



# DECENT WORK

*A better world starts here.*

Working Together for the Rights of the Migrant Workers



Promoting  
Decent Work  
Through Improved  
Migration Policy  
and its Application  
in Bangladesh

FUNDED BY:



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## Promoting Decent Work through Improved Migration Policy and its Application in Bangladesh

Civil Society Organizations

AND

Bilateral Cooperation

Venue: BIAM Auditorium, 63 New Eskaton, Dhaka-1000 [Venue phone: 88-02-9336110, 9333014]

Date: 10 to 11 Nov 2014

Time: 10:00 – 16:30 Hrs

Partnerships among non-governmental and civil society organizations, including the trade unions, have a key role in the ILO Agenda for Fair Migration. The Annex II to the ILO Multilateral Framework on Labour Migration lists examples of good practices indicating how Governments, social partners (employers and workers organizations), as well as Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), have put in practice the principles of labour migration policies.

While labour migration takes place for several reasons, including, for enhanced wealth generation and political and social reasons, ILO's Background Note for the Global Forum on Migration and Development, held in Brussels in 2007, pointed out that "...essential roots of labour migration lie in deficits in decent work in countries of origin. This deficit is reflected by unemployment, underemployment and ensuing poverty. The creation of productive, freely chosen employment and decent work should allow workers to exercise the right to work in their own countries."

The ILO took the lead on the global thematic consultation on growth and employment, and participated as a contributor in the following thematic consultations: inequalities, education and skills, environmental sustainability, governance, and population dynamics (where international migration was discussed as one of the four population mega-trends). The ILO also chairs the Global Migration Group (GMG) in 2014 and is supporting the GMG's strategy for action in light of the outcomes of the High Level Dialogue in the context of the post-2015 sustainable development goals (SDG). Efforts of the ILO have well-placed issues concerning workforce and labour market in the proposed SDGs. While many issues are mainstreamed, there is a specific proposed goal on employment, social protection and inclusive growth. Labour migration features as an indicator in this proposed goal as well as in the proposed goal 10.

As the SDGs are being negotiated, it is of importance that non-government organizations and social solidarity economy (SSE) – commonly referred to as the "third sector" – such as cooperatives, mutual societies, associations, social enterprises and foundations, join hands to improve the lives of women and men migrant workers and their families. Together they can and continue to support them by supporting migrant workers to find income and jobs, and to access affordable goods and services, including remittance schemes, as clients. In Italy, the tourism cooperative, *Viaggi Solidari*, has trained migrant workers in major cities to be tour guides, valuing their language skills and cultural awareness and leading to some joining the cooperative as member-employees. The ILO is expanding its work to document and harness the nexus between labour migration and the SSE, exploring the potential of partnerships to empower migrants through securing decent work and living conditions for them whilst simultaneously promoting sustainable and equitable development and social cohesion. In



Development of nature as described above is of utmost importance in Bangladesh. Labour migration from Bangladesh increased significantly since 1976. Main destinations for the Bangladeshi workers have been the Middle-East and North African countries. Most Bangladeshi workers have been migrating to work on large infrastructure projects. In recent years, participation of Bangladeshi women and men workers has also moved into manufacturing and other occupational sectors, such as retail, hospitality health, tourism and domestic work. The growth of manufacturing and other occupational sectors has presented new opportunities for women workers.

Migrant workers come to the Middle-East through a sponsorship system, called Kafala or an employer-driven sponsor (Kafeel) system defining the relationship that employers. Terms and conditions of work and accommodation are determined by the Kafeel. The system, though intended to treat a migrant worker as a guest, in the absence of labour rights based regulatory framework, has resulted in tremendous inequalities. Migrant workers face contract substitution, underpayment, non-payment and delays in payment of wages. Most workers are out of the host-country's social security system and domestic work is not even recognized as an occupation in the labour laws. Workers end up paying additional costs, apart from the payment of migration and recruitment, which should be borne by employer.

Nearly 50% of the Bangladeshi workers are less- and semi-skilled, who often work in difficult conditions for longer hours than envisaged by the law, without overtime payments. Certain categories of workers, like, domestic workers often get deprived of weekly rest, annual or home leave or subjected to physical and sexual abuse. Most of these countries do not grant right to association and collective bargaining to the migrant workers.

The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (Asian and Pacific Regional Organization) pointed out in a report in March 2003 that the destination country governments are sending mixed messages. They are "asking for migrants to come in ... from computer programmers and nurses to janitors and fruit pickers and the second that comes across is "Keep Out". Societies are increasingly concerned about the number and proportion of migrants - who is coming in, what are they doing, how are they affecting my job, what languages are they speaking, what faiths are they professing?" The concern of the destination country is no longer just about the migrant workers taking away their jobs. Bearing this in view, development of collaboration with CSOs, including trade unions, with the developed world facing labour shortages is also of significance.

The main objective of this workshop is to find the main types of partnerships or co-operative arrangements that currently exist and the future direction that need to be pursued in the course supporting workers within Bangladesh and in the destination countries. Some of the issues that will be taken up will include:

1. Cross-border/bilateral collaboration to ensure respect for and protection of the human rights of all migrants, with particular reference to women and children, in the Middle-East and North Africa as well as in the South Asia, East Asia and South-East Asia.
2. Strengthening partnership and cooperation on sector level, mechanisms to effectively integrate migrant workers in the skills and certification areas.
3. Cooperation for information sharing, analysis and cross-border action.
4. Cooperation for policy dialogue and advocacy bilateral governmental action for social protection of the workers
5. Collaboration for joint resource mobilization and implementation of field-level programmes on either/both sides



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## Workshop Schedule

Day One: Monday 10 November 2014	
Time	Description
09:30 - 10:00	<b>Registration</b> All Participants and guests
<b>Inaugural Session</b>	
10:00 - 10:25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Welcome:</b> Mr. Kazi Kalam, Deputy Secretary (Employment), Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment, Bangladesh</li> <li>• <b>Thoughts on cross-border partnerships for the rights of the migrant workers:</b> Prof. C. R. Abrar, Dhaka University, Bangladesh</li> <li>• <b>Remarks by the facilitator:</b> Mr. Marianito D Roque, Ex-Minister, Department of Labour and Employment, Philippines  <span style="margin-left: 20px;">✍ <b>Moderator:</b> Nisha, Chief Technical Advisor, Decent Work and Labour Migration, ILO</span> </li> </ul>
10:25 - 10:40 Tea/Coffee Break	
<b>Technical Session 1:</b>	
10:40 - 11:40	<b>Cross border collaboration among the trade unions – experiences of South Asian Regional Trade Union Council (SARTUC) and other countries</b> <span style="margin-left: 20px;">✍ <b>Presenter:</b> Mr. Shah Md. Abu Zafar, President, Bangladesh Labour Federation</span>  <b>Question and answer</b> <span style="margin-left: 20px;">✍ <b>Facilitator:</b> Mr. Marianito D Roque</span>
11:40 – 13:00	<b>Government and civil society collaboration in Philippines</b> <span style="margin-left: 20px;">✍ <b>Presenter:</b> Mr. Marianito D Roque</span>  <b>Question and answer</b> <span style="margin-left: 20px;">✍ <b>Facilitator:</b> Ms Rahnuma Salam Khan, Senior Assistant Chief, Ministry of Expatriates Welfare and Overseas Employment</span>
13:00 - 14:00: Lunch	
<b>Technical Session 2:</b>	
14:00 - 15:00	<b>Group work:</b> Mapping existing partnerships – sector specific as well as broader collaborations <b>Group presentations</b> by each group <span style="margin-left: 20px;">✍ <b>Facilitator:</b> Mr. Marianito D Roque</span>
15:00 - 15:15 Tea/Coffee Break	
15:15- 16:20	<b>Group work:</b> Good practices and needs in terms of sector level and broader collaborations: Social discrimination and exclusion, banking and remittance management, shelter and support services such as legal aid, language training, skills up-gradation, etc.  <b>Group presentations</b> by each group



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## Day One: Monday 10 November 2014

Time	Description
	<p> <b>Facilitator:</b> Mr. Marianito D Roque</p> <p><b>Question and answer</b></p> <p> <b>Chair:</b> Mr. Marianito D Roque</p>
16:20 - 16:30	<p><b>Closure of day 1</b></p> <p><b>Remarks:</b> Mr. Marianito D Roque</p>

## Day Two: Tuesday 11 November 2014

Time	Description
09:30 - 10:00	<p><b>Registration</b></p> <p>All Participants and guests</p>
10:00 - 10:25	<p><b>Plenary Session</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Rapporteur's notes of the day one:</b> Ms. Disha Sonata Faruque, National Project Officer, ILO</li> <li>• <b>Plenary remarks:</b> Mr. Alonzo Suson, Director, Solidarity Centre, Bangladesh</li> <li>• <b>Plenary remarks:</b> Dr Wajed-ul Islam Khan, General Secretary, Bangladesh Trade Union Kendra</li> <li>• <b>Setting the agenda for the day two:</b> Mr. Marianito D Roque, Ex-Minister, Department of Labour and Employment, Philippines</li> </ul> <p> <b>Moderator:</b> Nisha</p>
<p>10:25 - 10:40 Tea/Coffee Break</p>	
<p><b>Technical Session 3:</b></p>	
10:40 - 11:40	<p><b>CSO engagement with regional bodies:</b> Three-way dialogue - CSO to CSO and with regional organizations</p> <p> <b>Presenter:</b> Dr. Ridwanul Haq, Dhaka University, Bangladesh</p> <p><b>Question and answer</b></p> <p> <b>Facilitator:</b> Mr. Marianito D Roque</p>
11:40 - 13:00	<p><b>Group-work:</b> Review of ASEAN Guidelines for Relations with the NGOs and SAARC Social Charter and identifying scope of engagement</p> <p><b>Group Presentations</b> by each group</p> <p> <b>Chair:</b> Mr. Marianito D Roque</p>
<p>13:00 - 14:00 Lunch</p>	
<p><b>Technical Session 4:</b></p>	
14:00 - 15:00	<p><b>Group work:</b> Road-map to regional partnerships:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Analysis of the current situation</li> <li>▪ Self-assessment of engagement so far</li> </ul>



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## Day Two: Tuesday 11 November 2014

Time	Description
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Prioritization of where to do and how to communicate that</li> <li>▪ Actions needed – with SAARC (what to do for policy dialogue) and Bilateral (Mutual support and operational assistance to the migrant workers)</li> <li>▪ The next step.  <p> <b>Facilitator:</b> Mr. Marianito D Roque, Disha Sonata faruque and Nisha</p> </li> </ul>
<b>15:00 - 15:15</b> Tea/Coffee Break	
<b>15:15-16:20</b>	<p><b>Group presentations</b> by each group  <b>Chair:</b> Mr. Marianito D Roque</p>
<b>16:20 - 16:30</b>	<p><b>Closure of day 2</b>  <b>Closing remarks:</b> Mr Hazarat Ali, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh  <b>Vote of thanks:</b> Ms. Disha Sonata Faruque, National Project Officer, ILO</p>