process of providing support to the victim faster than any individual trying to help.

Government:

Officials believe that this the time to re-strategize migration issue for Bangladesh. And they felt that government should act on it as soon as possible. Officials think that, a proper monitoring on the women migration can reduce the problems significantly.

They also think that government should take necessary steps to tackle any problem arising in the migrant community based on 1990 convention. Some more

recommendations like opening a shelter house and let the private sector take the lead in resolving these problems would be helpful.

Government can also run some awareness program not only about safe migration, but also on what migrants should tackle the situation if they ever come across any problems.

Supposition:

Under the study, it was seen that a most of the female migrants went abroad with two years contract. On an average they stayed abroad 3 -5 years or most of them able to successfully finish their first contract. In general, domestic workers situation were vulnerable, they did not enjoy any holiday and they worked long-time, insufficient food, disgrace, lack of medical treatment and low payment. There was restrictions on movement of female migrants workers, usually they were deprived of opportunities for regular communicating with their family members and not even allowed to post letters. In quite a few instances families did not know the whereabouts of the female migrant's workers for several months. Some women are exposed to verbal, physical violence and sexual abuse.

According to the study we found some reasons, which create vulnerable situation of migrant workers life, which need to address immediately:

- Major portion of the workers go through individual initiatives
- They travel without proper and legal documents
- Many cannot reach the destination
- Very few of them get standard job
- They tortured verbally, mentally, physically and sexually
- There is common trend to stay illegally in Lebanon after the completion of the contract
- Sometimes they changed the employers without completing contract
- Sometime they run away or escaped from their employers house
- Sometimes they are arrested by the local administration and sent to detention camps or jail

A deep excavation into the reasons of this violence we found that most of the women migrants have literally no knowledge on safe migration. Around 42% of the respondents did not take training on the language or the work. They prefer to communicate through middlemen, which is leading these women to migrate through an informal channel. This is amplifying the chance of these women migrants to get exposed to violence even more than that of come though lack of language

efficiency or lack not work efficiency. We need to improve the quality of training and pre departure training in relate to country specific language and culture orientation.

Recommendations:

For Labor Recruitment Industry:

- Develop guidelines for assessment of agencies / countries through a task force
- Assessment / review of recruitment agencies performance. Licenses of non-performing should be cancelled. Grading of recruitment agencies. Incentives for performing agencies, better service providers.
- Transparent accountable recruitment industry
- Governments should be accountable for government-to-government recruitment process.
- Annual assessment of recruitment agencies by BMET. Standards for assessment / review to be developed together with Civil Society Organizations.

For Migrant Rights:

- Migrants can migrate with dignity and make informed choices
- Migrant workers enjoy the same rights as local workers
- Enable services in embassy and consulate in Lebanon
- Embassy staff should be properly trained with motivated personnel
- Migrant workers should be provided legal assistance in countries of destination through the embassies / consulates
- States become more responsive to issues of internal migrants (portability of rights)
- Decentralization of services for migrant workers
- Voting rights for migrant workers

Policy and Advocacy for migrants:

Implementation of National Legislation

- National migration policy needs to be based on the UN 1990 Migrant Workers Convention, ILO Conventions 97, 143 and 189

- Government should consider developing minimum wage (country and skills/vocation specific) Urgent need to frame a national policy for women migrant workers. On the ground of ensuring the constitutional guarantee of equality of men and women before law.
- Government will take necessary step through advocacy or lobbying for legal coverage to the migrant workers as well as ensure social security scheme by the receiving countries.
- Review existing MoUs or sign new MoUs with standard procedures in legal redress in case of violence and violation of labor rights.
- Establish a hotline connection between the countries
- Introduce and maintain database system- contract of workers, details of workers, information about recruiting agencies and employers
- Increase the quality of training for workers with experienced and trained person, including practical session on job skill such as operate electric machineries, experience sharing session (with returnee migrant workers), separate session on local language, food habit, culture of Lebanon, redress procedure, rights etc.
- Government should have strong position in favor of migrant workers' rights at regional and international mechanisms
- Government should have Bi-lateral, regional and international approaches to end all kind of violence and improve working condition for female migrants' worker in all destination countries.

For international council

- Collaboration between migration organizations and organizations
- Develop guidelines for assessment of countries through a task force
- Develop guidelines to ensure local law for the migrant house workers in the host country
- Develop guidelines to ensure safety net for unwanted children
- An international organization committed to migration and development.
- Migration should be a choice and not a necessity
- Engage in fair trade
- Debt moratorium
- Collaboration between migration organizations and organizations working on post 2015 issues

Annex – 4 Stories of the Respondents

Randomly selected 9 case studies are included

1. Story of Dilara Begum

Name: Dilara Begum

- Age at present

Current age is 36

- Age at times of migrating to Lebanon

At time of migrating to Lebanon, she was 34 old

Picture NOT Available

- Marital Status before migration:

-Married

- Marital status after returning:

-Married

Story of Dilara Begum:

Economic solvency was the key behind the migration of a housewife named as Dilara Begum. She went to Lebanon twice. Frist time her employer was decent which drove her to go for migration one more time. But both of the times her process of migration was through a broker. Paying around TK. 80,000, which she has managed to collect by doing loan from her sister and taking some from the savings; she migrated for the second time. She obtained VISA for Three (3) years. Since she was processing her papers by broker, it was only obvious that broker will keep the papers at hand. Which actually happened with Dilara Begum in realty. She got her papers from her broker just Thirty (30) minutes before the flight. She signed the contract paper after reaching at Lebanon. After reaching Lebanon she got the work she was promised, but did not get the wage she was supposed to get. In the investigation we came to know that she was promised to receive TK 8,000 per month as a wage, but received only TK 6,000. As a result she only was able to sent USD 400 all together in Two (2) years.

Like other migrants women of Bangladesh who are working in Lebanon as a house worker, Dilara Begum was also forced to be in the house. Except occasionally when

her employer used to ask her to get drinks from Bar's, she had chance to go outside of the house. She was told to that she will only have house works but there were many more works she was forced to do. Dalara Begum did not have permission for vacation by her employer. She could talk to her family members, but rarely. Her employer used to keep watch over her while she used to talk with her husband.

Investigating over her employer behaviors we found that, Dilara Begum's employer was not a good person. In-fact his (employer's) family was also had a bad manner while they used to communicate with Dilara. This was very disturbing for her. Having long work hours, tolerating mental and physical tortures through abusing her / sour her continuously was also very much disappointing for her. However, once when Dilara fell sick, she got help upon medical expenses by the employer. But she was not granted for any leave for her sickness. She informed all these to her husband, but could not inform the broker who managed this job for her. Broker was out of touch after deporting her to Lebanon.

According to her statements above, it is clearly visible that she had no information on safe migration. However, she attended on training sessions organized by a private organization. She learned the language along with the work she was going to do. She had to pay TK 5,000 for the training. Discussing with her about the most important training we found that, Dilara emphasizing on language training mostly. She also gave stress on the training of the work migrants are going to do at their workplace. But she strongly believes that, going to Lebanon for women workers are not safe based on the fact that people of Lebanon are normally cruel with migrants. She thinks government should ban migrating to Lebanon as soon as possible. Dilara was also unaware about Bangladeshi Consulate or any of its services. She does not even know certain facilities exist for people of Bangladesh in foreign countries.

Dilara is completely unaware about any steps taken to protect their rights by the government of Bangladesh or any NGO's. She has no idea of her contribution in the society and economy of the country.

2. Story of Rokeya Begum

Name: Rokeya Begum

- Age at present

Current age is 42

- Age at times of migrating to Lebanon

At time of migrating to Lebanon, she was 35 old

- Marital Status before migration:
-Married
- Marital status after returning:
-Married
- Number of Children:
-Boy: 0 -Girl: 1

Picture NOT Available

Story of Rokeya Begum:

Rokeya Begum a housewife used to work as a house worker in her locality. She chose to migrate in foreign country with a hope to gain economic solvency. She had full support of her husband on migrating to different country. Going Lebanon was her second time of migrating. She had to spend TK 60,000 for going there, which she collected by loan from other people on an interest rate of TK 100 per thousand. She obtained VISA and work contract for three (3) years. She took loan from local political leader around TK 12,000 on interest; from her brother around TK 6,000; from her brother in law around TK 48,000. She also sold a gold chain for TK 7,000. She migrated as a house worker upon a wage of TK 12,000 per month but she received her wage TK 2,000 less than the promised wage.

Rokeya had her papers at hand before a day. But she had no idea about the facts of safe migration. As a result she was not aware about leaving a copy of the paper with her family members. Also, after arriving at Lebanon her papers were taken by her employer. But she was lucky that she did not suffer any misbehaves of the employer. According to Rokeya, her employer was good. Except the fact that in her contract she was required to work from morning to afternoon but in realty she had to work morning to midnight. Rokeya fell sick once during her stay in Lebanon and her employer was kind enough to pay for the treatment.

Rokeya had no training taken on safe migration or language. According to Rokeya not knowing about language was troublesome. She was not able to communicate with her employer properly. She thinks every migrant should learn the language of the host country they are going in. she also believes that government should increase sending more women migrants with adequate trainings. Because in the foreign country's they pay on a timely manner and wage is more than they get in the garments in the country. She also believes that for women to migrate in different countries would bring them independence with their choice and enhance their opportunity to raise their voice in the society.

Rokeya is aware about the fact that in Lebanon Bangladesh has no embassy. She believes that having an embassy would be helpful for the migrants with their troubles they face. After coming back from Lebanon she was able to blend in the society better than before. But she feels insecure since she has less income than before. She is also aware about the fact that there is no re-integration plan taken by the government. Therefore she hope to migrate again sometime in the future.

3. Story of Alekjan

Name: Alekjan

- Age at present

Current age is 30

- Age at times of migrating to Lebanon

At time of migrating to Lebanon, she was 26 old

Picture NOT Available

- Marital Status before migration:
-Married
- Marital status after returning:
-Married

Story of Alekjan:

Alekjan and her husband works as a labor for livelihood. It barely provides them with food and In case of need managing extra money becomes really hard. Therefore in 2009 she decided to migrate to Lebanon for work. She got the information of job in Lebanon through a relative. She settled the VISA in TK 100,000, which was a huge amount for her. She collected TK 50,000 from a local person and another TK 50,000 from her relatives. This money she collected was on interest. She had to VISA for house working for three (3) years. She was promised to get \$300 as a wage per month, which remained same after she reached to Lebanon.

Alekjan had no training on the work she is going for. She also did not have language proficiency. She received her papers related to migration before one (1) day of her deportation from the country. She also had no idea about the facts of safe migration. As a result, she did not leave any of the photocopies of her papers on migration with any of her family members. She also was very lucky in-terms of having a good employer. She could go outside alone and enjoy holiday for one day in every week. During the weak day if she was asked to do work, she used to get payment for overtime up to \$20. She was also able to in other houses in the weekdays, which brought her more money. She could talk to her family members whenever she wanted. Defining her employer's character she told, he was very decent person. However, problem came from her employer's wife. Employer's wife used to suspect her for extra-marital relationship with her (employer's wife) husband. Therefore

she was harsh on Alekjan. She (employer's wife) used to make her work every day from 5am to 7pm, whereas in the contract she was entitled to work from 8am to 5pm. Apart from it, employer's wife once pushed her from a terrace once to the ground for which Alekjan was seriously injured. But she was not taken to hospital. She was kept at home and was given some pain healing medicines. She contacted with the relative through whom she migrated, he contacted her employer and also kept communication with Alekjan to support her if anything goes wrong. Alekjan had trouble with the food later. She asked for rice but she was given bread. This was particularly difficult for her to keep strength after the incident.

Alekjan believes that all migrants going abroad should take language training. Knowing the language gives a person freedom to talk to people. So if there is anything they want to share or inform, it can be done easily. She also thinks training on the work may be helpful for someone to be risk free in the foreign country. Working efficiently will give migrants an acceptance to their employers. She gave her vote against stopping women migrants to Lebanon. She thinks finding a good employer may reduce the risk for women migrants working in Lebanon. She believes government can take the responsibility of women migrants and can be able to send women migrants safely. She is not aware about the consulate of Bangladesh or such systems.

She hopes to migrate to Lebanon again soon.

4. Story of Sharufa

Name: Sharufa

- Age at present

Current age is 24

- Age at times of migrating to Lebanon

At time of migrating to Lebanon, she was 21 old

Picture NOT Available

- Marital Status before migration:
-Married
- Marital status after returning:
-Married

Story of Sharufa:

Sharufa is married to a farmer. Being a farmer her husband was earning a very small amount that was not sufficient to run the family. Therefore Sharufa decided to migrate to Lebanon. She migrated to Lebanon through a local broker by paying TK 70,000. Managing this huge money was very tough for Sharufa. She took loan from local political leader around TK 12,000 on interest; from her brother around TK 6,000; from her brother in law around TK 48,000. She also sold a gold chain for TK 7,000. She migrated as a house worker upon a wage of TK 12,000 per month but she received her wage TK 2,000 less than the promised wage. She received VISA and work permit for thee (3) years. She informed this misshapen to the broker but he (broker) remained silent.

Sharufa had her papers at hand before a day. But she had no idea about the facts of safe migration. As a result she was not aware about leaving a copy of the paper with her family members. Also, after arriving at Lebanon her papers were taken by her employer. But she was lucky that she did not suffer any misbehaves of the employer. According to Sharufa, her employer was good. Except the fact that in her contract she was required to work from morning to afternoon but in realty she had to work morning to midnight. Sharufa fell sick once during her stay in Lebanon and her employer was kind enough to pay for the treatment.

Sharufa had no training taken on safe migration or language. According to Sharufa not knowing about language was troublesome. She was not able to communicate

with her employer properly. She thinks every migrant should learn the language of the host country they are going in. she also believes that government should increase sending more women migrants with adequate trainings. Because in the foreign country's they pay on a timely manner and wage is more than they get in the garments in the country. She also believes that for women to migrate in different country's would bring them independence with their choice and enhance their opportunity to raise their voice in the society.

Sharufa is aware about the fact that in Lebanon Bangladesh has no embassy. She believes that having an embassy would be helpful for the migrants with their troubles they face. After coming back from Lebanon she was able to blend in the society better than before. But she feels insecure since she has less income than before. She is also aware about the fact that there is no re-integration plan taken by the government. Therefore she hope to migrate again sometime in the future.

5. Story of Sajeda Begum

Name: Sajeda Begum

- Age at present

Current age is 36

- Age at times of migrating to Lebanon

At time of migrating to Lebanon she was 30 years old

- Marital Status before migration:
-Divorced

- Marital status after returning:
-Divorced

- Number of Children:
-Boy: 2 -Girl: 1

Picture NOT Available

Story of Sajeda Begum:

Sajeda Begum a divorced woman took the decision of migration independently. Her husband left her without reason, which happens very often to woman in the rural areas in our country. She was a labor in the country. But wage of the labor is not sufficient to run a family that she had. She was struggling with the daughter and two sons; as she was not able to provide them food and education. Therefore she was dependent on her brother. But living with the brother was also tough. Because her brother has separate family, and was unable to help Sajeda at times of her needs. So to give children good education and food she decided to migrate. She migrated to Lebanon twice. Once she went for three years and in the second time she obtained visa for three years. But she came back after two years, because her employer was not good to her. Both the time she migrated by the help of the broker. For the second time she migrated spending Tk 60,000. She collected the money by taking loan by mortgaging her land to a local person without interest and rest of the money she gave from the money she saved. She was able to repay the loan within one (1) year of her departure. She got VISA for three (3) years for the second time along with the contract paper. She got the contract paper but Sajeda has no idea about what was written in the contract paper. Since she did not know reading. She was promised to be paid USD 125 every month. Working hours of Sajeda was very long. Everyday from 6am in the morning to upto midnight she had to work. This was very hectic for her, since there is a little time to rest. Moreover, she was not allowed to go

outside of the house. Not even for recreation. Day after day locked up in the house has also made her mentally weak. Like other women migrants she was able to talk with her family barely once in every month. She informed us that her employer used to let her talk to her family for only 2 to 3 minutes in a month. And that had to be in front of the employer. She also never got leave for holiday. Whenever she asked her employer about it, he used to ignore it saying that after three years she is going home anyway. Asking about the leave stated on the contract she told us, she had no idea what was written on the contract. So she could not tell. Asking about her employer, Sajeda told us that overall behavior of her employer was good. But employers' wife used to do shouting on her very often. Sajeda had to work really hard to satisfy employer's wife. Apart from it she also had problem with the food. She never had ample amount of food, which used to make her feel weak. She fell sick once during her stay in Lebanon and her employer was kind enough to take care of her and provide good food. However Sajeda came back to the country in the beginning of the third year for misbehave of employers' wife.

Sajeda Begum went through training following every instruction. She took training for 21 days and learned Lebanese language before going to Lebanon. Even though she was aware about the facts of safe migration, she failed to collect her papers having a considerable amount of time at hand to check those. However she after receiving her papers just before two (2) hours of departing she was able to leave copies of her papers with her mother for safety. Discussing possibilities of future shut down on sending women migrants to Lebanon, Sajeda was against it. She emphasized on managing a good employer and also aware them (Lebanese people) informing our cultural differences may resolve many problems. She also thinks that sending women migrants for works in the industries like garments would have been better. She believes that working in the industries would include migrant community into the countries interest therefore their rights will be protected. She believes migration has ben a vital option of livelihood for many divorced / troubled women in the country. They are now more independent and able in case of planning for their family members and future life. Sajeda Begum is aware of the fact that there is no Bangladeshi embassy in Lebanon. She strongly feels that wherever our migrants are going, we should have our embassies in those countries. She also emphasized on language trainings as a must and asked NGOs and government agencies to come forward to ensure learning language of the host country by the migrants before their departure. She believes that having patience while staying abroad, dealing with the problems tactically all these ideas should be included in the training for migrants.

6. Story of Shamsun Nahar

Name: Shamsun Nahar

- Age at present

Current age is 25

- Age at times of migrating to Lebanon

At time of migrating to Lebanon she was 22 years 6 months old

- Marital Status before migration:
-Married
- Marital status after returning:
-Married
- Number of Children:
-Boy: 2 -Girl: 1

Picture NOT Available

Story of Shamsun Nahar:

Being a housewife, Shamsun Nahar was happy. Her husband worked as a tailor in the village, earns a very small wage per day, which was insufficient to run the family. To change the fate and bring economic solvency Shamsun Nahar took decision to migrate to Lebanon in 2011. That was the first time she went abroad as migrant. The whole migration processing was done by her relative and was settle the deal in TK 60,000. Since she had not enough money, she had to loan this total amount from someone else. With the help of the broker she obtained visa for Three (3) years but she did not get work permit. She got all her papers related migration before five (5) days of her departure from Bangladesh. Also she did not get her contract paper before or after reaching to Lebanon.

Without the work permit she work for her employer for TK. 22,000 per month salary. She was fortunate enough to get the work she was told by her broker (who also was a relative). But the working hour was intolerable. On an average she had to work 16hours in a day. Moreover, her job was in a lock down situation, means she was not able to go outside, not even for refreshment. She also did not have permission to talk with her family more than once in a month. And if she wanted to talk she had to do it in front of the owner / employer. She was told to have leave once in every year. And she was able to enjoy 6months of leave during her total migration period. She spent this time with her family in Bangladesh.

Investigating about the employer (Owner) we come to know that her owner was a good person. But owner's wife was a bit harsh on her. Due to working for such long time for everyday, sometimes it so happened that she was asleep for a bit longer. At that moment owner's wife used to wrangle with her. She even sometimes insulted her saying bad words. These incidents made Shamsun Nahar feel really bad sometimes. She also had trouble with food and housing. The employer was however kind enough to support her with medical expenses, when she fell sick during her stays at Lebanon. He (employer) also paid the travel expenses while she was coming back to the country.

Shamsun Nahar had to pre-departure training before going to Lebanon. Not having training made her unaware about safe migrations issues. She did not leave any of her papers with any of her family members for safety. This could have been deadly for her. However, things were not as bad as it appeared to be with many people migrating Lebanon. Shamsun Nahar had a decent earnings and tolerable work environment than any other women migrants we have so far come across. But while discussing with Shamsun Nahar on possible steps a women migrant should take before migrating, she emphasized on learning language and the work for which she is going. She also stressed on behaving while staying with the employer. She thinks not doing anything without asking the employer is a behavioral aptitude may save women migrants being exposed to possible humiliation. She strongly believes that we need to establish our embassy at Lebanon as soon as possible. So than migrants can go seek for help from them in case of any misshapen occurs. Sharing her point of views she told us that she does not think any step against sending women migrants to Lebanon will not be much help. She said that, otherwise some occurrences stated above, overall work environment of Lebanon is very good. Their climate is very soothing makes easy for people from tropical zone to adopt and work efficiently.

Talking about the help or supports she expects from the government / NGO and civil society, she recommended for more works at Lebanon not in the house works but in the industries. She requested Lebanese people to understand the cultural deference of the food and help the migrant worker accordingly. She thinks if government can take the responsibility of sending the women workers, then problems would decrease.

7. Story of Shahanara Akhter

Name: Shahanara Akhter

- Age at present

Current age is 22years

- Age at times of migrating to Lebanon

At time of migrating to Lebanon she was 21 years old

Picture NOT Available

- Marital Status before migration:
-Married
- Marital status after returning:
-Married

Story of Shahana Akhter:

Shahana Akhter married to businessman decided to migrate to Lebanon to bring economic solvency to the family. She migrated in the year of 2012 with the help of a broker who happens to be her relative. She had to pay TK 80,000 for the VISA. She managed this money by doing loan on 10% interest from her relatives. She got the VISA and work permit for 3months. She was promised to get wage TK 35,000 but she received only TK 25,000 after reaching there. Asking her about the reason for her not getting the wage she was promised, she replied saying that she did not understand the language of the contract paper. Therefore she signed without understanding what is written in the contract. The recruitment office and the employer took the advantage of her for not knowing the language and reduced the wage. Shahana Akhter migrated as a house worker.

At the workplace Shahana was asked to work long hours. Everyday she worked for 18 hours. In edition to this, the employers' wife also verbally abused her most harshly. Shahana particularly was in trouble since employer's wife was not giving enough food for her. Without enough food made her week leading to efficiency in the work. Brutal employer's wife even sometimes beaten her (Shahana); for not

being able to work due to weakness. Shahana was promised for a yearly vacation, but she never got one. She was not permitted to go outside of the home. She (Shahana) was barely able to talk with her family in Bangladesh. But she could not talk freely in-front of the employer. Shahana also complained about childrens of the employer. They were also very brutal with her and abused her verbally many times. Shahana fell sick one in Lebanon due to the weakness and her employer did not pay for the medical expenses. She had paid it by herself.

Shahana informed her agent back in the country about the misshapen at Lebanon, but they remained silent and did nothing to resolve these issues. Shahana attended the long training (21 days) where she learnt about safe migration process. According to Shahana knowing the fact of safe migration did not help much in Lebanon. Because in the training there were no instructions based on problems these migrants get into in Lebanon. Therefore when she became a victim she felt very helpless. She strongly feels the need of Bangladeshi embassy in Lebanon. She thinks establishing an embassy and monitoring their (migrant women's) conditions will help many migrant women living in Lebanon.

Asking about banning the migration to Lebanon, Shahana replied opposing such activity. She thinks that, for many women migration means an opportunity to earn some money for the family. Banning migration to Lebanon will be deadly for all these women who have no other choice but to migrate. She is aware about her contribution towards the country's economy. She believes if government helps these migrants with finance and monitoring, then problems identified here can be reduced down.

Shahana came back to country in 2013 after one year of her departure. She was able to repay her loan.

8. Story of Salma

Name: Salma (Fake Name)

- Age at present

Current age is 35 years

- Age at times of migrating to Lebanon

At time of migrating to Lebanon she was 33 years old

Picture NOT Available

- Marital Status before migration:
-Married
- Marital status after returning:
-Married
- Number of Children:
-Boy: 2 -Girl: 0

Story of Salma (Fake Name):

Salma (Fake Name) migrated to Lebanon to earn money to provide her family with economic freedom. At the age of 33 she went to Lebanon as a house worker. She had to spend TK. 120,000 for the VISA, which she collected by doing loan and selling her family land. She got VISA for only two (2) months and did not get the work permit. She also did not get her contract paper. The agents here told her that she would get wage TK 10,000 per month. But she did not get that wage as she was promised. She also had trouble with her work. She was told to work as a house worker but there were many other things she was asked to do.

At the workplace Salma (Fake Name) was sexually abused. Her employer was very bad and used to harass her sexually. Employer's wife and employer's children were not also good with her. They used to verbally abuse her all the time. She even was not allowed for vacation and to talk with her family members back in the country. She was not allowed to go outside of the workplace. She had to work in a lockdown. She informed her agent back in the country but they did not take any step to rescue her from the employer. Salma (Fake Name) did not have training on safe migration issues. she also did not have training on language therefore she was not able to inform anyone about her trouble. Lacking the information Salma (Fake Name) got

her papers before one (1) hour before her departure from the country. She did not know the necessity of leaving a copy of her migration related papers with any of her family members.

Asking her about the role of the government to protect women migrants from such issues, Salma (Fake Name) replied saying that if government wants then they can do anything. She is not aware about Bangladesh not having an embassy at Lebanon. But she thinks if there was someone to keep communication with the women migrants and monitor their whereabouts than such harassment would not take place. She thinks women migrants much carefully think and then take the decision before going to Lebanon. She also believes a country like Lebanon should be banned by Bangladesh for women labor migration. Working environment of Lebanon for women is not favorable at all.

Salma (Fake Name) has a moderate relationship with her husband. Society did not take her well after coming back to country. This is hampering their relationship. She also complained about harassment in the airport in Bangladesh.

Salma (Fake Name) does not think going to Lebanon was a good decision for her.

9. Story of Bulbuli

Name: Mst. Bulbuli

- Age at present

Current age is 24years 5 months

- Age at times of migrating to Lebanon

At time of migrating to Lebanon she was 21 years old

- Marital Status before migration:
-Unmarried
- Marital status after returning:
-Unmarried

Picture NOT Available

Story of Bulbuli:

Bulbuli was a student before migrating to Lebanon. She was unmarried and was dependent on her father. Her father works as a farmer. Being a farmer he was unable to operate his family properly. Moreover with the studying expenses that Bulbuli had that was unbearable for her farmer father. This situation led Bulbuli to take decision of migration. She went to Lebanon in 2010 spending TK 80,000. She managed this money from her family savings. She came to know about the opportunity from a relative. She obtained VISA and work permit for three (3) years. She was promised to get wage TK 16,000 that is a well paid wage comparing to other migrants. She migrated as a house worker.

Bulbuli was very lucky to get an employer in Lebanon. She got exactly what she was promised to get paid. Her employer was very good with her. She (employer) made Bulbuli feel at home. As a house worker Bulbuli was very efficient. She had training on the language from the country. This helped Bulbuli to understand their language and work efficiently. As bulbuli said, her employer was a very good person and so are her children. She (employer) had three children who also behaved very well with Bulbuli in different times. She was able to communicate with her family member over phone whenever she wanted. She could talk in front of the employer or somewhere else. Her employer never bothered her for talking to her family members. She could go outside of her workplace whenever she wanted. In her contract she had weekly vacation, but she never took such vacations. Because, there were no binding if she wanted to go somewhere from her employer.

Bulbuli participated in the Arabic language training under a government organization. She also received training on safe migration. Having enough education helped her to understand the facts of safe migration. She got her migration related papers two days before her departure from Bangladesh. She had three photocopies of the papers, which she left with her family members. She also had the contact details of the relative (who helped her with the migration) with her. But she never needed to contact her. However she informed us, that person (her relative, who helped with the migration) also never contacted with her.

Bulbuli is aware about the fact that there is no consulate of Bangladesh in Lebanon. She strongly feels that there should be a consulate of Bangladesh in Lebanon which an keep track of the whereabouts of Bangladeshi women migrants living in Lebanon. Asking her about what types of training would be helpful for the women migrants migrating from Bangladesh; she said that understanding of the language is the first to learn. Then she emphasized on learning about local law and have training on the work she is going to do in Lebanon. She believes that having education qualification

helps immensely for anyone wants to migrate. Therefore she recommended to set a bar for the migrants with a minimum education.

Bulbuli does not think that barring migration to Lebanon would be a good for migrant community. She thinks that, that for many of the women migrating is a hope that brings them economic comfort in their life. Also it brings a good amount of remittance for the country. So barring migrations to Lebanon would spoil the market. She thinks government should work on ratifying some law, which could help migrants if they are exposed to any humiliation in both home and host country.

Did you get the work permit? Yes/No

- D) Did you get the contract paper? Yes/No
- E) If yes, what was written in the contract paper? For how many days you had the contract?
- F) What was your monthly salary?
- G) Have you got the work and salary as promised?
- H) If your answer is No, then explain the differences you experienced. What was the difference between the salary you were promised and the salary you actually received?
- I) Why do you think you have not got the work and salary as promised (what might have been wrong, explain)
- J) How many hours of work requirement was on your contact? And what were the actual working hours?
- K) Did you have allocation of day offs in the contract? If yes then in which format? (Weekly/Monthly/Yearly)
- L) What you used to do when you had day off? Did you have permission to go outside alone?
- M) At actual how many days of leave you were able to enjoy? Was it a paid leave?
- N) Did you have option to communicate with your country? If yes, then how you used to communicate with your Family?
- O) How and how often, you used to send the money to country?

Information on the owner and owner's family:

A) Behavioral evaluation of owners of your work place:

Owner	
Owners wife	
Owners children	
Owners father / mother	
Other relatives of the owners	

- B) What kind of behaviors of the owner and his/her family's towards you were inappropriate?
- C) Why do you think their behavior towards you were inappropriate? What was the reason?
- D) Did you bear the expense to back to country by yourself? Did you get any help from your owner?

Migration Process / Migration Preparation related information:

- 19. How did you get the information about the work? (Broker/ Agency/ Relative / NGO Official/Government Official.
- 20. How much money you spent?

21. How did you manage the money? How much you took as a loan?
Whom/where did you take the loan from? What was the interest rate for the loan?
22. Did you repay the loan?
- A) If yes, what was the time period within which you were able to repay your loan? How much you actually had to repay (Capital + Interest)
- B) If no, then how much of the total loan money yet remains? How many days you will need to repay it back?
23. Did you know about the work and salary before going to Lebanon?
Yes/No
24. If yes, did you get the same work and got the salary as promised in the contract?
25. If no, then did you inform the person through whom you have completed the procedures? Yes/No
26. If yes, then did they take any step? What kind of steps they have taken?
27. Did you take any training before going to Lebanon? If yes then-
- A) What kind of training you took?
- B) How long was the training? How long the training should be to be effective?
- C) Where did you do the training? Who conducted the training?
(Government organization / private organization/ NGO)
- D) Did you take training on the language? Which language you have taken the training on?
- E) How much needed to spend for the training?
- F) Do you think the training was helpful for you? Which part of the training was helpful for you more?
- G) What else you think can be included into training sessions for your betterment?
- H) Did you take the Pre-departure training? How long was the PDT training and what have you learnt from the training?
28. Information on Required paperwork and employment organization
- A) How did do the passport? With the help of Broker or by yourself?
(Broker / Self / Relative)
- B) Before how long of your departure to Lebanon, you got your passport and tickets in hand?
- C) Did you do photocopy of the passport and other papers? Yes/No
- D) If yes, how many copies of photocopy you have done? Did you leave any copy of photocopy to any of your friends and family here in Bangladesh?
- E) After reaching Lebanon, did you have your main passport in your possession? Yes/No
- F) Did you have the contact details of the Broker/Agent/Employment organization/The
- G) Person or organization helped you with the proceedings with you?
Yes/No

- H) Did you contact with the broker/agent/employment organization/the person or organization helped you with the proceedings during your stay at Lebanon? If you have, how did you contact them? Was it in front of your owner or during absence of your owner?
- I) Did they contact with you or kept communication with you? If yes, then how did they maintain it?
- J) Whom did you contact when you had problem?

Information on the Consulate of Bangladesh / Embassy of Bangladesh

- A) Did you know about the consulate office of Bangladesh? Yes/No
- B) Do you think there should be Bangladeshi embassy / consulate in Lebanon? Yes/No
- C) What kind of help you want from consulate / embassy?
- D) If there were a shelter home in Bangladeshi consulate / embassy do you think it could have been helpful for you?

Information on sickness and torture

- A) Did you experience sickness while staying at Lebanon? If yes, did you get treatment expenditure and day offs to recover from your employer?
- B) Have you been a victim of torture? If yes, then what kind of and by whom? (Physical torture / mental / sexual / financial / misbehave)
- C) If yes, please explain in brief
- D) Have you been tortured in any other way? If yes then explain it in brief.
- E) Have you got any problem with food, cloths and place to stay?
- F) Have you ever heard of any other Bangladeshi women being tortured? If yes then please explain in brief

Information on what a migrant should one does to maintain a good work and social life:

- A) Who should work for the betterment of you in the country? And why?
- B) For your safe staying at abroad what do you think government should do? And why?
- C) Do you think there is a healthy work environment of women at Lebanon?
- D) If yes, explain it in brief.
- E) If no, then explain it in brief
- F) For women to work safely at Lebanon what could be the step you think?
- G) What kind of training would have been good for women migrant before coming to Lebanon?
- H) Without training what kind of capability would have been helpful for you to work in Lebanon?

Future Plan

- A) Do you want to go to Lebanon again? Or do you want to go to some other country?
 - If yes, then please explain why?
 - If no, then please explain why?
- B) If government takes action against sending women domestic workers as migrants to Lebanon, do you think it would be good? Please give your opinion.
- C) After coming back to the country, do you think government took step to rehabilitate you?
- D) Did you experience harassment at the airport? What kind of help you want at the airport?
- E) How well your family and society accepted you after coming back to country?
- F) What have you done to the betterment of your family?
- G) Do you know that you have a large contribution in national economy of the country?
- H) If yes, what rights you think you have to the government? Please provide your opinion.

Annex – 2

FGD questionnaire for Women who came back from Lebanon

1. What do you mean by safe migration? Why did you go to Lebanon for work?
2. What do you think of a woman working as a house worker in Lebanon? Do you think they can work safely with dignity?
3. In Lebanon or in any other country if a women worker wants to work than what types of competencies they should posses?
4. Do women working in Lebanon become a victim of distresses? If yes, out of ten how many of them become victims?
5. What types of distresses women migrant suffers? Who are responsible for these troubles?
6. How is the behavior of the recruiting agency? Do they listen your complaints? Do they try to resolve the problems the women migrants are suffering through discussing it with the employer?
7. Does recruiting agency ever torture migrants? If yes, what types of distresses they caused?
8. Do you think government is keeping track of the migrants or working for the betterment of migrant community? What do you think government can do to keep track of the migrants and how they can do it?
9. Do you think taking training is helpful before going to Lebanon? Which training was the most helpful in case of you?

10. What do you think should be done for / by women workers to live without hassle in Lebanon or abroad?
 - For Labors / House Workers:
 - For Family and Society:
 - For Government:

Annex - 3

Questionnaire for NGO officials

1. What do you mean by safe migration? Why did you think women migrants go to Lebanon for work?
2. What do you think of a woman working as a house worker in Lebanon? Do you think they can work safely and with dignity at Lebanon?
3. In Lebanon or in any other country if a women worker wants to work than what types of competencies they should posses?
- 4-5. Do women working in Lebanon become a victim of distresses? What types of distresses women migrant suffers? If yes, out of ten how many of them become victims? Who are responsible for these troubles?
- 6-7. How is the behavior of the recruiting agency? Do they listen your complaints? Do they try to resolve the problems the women migrants are suffering through discussing it with the employer?
8. Do you think government is keeping track of the migrants or working for the betterment of migrant community? What do you think government can do to keep track of the migrants and how they can do it?
9. Do you think taking training is helpful before going to Lebanon? Which training you think is most helpful for women migrants?
10. What do you think should be done for / by women workers to live without hassle in Lebanon or abroad?