



Obhibashon o Shonar Manush Shommilon 2023

Obhibashon O Shonar Manush Shommilon Aims and Objectives

Bangladesh, in recent years, has become a role model of development in the world. According to the World Bank, it has demonstrated successful ways to reduce poverty dramatically through unique innovations in human development, women empowerment, and climate adaptation. In 2022 Bangladesh had the 35th largest economy with a GDP size of USD 460.8 billion.

Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit (RMMRU) believes that migration is an important livelihood strategy for the poor to move out of poverty and a key tool for development. Over more than two decades, In addition to conducting policy research, RMMRU played a key role in policy advocacy, imparting training and grassroots mobilisation for establishing the rights of migrant workers. It has been a pioneer in launching media campaigns for raising awareness among migrants and members of their families as well as to highlight their contribution to broader society. RMMRU has been implementing innovative programmes to help migrants in accessing justice, developing informed migration systems including reintegration of returnees.

RMMRU had the honour to prepare the primary draft of the Overseas Employment Policy 2006 and the draft law of the Migration and Overseas Employment Act 2013 upon request from the government of Bangladesh. RMMRU formulated Alternative Dispute Resolution Rules and recommended specific areas for amendment to the Overseas Employment and Migrants Act 2013. Through evidence-based research on female migration RMMRU launched a campaign that ultimately led to the lifting of the ban on female migration.

The Award Ceremony

Complementing its policy and field actions, RMMRU has organised four national award ceremonies titled **Shonar Manush Shommilon** in 2009, 2011, 2018 and 2019 in which successful migrants, members of their families and their service providers were honoured with Shonar Manush Awards.

This year, RMMRU will highlight migrants' contribution in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and the objectives of Global Compact for Migration. RMMRU will specially acknowledge the returnee labour migrants who have become entrepreneurs and contribute to the national economy. Efforts on reducing poverty through migration, on ensuring a safe environment for migrant workers, particularly the women migrant workers as well as reintegration of returnee migrants and entrepreneurship development will feature prominently in this years' Shommilon.

Introducing Shonar Manush Shommanona 2023

Shonar Manush Shommanona

Despite facing a number of challenges, many Bangladeshi migrant workers have not only transformed the socio-economic conditions of their households, they have also contributed to the development of their respective communities, and created employment opportunities for others. The country as a whole acknowledges the contribution of migrants to the national economy. They are indeed *Shonar Mamush* (The Golden Sons and Daughter) of Bangladesh. RMMRU bestows the *Shonar Manush Shommanona* on them to acknowledge their contribution.

Shonar Manush Sheba Shommanona Expatriates' Welfare Desk

Migration is one of the most important livelihood strategies for the people of Bangladesh. Every year on average seven to eight lakh people migrate for work. In order to extend migration related services to these large numbers of migrants, the Government has established Expatriates' Welfare Desk at three international airports in Bangladesh RMMRU is delighted to recognise the contribution of the Assistant Director of Probashi Kallyan Desk (Expatriates' Welfare Desk), Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport with *Shonar Manush Sheba Shommanona* for delivering emergency services to the returnee migrants during the period of COVID-19 with deep commitment and dedication.

Grievance Management Committee (GMC)

Grievance Management Committee (GMC) is a model developed by RMMRU to resolve migration-related disputes at the local level. Through the locally led committee members, this mechanism reduces migrant workers' difficulties in accessing justice and resolving disputes effectively and satisfactorily. This committee plays a significant role as a platform to address migration related grievances in a transparent, credible and inclusive manner. As appreciation to this effort, RMMRU recognises the contribution of GMC through awarding the *Shonar Mansuh Sheba Award*

Shonar Manush Bishesh Sheba Shommanona Wage Earners' Welfare Board (WEWB)

In 1990, the Government of Bangladesh created the Wage Earners' Welfare Board (WEWB) under the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare & Overseas Employment to provide assistance to the migrant workers and their family members abroad or at origin to reduce their distress. It is a welfare oriented institution which extends transparent and accountable welfare services to the migrant workers and their families. The WEWB has undertaken path-breaking decisions to reintegrate the returnee migrant workers during and after the COVID-19 period and has made enormous contributions to reduce the hardships of the returned migrants. As appreciation to this effort RMMRU honours the WEWB as an institution, its leadership and contribution with *Shonar Manush Bishesh Sheba Shommanona*.

Shonar Manush Bishesh Sheba Shommanona

Wage Earners' Welfare Board (WEWB)



In 1990, the Government of Bangladesh created the Wage Earners' Welfare Board (WEWB) under the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare & Overseas Employment to provide assistance to the migrant workers and their family members abroad or at origin to reduce their distress. Over the last couple of years, the WEWB has undertaken important decisions to achieve sustainable improvements in ensuring the short and long term reintegration aspects especially during the time of COVID-19 period. WEWB has given financial assistance to 1510 migrant workers for medical treatments from 2010 to present which amounts to BDT 144.23 million. From January 2022 to February 2023, it has supported 1349 deceased migrant workers' families by supporting to receive BDT 900.12 million as death compensation/regular dues/insurance/ service benefits. As appreciation to this effort RMMRU honours the WEWB as an institution, its leadership and contribution with Shonar Manush Bishesh Sheba Shommanona.

Story of Grievance Management Committee (GMC)

Grievance Management Committee (GMC), Paikara, Tangail

The Grievance Management Committee (GMC) of Paikara consisting of 11 members was established in 2017 to settle migration related disputes at the local level. The committee is mainly responsible for providing legal services through mediation and retrieving money of the deceived migrant workers. From 2017 till 2023, the committee has received 171 complaints from affected migrants and their family members. Out of which 129 have been resolved. Through this committee's intervention, a total of BDT 59,30,000 was recovered from the sub-agents and the recruiting agencies using a win-win approach.

Additionally, this committee has supported children of the migrant family to receive scholarships and sick returnee migrants to get medical allowances. Dead bodies of deceased migrants have been brought back to the country and their families have received compensation through the support of this committee.

RMMRU is awarding GMC Paikara with the Shonar Manush Sheba Award, 2023 for its unique method of dispute settlement and ensuring access to justice locally as well.

The Organiser Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit



The Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit (RMMRU) was established in 1995. Since then, RMMRU has been engaged in evidence-based research and policy advocacy on labour migration and rights of refugees, displaced and vulnerable people.

Pioneer in Primary Research on Migration

RMMRU research contributed to various evidence-based policy change such as female labour migration, remittances of migrant workers and microfinance institutions in Bangladesh, climate change adaptation and migration, informality in recruitment, plight of Rohingya refugees etc. In recent years RMMRU conducted research on middleman, decentralisation on DEMO services and prepared strategy document for BOESL, WEWB and developed an arbitration model for BAIRA, developed market-oriented business models and conducted a research on the death of women migrant workers in the destination countries.

Major engagement in Policy Advocacy

RMMRU's research and advocacy on female international labour migration contributed to the withdrawal of the ban on migration of unskilled women. In 2001, RMMRU in collaboration with civil society and the private sector prepared a policy document to streamline labour recruitment from Bangladesh. RMMRU prepared the drafts of the Overseas Employment Policy 2006 and the Overseas Employment and Migration Act 2013 for the government of Bangladesh. RMMRU's research on the role of middleman created a space to advocate for a fairer recruitment system to regularise sub-agents in the migration process. The Unit also conducted a research on identifying challenges in disbursing reintegration loan of Probashi Kallyan Bank (PKB) among returnees after outbreak of Covid-19. It also conducted study and policy advocacy on Wage Theft and Arbitrary Return of Bangladeshi migrants in the aftermath of the Covid 19 pandemic.

Field based programme

RMMRU is also engaged in field level interventions to raise awareness among the migrant community of their rights and ensuring services. RMMRU developed the Migration Mediation Model to ensure access to justice at grassroots level. It also formed Community Groups for migration services to avail government services at the grassroots level. Current major activities in field involves strengthening and informing the migration system, expending safe migration information through using mobile application, support to achieve economic resilience and social cohesion of the returnee migrants in their communities and help them to be reintegrated.

Recipients of Shonar Manush Shommanona

Shonar Manush Md. Nazmul Talukdar, Tangail



Md. Nazmul Talukder is an inhabitant of Boilarpur village, Shakhipur union, Tangail. Longing for a better life, he went to Dubai in 2009 with the help of a relative while studying Honors in Accounting. After staying abroad for almost 9 years, he returned home and started a mustard oil factory using his earned money He also started a cattle farm. Currently he has 12 buffaloes and 50 cows in his farm. He also has a partnership in a paper mill business. He created employment opportunities of 162 people. Nazmul is a Shonar Manush of Bangladesh.

Shonar Manush Md. Nuruddin Ahmed, Cumilla



Md. Nuruddin Ahmed from Cumilla's Daudkandi went to Bahrain and worked there for 6 years at a printing press as an operator. During his time abroad, he used to send a major portion of his earnings to Bangladesh through legal channels and kept the rest of it in a bank account as savings. From his earned money, Nuruddin's brother started breeding cows in a farm and now his farm has 38 cows. After returning to Bangladesh he started fish farming and started cultivating fruits and vegetables. Besides, he started another farm with 18 goats and 13 sheep. Nuruddin has a feed mill as well. Moreover, he regularly saves a big amount in the bank each month from his business earnings. Nuruddin currently has 38 employees working under him. He indeed is a successful entrepreneur.

Shonar Manush Haji Md. Salim Ullah, Keraniganj, Dhaka



Haji Md. Salimullah is a resident of Sonakanda village, Ruhitpur, Dakshin Keraniganj, Dhaka. In 1979, he migrated to Saudi Arabia through a relative longing for a better life. At the beginning, he started working there as a hotel boy, but later took a catering job in a Chinese restaurant. In 1988, he returned to Bangladesh. He bought 1100 decimal farmland and built ponds in some locations for fish farming. His fish farm and agricultural land employ 35 farmers. He bought 43 decimals land and built 4 storied Dakhil Madrasa on it . Currently, 625 students are enrolled in his established Madrasa and 23 staff are working in the madrasa. He also built Sonakanda Secondary School. There 650 students are enrolled and 14 staffs are working. Moreover, he built a mosque. Keeping the poor people in mind, he allocated 30 shops from his market for free and supported the small entrepreneurs. He has 2 sons and 2 daughters. He educated his girls and married them off. One son of his was in South Africa and the other son is currently preparing to go to Canada for MBA. After returning from abroad, he feels he is now ready to give back to society.

Recipient of Shonar Manush Paribar Shommanona

Left in charge Wife

Umme Habiba (Ruma), Wife of Migrant Worker, Kalihati, Tangail



Abul Kalam, a resident of Kalihati upazila in Tangail, left his family and migrated to Saudi Arabia in 2001 to work in a coffee shop. Using his remittance, his wife Umme Habiba first bought 80 decimals of agricultural land to cultivate crops. She also started a fishery farm on 60 decimal of land. Umme Habiba also started cattle farming. Besides, she built a house on 6 decimals of land and bought additional 6 decimals of land in Tangail. In addition, she bought an irrigation machine to cultivate the agricultural land. Umme Habiba also built a market in Baliata Bazar of Tangail and gave the shops for rent. She bought a private car as well for rent. Besides, she and her mother-in-law produce bakery items and sell them online and offline. They also built a poultry farm and sell chickens in the local market. In addition to those, they grow local vegetables in the home yard and sell them in the market. By proper and timely utilisation of her husband's remittances she ensured employment for 11 people. Now in her community many people follow her and want to be like her.

Left in charge Wife

Shiuly Islam, Chanpur, Bhaluka, Mymensingh



Sheuly Akhter's husband Md. Saidul Islam went to Italy in 2006. Saidul Islam. In Italy, Saidul Islam first went to work for a company but later found success working as a cook in a restaurant. After spending on family expenses and education of children Sheuly started to deposit the remaining remittance sent by her husband in the bank. In 2011 she started rearing 4 cows with her savings and slowly grew her farm. Using the profit from that and the remittances , she built a 2000-layer chicken shed and started raising chickens. She then continued to expand her business by hiring more people in the farm and starting a fish farm in addition to the cattle and chicken farms.

Currently a total of 10 people work in her various farms on monthly salary. Sheuly purchased a flat in Tangail town as well. Brother in law of Sheuly has received training in cow husbandry, chicken husbandry and fish farming from the Mymensingh Youth Development Office and has taught it to their workers.

