

Reintegration Challenges of Migrants in Bangladesh: A Study on Forced Returnee Women Migrants from Saudi Arabia

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ARTICLE INFO

Article history

RECEIVED: 19-Aug-19

REVISED: 30-Nov-19

ACCEPTED: 02-Dec-19

PUBLISHED: 16-Dec-19

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ABSTRACT

The paper aims to analyze the challenges of reintegration of forced returnee women migrants in Bangladesh. Bangladeshi women basically migrated to Middle East countries for earning a better livelihood. Though the recent trend of women's migration is increasing gradually, they are suffering in pre-departure, post-arrival and re-integration, all the three basic phases of overseas migration. Unlike other research papers on the topic that focus on pre-departure and post-arrival challenges of migration, this paper sheds light on the reintegration challenges of Bangladeshi women migrants. The paper is based on the qualitative research approach. In Depth Interview and Focused Group Discussion are used as tools to collect the primary data from women migrants and the secondary data relevant to the study is collected from secondary sources like books, journals, newspapers, documents, published reports, and authentic online sources. The findings of the study suggest that forced returnee women migrants are facing various types of reintegration challenges such as low social acceptance, challenges in finding new jobs, patriarchy and social constructions, lack of comprehensive reintegration mechanisms, and health and psychological challenges.

Keywords: Bangladesh, Challenges, Reintegration, Saudi Arabia, Returnee migrants, Women migrants.

Introduction

Though the integrated global market permits the free movement of goods and capitals, it is not free for people in the true sense. Migration has various dimensions throughout the world. In Bangladesh, migration is not a new phenomenon. There has been an increasing trend of both internal and overseas migration. Islam (2010) stated that Bangladeshi women migrants mostly migrate to UAE (United Arab Emirates), Lebanon, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Mauritius, Bahrain, Hong Kong, Singapore, Oman, and Jordan as domestic workers. Some districts in Bangladesh score top positions such as Barishal, Brahmanbaria, Comilla, Dhaka, Faridpur, Gazipur, Jessore, Kishoreganj, Madaripur, Manikganj, Munshiganj, and Mymensingh.

Overseas migration has accelerated in Bangladesh for the last couple of years. It is considered as a better livelihood approach. In 1976, Bangladesh started sending manpower to different countries. In 1981, women migration from Bangladesh was banned by a presidential order on the ground of their security, rights, and dignity. The decision was addressed with massive opposition by the civil society. They argued that such type of government decision is unconstitutional and discriminatory against women and can lead to women trafficking. In 2003, the Government of Bangladesh removed restriction on women migration and set an age limit as 25 years for women to migrate under special permission. From 1991 to 2003 women constituted only 1% of total overseas migration due to the policy change. In 2006, it reached 5% and afterward in 2007 it was more than double (Siddiqui, 2008).

It is mentioned in the ILO (2015) report that, though women migration started in 1991 until June 2013, the percentage was only 2.9. It is also argued that, “feminization of migration” has not happened in the true sense, in Bangladesh. The report said that the remittance sent by women migrant workers is less than their male counterpart because of the discrepancy between the wage paid to men and women migrants which is approximately 100:70 whereas women workers tend to remit a larger portion of their income rather than male. Islam (2010) mentioned that, in 1976 feminization of labor migration was 15% and in 2000, it was 50% in Asia and Latin America. There are some countries like the Philippines, Indonesia; Sri Lanka where the number of women migrants is larger than male migrants. He again argued that, women migration is confined to some specific occupation like, housekeeping, cleaning etc. In 2014 the percentage of women migration from Bangladesh was 17.85% whereas in 2015 it was 18.66% of total migration. In 2017 total 121,925 women migrated to different countries of the world and in 2018 it was 101,695 which are not just numbers but a sector to be highly considered.

Overseas migration has now been highly considered as an important strategy to achieve the goal of 2021. Overseas migration is contributing to the country’s economy by decreasing the rate of unemployment and by supplying remittances which is contributing to the national GDP growth. According to the database of Bangladesh Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training (BMET) more than nine million people had migrated overseas for work for the year 1976 and 2014. They have sent \$ 15.3 billion remittances for the fiscal year 20142015 according to Bangladesh Bank statistics.

Women migrants have been suffering in each phase of migration from the very beginning. Like many other phases of migration, reintegration and re-socialization of migrants is one of the most critical phases. Nevertheless, this phase of migration is unexplored. The study intends to unravel those untold stories. Bangladeshi women migrated frequently and are also being forced to return to Bangladesh from migrated countries especially Saudi Arabia. This paper focuses on the following issues: why women are being forced back in Bangladesh from Saudi Arabia? And what are the challenges they are facing upon their return or while reintegrating into their family, society, or economy?

Theoretical Framework

Velazquez (2000) stated that in 1966, Everett Lee proposed the ‘push-pull’ theory of migration which we can

easily relate to in the case of migration and again in the case of re-integration. People may migrate for social, economic, political, or environmental causes. There are some factors behind migration namely push factors and pull factors. Push factors encourage people to leave the place where they live, such as poverty, unemployment, natural disaster, political instability, religious intolerance, etc. On the other hand, pull factors attract people to move to another place such as better living standard, employment opportunity, democratic government, flourishing economies, etc. Their return to Bangladesh is mainly affected by some ‘push factors’ in Saudi Arabia rather than ‘pull factors’ in Bangladesh. Many returnees are being forced to move back to Bangladesh due to the deterioration in living and working conditions in Saudi Arabia. The reasons for forced return may include: work pressure, lack of complaint mechanisms, physical and mental torture, sexual abuse, inability to adopt new culture, worse accommodation for living, lack of proper food, language barriers, etc. The pull factors may include: home sickness, personal issues like marriage or broken family, children related affairs, etc.

Migration

According to IOM (2015), “Migration is the movement of persons away from their place of usual residence, either across an international border or within a State”. UNESCO has defined migration as “it is the crossing of the boundary of a political or administrative unit for a certain minimum period of time. It includes the movement of refugees, displaced persons, uprooted people as well as economic migrants. It can be of two types: Internal (within country viz. rural to urban, urban to urban etc.) and overseas (country to country). Internal migration refers to a move from one area (a province, district or municipality) to another within one country. International/overseas migration is a territorial relocation of people between nation-states”. Therefore, Migration denotes the movement of people from one place to another. This study focuses on overseas migration.

Returnee Women Migrants

According to UNESCO, “returnee migrants are people who return to their countries of origin after a period in another country”. Alternatively, returnee migrants are those who return to the country of origin after being a migrant for short term or long term basis. Return may have happened by force or by choice. Forced returnee is a person who returns not by choice but by force from

the destination country after being an overseas migrant and who intends to remain in his/her home country. Voluntary returnees are those who are returning by their own choice after short term or long term migration and not by force from the destination country. The paper focuses on forced returnee migrants.

Reintegration

The Collins English Dictionary defines that reintegration is to amalgamate or help to amalgamate a group with an existing community. The structural environment of the country of origin plays a vital role in the reintegration process. It can be said that, reintegration is the action or process of integrating people after their return from the migrated country into their own country. It means re-inclusion or re-incorporation of a person into a country of origin. Re-integration can be economic and social. Wikipedia stated that, social reintegration is the movement of minority groups of a society into the mainstream of the society whereas economic reintegration is the movement of a specific group of people into the mainstream of the economy. Thus, social re-integration means re-integrate the returnee migrants into the local community and economic reintegration is re-integrate the returnee migrants into the local economy. When a migrant is supposed to be re-included into a society or a community, it is called re-socialization or social reintegration. It means re-integrate the returnees into the local community. When a migrant is re-included into the local or national economy of a country of origin, it is called economic reintegration. It means re-integrate the returnees into the local economy. This paper sheds light on both economic and social reintegration.

Safe Migration

When a migrant worker migrates to another country safely, works there for a certain time period and comes back to his/her country of origin by ensuring a better and sustainable livelihood, this is called safe migration. Safe migration is a step by step process including taking a decision to migrate, migration preparation, journey to destination country, during migration, return to country of origin, and reintegration. All these steps can be categorized into three phases, a) pre-departure stage which includes taking decision to migrate and migration preparation b) post-arrival stage which includes journey to destination country, and c) reintegration stage includes return to country of origin and socio-economic reintegration. If we want to ensure safe and sustainable migration,

we will have to ensure sustainable reintegration. Without sustainable reintegration, safe and sustainable migration cannot happen.

Review of recent literature

It has been argued that the term integration implies the insertion of a group or individual into an existing entity which can be a society, bound by a nation state whereas the terms 'inclusion' and 'incorporation' have been used by the scholars and policy makers as alternatives (Spencer & Charsley, 2016). The study argued that barriers to integration can be individual or structural; forms of discrimination are thus an integral part of integration research (Spencer & Charsley, 2016 cited in Heckmann, 2006). Kuschminder (2013) argued that we have lack of understanding of how people reintegrate and theoretical models to explore the different dimensions of reintegration.

The process of reintegration is not so straightforward. The study argued that migrants are returning to their country of origin, their culture, and their home. It also argued that reintegration is not simply fitting back into their old life rather this process takes time, years for some and for others reintegration can never be achieved which may also lead to re-migration which is not a new phenomenon. The study identified that the reintegration strategies refer to the process of how people reintegrate across the four dimensions of cultural orientation, social networks, self-identification, and access to rights, institutions and the labor market. Boyd and Grieco (2003) argued that reintegration was thus a multidimensional concept encompassing many different elements. We argue in our paper that in the case of integration, men and women may be treated differently and experience resettlement differently, once in a receiving country.

Islam (2010) states that there are three factors such as a) the impact of entry status on the ability to integrate and settle b) patterns of incorporation into the labor market and c) the impact of migration on the status of women and men whereas the reintegration process and its impact was not revealed by them in the true sense. Migrant workers come back to the country of origin after completion of their employment agreement abroad. They return with skills and experiences. They play important roles in the country's employment market. It is evident that the remittances are not utilized properly for the wellbeing of the migrant's family members. Lack of opportunity for investment and appropriate counseling service are the main causes of it (Islam, 2010). He again argued that there are very few strategies for effective

socio-economic reintegration for the returnee, especially for women migrants.

Latek (2017) argued that, a stable political situation and socio-economic condition of a country of origin plays an important role in post-return stage. The researcher suggested that it is essential to create educational and vocational training opportunities for returning migrants. European Union (EU) is supporting reintegration of returnees in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Pakistan. He again argued that successful reintegration highly depends on the opportunity to develop an income generating activity, access to social networks, and on psychological health. On the other hand, there are some factors that may hinder the reintegration process such as, a poor perspective for self, economic sufficiency, lack of family ties, feelings of shame and anxiety, etc.

Furthermore, Chobanyan (2013) identified that, lack of information is one of the major challenges faced by returnee migrants that turn into an impediment to return and reintegration. The study suggested that the awareness raising must be included into the legislative framework, employment, and private business opportunities. The study also identified the challenges of reintegration in Armenia as employment problems, social-psychological problems, educational-cultural problems, problems with documents, and housing problems. The author concluded that information support and employment support, socio-cultural and psychological support may lead to sustainable reintegration.

In addition, Setrana and Tonah (2014) indicated that reintegration is a process of re-adaptation which may not entail the abandonment of the identities they acquired while abroad and returnees are faced with challenges of reintegration. The study also stated that, family members and friends play a crucial role in the behavior of returnee migrants which leads to social reintegration. The study found that the reintegration challenges refer to poor infrastructural facilities in the city, lack of employment opportunities, and practice of corruption, red tape and bribery system they face in obtaining permission to start a business. The study also found that returnees are also facing challenges to meet the high expectations of family, friends, and community members in Kumasi, Ghana. It is mentioned in the IOM (2015) report that returnees are not always perceived positively by those who have never migrated, which leads to a challenge of re-socialization of returnees. In the case of economic reintegration, returnees may face challenges as the skill they received abroad may not be well matched to the local economy and they may not even have any easy pathways to enter into the private sector.

The journey of reintegration is never simple. Several studies suggested some approaches for socio-economic reintegration of the returnee migrants such as providing SME information regarding sector selection, business formation, and other operational information, providing information on micro credit facilities, information on saving procedures, and various training opportunities for further skill development. Some Non-Government Organizations have some projects on returnee migrants. BRAC provides psycho-counseling, training, and financial support to facilitate socio-economic reintegration of returnee migrants. They also provide information, training, counseling, and networking support and remittance advice through referrals. BRAC organizes meetings with returnees after their return for drafting the reintegration plan. BRAC provides emergency support to the returnee migrants especially those who are a victim of violation and discrimination. BRAC tends to protect the basic rights of returnee migrant workers with emphasis on the vulnerable male. BRAC also works on the need based trauma counseling to returnees and their families and assist returnees to become financially independent through a tailored economic reintegration plan, providing financial literacy training. For ensuring the social reintegration of returnee migrants BRAC is working for providing community support, contributing and promoting institutional support too (BRAC, 2019). The present study is an endeavor to identify the challenges of forced returnees from Saudi Arabia.

Methodology of the study

The study uses a qualitative research approach to reach the objective of the study. The qualitative research seeks to identify the status or quality of social phenomenon. The study follows a case-oriented qualitative research method. As Creswell (1994) points out, there are six assumptions of qualitative research based on Merriam's (1988) work: qualitative researchers are concerned primarily with (i) process, (ii) an interest in understanding how people make sense of their lives, (iii) the researcher as the primary instrument for data collection and analysis, (iv) the involvement and importance of fieldwork, (v) descriptive, observational research that demonstrates an interest in process, meaning, and understanding gained through words or pictures, and (vi) inductive qualitative research (Creswell, 1994 cited in Panday, 2004, p.7). Denzin and Lincoln (2000) define qualitative research in the following way:

Qualitative research refers to a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of

interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. Qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. Qualitative research studies things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or to interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. (p. 3)

The study uses both the primary and secondary sources of data to draw the conclusion. A total of 30 women returnees from Saudi Arabia staying at different areas of Dhaka (Mirpur, Badda and Dhamrai) were contacted on the basis of purposive sampling technique as purposive sampling techniques focus specific characteristics of a population. The study includes female migrants and their family members as well.

In summary, as the present study follows a qualitative strategy, the process used inductive reasoning, because it was exploratory and moved to a broader generalization and theories based on the on-going construction of reality by both the participants and the researcher. Qualitative research approach is used as it seeks to answer how the situation is. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and observation. Holtzhausen (2001) argues that triangulation is a powerful tool that strengthens the qualitative research design (p. 5). This study followed the triangulation method because different qualitative approaches in the data collection were used, involving multi-perspectives coming from women returnees from Saudi Arabia.

Primary data consistent with the research objectives and questions was collected through in-depth interviews. This is a verbal technique for obtaining data directly from the primary source (Aminuzzaman, 1991, p. 82). In-depth interviews were conducted with forced returnee women migrants and their family members. Case stories were also collected while conducting in-depth interviews. Focused Group Discussion (FGD) is used to collect data from the field. FGD is used as it is a good way to gather together people from the same background and collect specific data relevant to their experiences. A FGD guideline was used by the researchers and an in-depth-interview (IDI) technique of data collection tools was also used

Table 1: Sample size

Location	Numbers of Respondents
Mirpur	10
Badda	10
Dhamrai	10
Total	30

Source: The authors

by the researchers. Observation refers to a technique which operates by systematically selecting, watching, listening, reading, and recording behavior and characteristics of living beings, objects, or phenomena (Islam, M. N., 2008, p. 171). The observation method was also used for collecting data from the forced women returnee migrants. This method was very useful for collecting actual data about respondents' behavior and attitudes during the process of interviewing.

Findings, Analysis and Discussion

Lack of information and training are major causes of suffering in all stages of overseas migration. There are some specific challenges too. Women who are going as domestic workers to Saudi Arab are most vulnerable. Many of them come back empty handed in a distressed situation where family members also disown them. They face many challenges after their return. We have collected some case stories to be discussed in this line. All the names used in the case stories are pseudo names. The major findings of the study are shown in the table below

Patriarchy and social constructions:

Returnees are being treated as unexpected! It's an untold truth as agreed by 98% of women returnees from Saudi Arabia. Their silent cry is a misery of being migrants which is most pathetic. Asna Banu (41), a mother of four children and a divorcee, did not find any shelter or support from family members after her return and passing life poorly even before.

She said that, *"I am a returnee from Saudi Arabia. I back to home few years ago. My sons and daughters are now adult. They behave rough with me. I have sent all my earnings to home for their betterment and now I am nobody in my family. They used to say I may have earned by evil way. I put my best for their wellbeing and by this time community and society treat me like a stranger and my*

Table 2: Key Findings of the study

Particulars	Percentage	Position
Patriarchy and social constructions	98%	1 st
Low social acceptance	89%	2 nd
Challenges of finding new job	88%	3 rd
Lack of comprehensive reintegration mechanisms	85%	4 th
Health and psychological challenges	78%	5 th

Source: The authors

return was even unexpected to them. If I am a male then these could not be happened to me at all”.

Criticism from family and society, and even unwillingness of families to welcome them back are a common phenomenon for women migrants in Bangladesh. There is a lack of psychosocial counseling for traumatized returnee migrants in Bangladesh. Social stigma and mental torture is common as a result of patriarchy prevailing all over the country. Society's power relation and social construction do not permit them to live with freedom and dignity.

Low social acceptance

Forced return without compensation is not a new issue for returnees from Saudi Arabia. Sometimes they have to return back empty-handed. They are paid lower-wages and benefits abroad also. After their return, they suffer from low acceptance by their family members and community. 89% of respondents are facing this challenge after their return home which ranks 2nd position among the challenges.

A woman returnee from Saudi Arabia said, “I was bound to back home as being suffering physical and mental torture there. I was supposed to do twenty hours work at a household composing 14 members. I can't but left without any calculation and without any plan. Now I have no money rather I have gathered bitter experiences which I will have to carry lifelong. I was tortured physically and mentally in different forms. After my return my family and community is not accepting me like as earlier. My family as well as society was not ready for accepting me. One of my close relatives has said to me that, why have I back? Rather she suggested that, staying there was a good choice for me and my family though I had to suffer a lot there. They are emphasizing their honor rather than my dignity and pain”

Sometimes migrants return without any plan especially women migrants have to return under emergency; due to circumstances of their family and the situation they have to face abroad.

Challenges of finding new jobs

Finding new jobs after their return is a big challenge. The pattern of work is different at home and abroad. They can't even use their experiences properly after their return. 85% of women said that they have to face lots of

difficulties in finding new jobs or establishing business at home after their return.

“I did not find any job after return. My experiences are not matching here with my expectations. I worked as a housemaid in Saudi Arabia. I had a month long training before going there. I did not have collected any certificate from there. I wanted a better job with handsome salary but I failed to find as the wage is lower here in Bangladesh for us rather than abroad. I wish to re-migrate but my family was unwilling to send me again. I learned new things during my staying in Saudi Arabia but didn't know how to use my skills and experiences. The opportunity is limited here for us” ---a returnee woman from Saudi Arabia

New job acquisition and retention is the biggest challenge for returnee women migrants. They usually have to return back after two to three years' service. After their return, they face difficulties in finding new jobs and continuation of their services. No certificate of experiences and skills they gained abroad are also hindrances in getting new jobs after their return home. In case of forced returnees, the situation is more-vulnerable. 85% of them fall into a worse position in society in the reintegration stage and they said that the situation is even more unexpected to them and it seems that they were better off before going abroad.

Lack of comprehensive reintegration mechanisms

Though there are a few success stories, most of the time, they (88%) fail to manage their livelihood as they had before. One of the returnee back from Saudi Arabia has said, *“I earned but I lost. I did not know the mechanisms of spending my hardcore earnings. I am doing a little business now without having any support from others. I even don't know the channels and networks for supporting me. I don't know any mechanisms of government for us.”*

Lack of coordinated, integrated, and comprehensive approach to sustainable reintegration of returnee migrants at home is a big challenge of reintegration of women. There is a big lacking of reintegration mechanisms from the three sectors as such government, NGOs, and the private sector for the returnee women migrants in Bangladesh. There is still no specific database of men and women returnees in Bangladesh. Their sufferings begin at family level and exist in the community at the state level.

Health and psychological challenges

78% respondents are suffering from health hazards and challenges after their return. Women migrants are facing

difficulties in sustaining their family's basic needs due to the lack of financial means after their return which leads to psychological challenge. They also face difficulties in social reintegration because of the separation from family and community and strange relationship with their child. They are being traumatized due to the unexpected behavior they had to face abroad.

Swapna Rani (30) a returnee from Saudi Arabia stated that, *"I was bound to return as I faced physical torture there in Saudi Arabia. I had to cook for a family comprising 24 members. I usually did all the household chores. If I failed to meet-up their requirements they tortured. I have got skin sickness due to unbearable physical torture and mental pressure. I injured not only physically but mentally because of being fear of harassment. Then I decided to return home. Now my physically health is not good as I had before. My family members are treating me as a stranger. I have lost my goodwill and honor which is creating a psychological pain to me. I feel like suicide myself. I find no interest in life any more"*.

Physical torture, workplace exploitation, mental and sexual harassment, etc. are common cases in Saudi Arabia for Bangladeshi women migrants. Suffering from diseases and occupational injuries during their work in Saudi Arabia are very common whereas health care services are very limited. Lack of legal support during their stay abroad is also common. Limited complaint mechanisms encourage them to remain silent. Supportive mechanisms are poor for the traumatized returnees in Bangladesh.

Socio-economic reintegration challenges in Bangladesh:

The section below will discuss the overall socio-economic challenges of reintegration in Bangladesh. Ameena Begum (31) a returnee from Saudi Arabia as case focuses:

"A middleman sends me Saudi Arabia without any cost. My passport was high jacked and I was totally imprisoned at a household. I was bound to do all the household chores and I was being harassed physically and mentally during my yearlong staying in Saudi Arabia. Finally, I was being forced to return in Bangladesh."

The case above indicates the miserable condition of women migrant workers in Saudi Arabia. They were supposed to do anything the house lord required. These are the inhumane attitudes towards migrant workers which affect their return and reintegration adversely.

Shirina Aktar (28) a returnee from Saudi Arabia uttered:

"I was in Saudi Arabia for one and half years. Proper food and accommodation was not provided for me. I took training for one month but I did not find a good job rather I was tortured physically. I came home back after my three months staying at safe home. I did not get my four months' salary even. Now my position in our society is as if I were a criminal. No one from my family welcomed me. I am treating with bad comments and attitude. Once I decided to suicide but I failed".

The story seems indescribable. The returnees are back with empty hand. They face challenges in every stage of migration that effects the socio-economic reintegration. They don't even find new jobs after their return home.

Akter Shanu (28) a returnee from Saudi Arabia:

"I was being near to rape in Saudi Arabia. I was senseless due to the torture by the house lord. My left hand was fractured. I had to expense more than one lac taka for going there but I did not get my money back and I had not the opportunity of sending money to the country. Society is now criticizing me for my decision of migration and my husband opposed to accept me anymore. My husband is deciding to get married again. He has decided for not to continue with me anymore. I don't know where I should go and how will I live my life".

The case is a clear indication of sexual harassment and at the same time, their family repudiates them after their return. They are being traumatized by the family and society. Their sufferings are unspeakable. Low social acceptance is not rare and patriarchy system does not permit a female to take her own decision. Social reintegration is thus a big challenge for the women returnees. A returnee woman from Saudi Arabia said, *"After my back from Saudi Arabia, I have bought a land though I had only few cash at my hand. I take loan and purchased the land for housing purpose"*.

Almost 90% of returnees invest their money in purchasing land and luxurious goods such as motor bike for son or husband, smart phone for their family members, etc. Lack of awareness about savings and investment may lead them to take wrong decisions regarding expenditure. Their investment decisions are limited and they frequently invest in purchasing land for living. Due to the lack of knowledge on income generating activities and Small Medium Enterprises, they usually invest their money in low profit-making businesses. The money earned through hard work is spent on repaying their loans, child's school fees, and buying gifts for relatives on

their way back home. They do not have proper knowledge and idea about the effective and efficient use of money. Sometimes they lend to their relatives while encountering debts. Poor living conditions and work hazard abroad limits their willingness of long term investment after their return home. Moreover, lack of knowledge on the productive use of remittances is also a big challenge for economic reintegration.

Policy Suggestions

A well-defined policy framework for sustainable reintegration should be introduced by the government of Bangladesh. Government should take preventive measures to tackle the inhumane forms of attitude to migrant workers especially women migrants at home and abroad.

Development of specific legislation, policies and programs on returnee men and women separately is a timely demand. Database development for returnees especially for women should be ensured firmly. Moreover, introducing referral services to returnees, establishment of partnership with national banks and private sector lenders to provide soft loans to the returnees, and easier access to finance for returnees should be established. Banks should provide loans to overcome their economic challenges.

Social safety net for returnees, such as free education for the child of returnees can be launched. One-stop service center should be established for migrant workers. Development of capacities of government officials, local community members, and local leaders to create a network of support to the returnees should be ensured. Good practices should be exposed to motivate migrants and the stakeholders. Furthermore, foreign mission needs to be proactive and the government should lobby with labor receiving countries and exploring alternative markets to reduce over dependency on Middle East.

Government should find safe countries for women migrant workers, government should have a proper investment scheme to address the economic challenges of women returnee migrants, psychosocial counseling service and legal support should be introduced with provision of social and economic counseling for reintegration. A strong and comprehensive mechanism should be established, focusing on socio-economic re-integration for women migrants. We believe social media should play an important role to connect, inform, advocate, and refer returnees to appropriate channels of government and to NGOs. Active involvement of CSOs, NGOs, social media, trade unions, private sectors, migrants' associations,

and other stakeholders in the process of reintegration of migrants should be ensured.

Finally, Government and NGOs, along with other private sectors, should work together for the technical skill training of returnees. Basic entrepreneurship training, business development, and livelihood program assistance for workers and family members should be ensured. Introducing financial literacy training to promote efficient and productive use of remittances, nurturing the skills and experiences of returnee migrants should be ensured. Migrants have a great contribution to the national economy of Bangladesh. Returnee migrants are the assets for their families as well as for our country. So, socio-economic reintegration should be facilitated in a meaningful and comprehensive way by eradicating the mentioned challenges in Bangladesh.

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