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Researchers single out means to cut poverty

FE Report

Researchers at a seminar said on Saturday that exploring new labour markets, reducing gender wage gap, access to easy loans and improvement of health system at the primary level can play a significant role in reducing poverty. They were speaking at the seminar titled 'Poverty and Human Development' held on the sidelines of the South Asian Network on Economic Modeling (SANEM) Annual Economists' Conference-2016 on 'Bangladesh: Way towards a Middle Income Country' organised at the Brac Centre Inn in the capital. Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) director general Dr KAS Murshid presided over the seminar with Economic Research Group (ERG) executive director Dr Sajjad Zohir as the special guest, and BRAC Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD) head of research Dr Minhaj Mahmud and Associate Professor of Dept of Economics, University of Dhaka Dr Atonu Rabbani as discussants. The objective of the conference was to promote quality economic research among academicians, researchers, policy advocates, students and young aspiring economists. Presenting a paper on 'Microeconomic Impact of Remittance on Household Welfare: Evidence from Bangladesh', Associate Professor of Dept of Economics, University of Dhaka Dr Syed Naimul Wadood said most of the remittance-sending migrant workers are unskilled or semi-skilled and rarely skilled who have been working as chef, cook, hotel boy, unclassified sales worker, house caretaker, cleaner, car driver and unclassified service worker. He suggested that the government should take steps to explore new market opportunities in European countries like Sweden, Norway, Germany, the Netherlands, Russia, as well as some South East Asian countries including Brunei, Malaysia, Singapore and Hong Kong. Associate Professor Muhammad Shahadat Hossain Siddiquee of Dhaka University, presenting his paper on 'Gender Wage Gap in Urban Areas of Bangladesh', said the average weekly wage of a male worker in the research sample is approximately Tk 2,105 whereas it is Tk 1,563 for a female worker which is a great barrier to reducing poverty. Another two research papers were presented at the seminar - one on 'Impact Assessment of Credit Programme for the Tenant Farmers in Bangladesh: Evidences from the Field Experiment' by Lecturer of Economics at Dhaka University Md Amzad Hossain; and the other on 'Effect of Strenuous Job on Health: A Study on Rural Bangladesh' by Lecturer of the Institute of Health Economics, Dhaka University Azhar Uddin.

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