



# Engagement of Non-resident Bangladeshis in National Development

Strategies, Challenges and Way Forward



Economic Relations Division (ERD)  
Ministry of Finance





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Economic Relations Division (ERD), Ministry of Finance  
**Knowledge for Development Management (K4DM) Project**

**Engagement of Non-resident Bangladeshis (NRBs) in  
National Development: Strategies, Challenges and Way  
Forward**

**Study conducted by**

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## Message



**Minister**

Ministry of Finance

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

I am delighted to know that, ERD is publishing a study report on "Engagement of Non-resident Bangladeshis (NRBs) in National Development: Strategies, Challenges and Way Forward". This is a comprehensive study on this important issue for the first time in Bangladesh.

Strengthening economic diplomacy is one of the key businesses of ERD, and this report will assist ERD to find out the best option for effective engagement of NRBs for national development. By focusing on the manner and means by which the NRBs can engage and contribute to the country of origin, the study broadens the scope beyond migration and settlement.

We are very proud of the people of Bangladesh who are contributing towards the development of their country of residence. Quite a few NRBs are taking part in the parliaments of countries like UK, Sweden and Canada as elected representative.

The research team deserve special thanks for production of such a good report. I appreciate the pro-active role of UNDP funded Knowledge for Development Management (K4DM) Project for supporting this publication.

In the context of LDC Graduation, we need to have paradigm shift in development planning and I strongly believe that NRBs will play significant role in that process.



**Abul Maal A Muhith MP**

## Message



**State Minister**

Ministry of Finance & Ministry of Planning  
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

The study report titled “Engagement of Non-resident Bangladeshis (NRBs) in National Development: Strategies, Challenges and Way Forward” commissioned by the Economic Relations Division and supported by UNDP funded Knowledge for Development Management (K4DM) project is timely action to explore the areas of NRB engagement in national development.

We have earned international acclamations for our credible success in achieving SDGs and financing is a big challenge here. NRB engagement in national development can generate finance for some specific goals of SDGs and we should consider the issue with due importance.

I am really impressed over the findings of this study and consider the report as a quality knowledge product and appreciate sincere work of researcher. This report shows how NRBs often serve as critical bridges to facilitate movement of funds, sharing knowledge and generate useful networking for various socio-economic initiatives.

We are living in a global family and the distance between country of origin and country of residence is no more a risk factor if we really work collectively for positive changes.

Let us work together for protecting human dignity with innovative development approaches.

MA Mannan, MP

## Message



**Principal Secretary**

Prime Minister's Office

Govt. of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

I am pleased to know that Economic Relations Division (ERD) has conducted a study on "Engagement of NRBs in National Development: Strategies, Challenges and Way Forward". This is a good initiative to capture the prospects and challenges of NRB engagement, which is supportive to proper planning on this area.

NRB engagement in national development is a potential area. Policy makers increasingly recognize the value that non-resident population brings to development efforts at home. Countries in this region particularly India and the Philippines have taken strategic steps to develop institutional framework for engaging diaspora's in development initiatives. All these initiatives are very much encouraging to us in further accelerating our efforts to engage the non-resident Bangladeshis in national development efforts.

It is estimated that about 2.4 million Bangladeshis are living abroad permanently either as citizens or with other valid documents in 162 countries. Government of Bangladesh is interested in tapping the diaspora's knowledge, skills and expertise and also encourages them to invest in Bangladesh. An effective engagement strategies and institutional arrangement have been devised. However, it must be kept in mind that reaching out the diaspora as well as engaging them in productive and meaningful way will require commitment and leadership.

As an advisor of the Taskforce for NRB Engagement in National Development, I feel proud of my engagement in this process.

I take this opportunity to thank ERD for publishing this important report- which could be the basis of our future work in this area.

**Md. Nojibur Rahman**

## Message



**Principal Coordinator (SDG)**

Prime Minister's Office

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh &  
Advisor, Taskforce for NRB Engagement  
in National Development

I am delighted to learn that Economic Relations Division is publishing the analytical research report on 'Engagement of Non-Residential Bangladeshis in National Development: Strategies, Challenges and Way Forward' which would facilitate NRB engagement in national development. This study explored the potentials of NRBs and identifies the ways and modalities for their effective engagement. As an Advisor of the Taskforce for NRB engagement; I strongly believe that this report will serve as a guiding framework in identifying the future course of actions in this area.

I am happy to note that prior to publication of the report, many of its recommendations have already been implemented. The Government has already constituted a Taskforce to facilitate the NRB engagement process and for developing institutional arrangement in this regard. First meeting of the task force recommended establishing a separate cell at ERD for facilitating NRB engagement. A dedicated website has already been developed for strengthening linkages with the NRBs and for providing information services to them. We hope this new website will contribute towards better connectivity and understanding on the relevant issues.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank officials and colleagues from different ministries and representatives of Non-Government Organizations and CSOs for providing inputs, sharing their views, which have enriched report, made it informative and useful.

NRB engagement for national development requires a coordinated and collective effort. I hope that all stakeholders will play significant role in this process, which will create synergy towards effective participation of NRBs in different areas of national development.

I congratulate ERD for such a good initiative and appreciate assistance from UNDP Bangladesh for supporting this publication.

**Md. Abul Kalam Azad**



## Message




**Secretary**  
Economic Relations Division

NRB Engagement in National Development is an emerging issue, which can enhance the relationship of NRBs with their country of origin and facilitate development efforts with their active participation. As a part of Economic Diplomacy, Economic Relations Division is playing significant role in providing institutional arrangement for facilitating NRB engagement in national development. The Government has constituted a Task Force with representatives from Government and Non-Government agencies and also established a dedicated cell at ERD to deal with the NRB issues.

For better understanding the issue, ERD initiated this study titled “Engagement of NRBs in National Development : Strategies, Challenges and Way Forward “ in November 2017 and the findings were disseminated in an international seminar held on 13 December 2017, where a good number of NRBs participated. The findings of the study and the recommendations already contributed significantly to undertake follow-up actions in promoting the engagement process.

I appreciate the contribution of Professor Mobasser Monem in conducting the study on time and sharing the study findings with stakeholders. I strongly believe that, this study will contribute towards identifying the most appropriate actions in developing institutional arrangements for effective NRB engagement. The best practices of other countries and the recommendations of the NRBs included in this report, which will help us to replicate the good lessons in our future action.

I appreciate the active role of K4DM Project in facilitating the process and thanks the project team for publishing the report.



**Kazi Shofiqul Azam**

## Message



**Additional Secretary (UN)**  
and National Project Director, K4DM Project

Economic Relations Division is driving to reach the next level of excellency by publishing a study report on “Engagement Non-resident Bangladeshis (NRBs) in National Development Strategies, Challenges and Way Forward”.

Non-Resident Bangladeshis (NRBs) are contributing in different ways but there is no formal institutional arrangement or any platform to engage them effectively. Considering the potentials of Bangladeshi diaspora across the world, ERD initiated the study to understand the current scenario of NRB engagement, the constraints, and best practices in other countries and to identify the policy recommendations for future work.

Professor Mobasser Monem from the Department of Public Administration, Dhaka University was hired to conduct the study. He discussed with relevant experts, NRBs, Policy makers and explored best practices of other countries to prepare this report. Dr. Monem deserves thanks for submitting quality report on time.

I strongly believe that this knowledge product will prove valuable for NRB engagement in national development and will facilitate further discussions and interactions with the stakeholders. I assure that ERD will consider the relevant recommendations and will undertake follow-up actions in order to institutionalize NRBs engagement. As a National Project Director of K4DM Project, I feel proud of sponsoring this comprehensive study, which is the first time in Bangladesh.

Finally, we look forward to your further ideas and innovative thinking in fostering our efforts towards developing a national platform for facilitating NRB engagement in national development.

**Dr. Kazi Anowarul Hoque**

# Message



United Nations Development Programme

জাতিসংঘ উন্নয়ন কর্মসূচী



Until date Non-Resident Bangladeshis (NRBs), remain an untapped resource to support the national development agenda. It is estimated that nearly 2.4 million Bangladeshis are living abroad permanently either as citizens or on long term permits and several of whom are well-established, highly skilled and influential in their counties of residence. Further, studies indicate that many of them still retain very strong emotional ties with Bangladesh and would be willing to contribute through extending philanthropy, lending skills and experience or as investors, if opportunities to do so are conducive. To that end, it is timely that the Economic Relations Division in partnership with UNDP is supporting research and facilitating dialogue to support the design and establishment of mechanisms that will help to tap into these resources. This study represents one such useful and very timely initiative.

Globally, there exists numerous successful initiatives of diaspora engagement that Bangladesh can review, learn lessons and potentially adapt for use. An UNCTAD study conducted in 2012 estimated that up to 80% of FDI into China was from its diaspora networks. In Lebanon, around six thousand projects have been successfully implemented through the 'Live Lebanon' initiative with diaspora-donated money to support local communities. Contributions from the Diaspora take multiple forms that include philanthropy, business and academic networks, institutional twinning initiatives, practitioners or technical advisors etc. There also several successful examples of the Diaspora providing pro-bono medical and education services and promoting tourism.

UNDP has long standing experience of providing support to national governments in developing partnership with their respective Diaspora. UNDP supported initiative called TOKTEN (Transfer of Knowledge through Expatriate Nationals) implemented in different countries in the world is a good example in this regard. 'Live Lebanon' ([www.livelebanon.org](http://www.livelebanon.org)) for mobilizing Lebanese Diaspora contribution in support of local development in the most deprived areas of Lebanon is another milestone achievement of UNDP.

In face of reduced benefits, as Bangladesh graduates out of the 'least developed country' status, engaging non-resident Bangladeshis (NRBs) as investors can be a new way to maintain the pace of economic growth. UNDP can help in devising both a suitable platform and campaign to incentivize Diaspora from different parts of the globe to come together and invest in the development of Bangladesh.

**Sudipto Mukerjee**  
Country Director



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## Acronyms

<b>BB</b>	Bangladesh Bank
<b>BIDA</b>	Bangladesh Investment Development Authority
<b>BOESL</b>	Bangladesh Overseas Employment and Services Limited
<b>BMET</b>	Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training
<b>ERD</b>	Economic Relations Division
<b>PKB</b>	Probashi Kallayan Bank
<b>NRB</b>	Non-resident Bangladeshi
<b>NRI</b>	Non-resident Indian
<b>LBN</b>	Lebanese Business Network
<b>MoFA</b>	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
<b>MoF</b>	Ministry of Finance
<b>MoPA</b>	Ministry of Public Administration
<b>MoEW&amp;OE</b>	Ministry of Expatriate's Welfare and Overseas Employment
<b>MoL&amp;PA</b>	Ministry of Law and Parliamentary Affairs
<b>PIE</b>	Philanthropy, Investment, Expert Affiliation
<b>DEW</b>	Diaspora Engagement Wing
<b>K4DM</b>	Knowledge for Development Management
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nation Development Programme
<b>IOM</b>	International Organization for Migration
<b>MPI</b>	Migration Policy Institute
<b>PBO</b>	People of Bangladeshi Origin
<b>PIO</b>	People of Indian Origin
<b>SANSA</b>	South Africa Network of Skills Abroad
<b>NIDO</b>	Nigerians in the Diaspora Organization
<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency International Development
<b>RAMRU</b>	Refugee and Migratory Research Unit
<b>OCI</b>	Overseas Citizenship of India
<b>IDF-OI</b>	India Development Foundation of Overseas Indians
<b>FDI</b>	Foreign Direct Investment
<b>SIPA</b>	'Silicon Valley' Indian Professional Association
<b>KIP</b>	Community Welfare Fund Know India Programme
<b>WEWB</b>	'Wage Earners' Welfare Board



## Executive Summary

The term “NRB” includes both the temporary and permanent migrants of Bangladeshi origin-- who are working or living abroad. **However, the focus of this study is on those Bangladeshis who are permanently residing in different countries and continents and their off-springs and who are maintaining some sort of ties with Bangladesh.** These permanent migrants living in different continents and countries are known as the “Bangladeshi diaspora” who have the immense potential to make substantial contributions to Bangladesh’s development in terms of sharing their skills, expertise, technology and knowledge. It is perceived that about 10 million Bangladeshis are living abroad of which about 2.4 million Bangladeshis are living abroad permanently either as citizens or with other valid documents in as many as 162 countries. They make up the ever-growing Bangladeshi diaspora and they mostly live in the industrial countries including but not limited to UK, USA, Italy, Japan, Australia, Greece, Canada, Spain, Germany, South Africa, France, Netherlands, Belgium and Switzerland. While reasons for their departure vary—jobs, education, improved standard of living—individuals within diaspora communities maintain a special affinity with Bangladesh, a desire to maintain a connection (cultural, social or economic) to their country of origin. With this affinity comes an interest in matters related to the development in their homeland, be it the social and economic well-being of remaining friends and family members, humanitarian concerns, business interests, professional aspirations, or even a desire to return “home” someday. It can be said that when this interest becomes engagement, whether collective or individual--diaspora community can use their financial, time and intellectual resource to help reduce poverty, contribute to the expansion of the private sector and enhance global competitiveness and overall development of the country.

Diaspora engagement is generally viewed as the government of a given country is increasingly recognizing the value that diaspora populations bring to development efforts and is seeking ways to magnify the human capital and financial resources that emigrants and their descendants contribute to development in their country of origin. Beyond the remittances, the diaspora members fulfill a key development role in their countries of origin: as major direct investors in critical and emerging industries, generous philanthropists, and in the development of human capital and sharing and transfer of knowledge from the countries of residence to the country of origin in various ways. The significance of diaspora engagement for national development has drawn attention and has become an important part of the international agenda in recent years, demonstrated by the growing number of studies, conferences, pilot projects and initiatives funded by various countries and development actors. In Bangladesh, there is a growing realization by the government, policy makers and donors that the diaspora engagement demands greater consideration within the wider development context.

Within this background, this study concentrates on demonstrating the benefits of diaspora engagement and finding ways of linking the Non-Resident Bangladeshi (NRB) in the process of development in Bangladesh. While doing so, the study provides a road map or action plan

to be undertaken by the government and other relevant agencies in the short, medium and long term with a view to facilitate this process of engagement.

As mentioned above, Bangladesh has a large diaspora and this has been growing in the last few decades. In general, these huge number of diaspora populations have higher levels of education, special skills, technical expertise and significantly higher incomes and larger amounts of money in banks in the country of their residence. And engaging the diaspora communities in a well-coordinated, concerted and effective way would allow them to contribute while bolstering the developmental efforts of the country. In fact, the successful design and implementation of a diaspora engagement framework would serve a number of purposes- first, it would strengthen the integration of the diaspora communities with Bangladesh allowing them an opportunity to contribute for the betterment of the country; secondly, the NRBs, through their investment, can play a pivotal role in fostering economic growth of the country while generating new opportunities for industrial development; thirdly, the financial contribute made by the NRBs can open up new horizons in the domain of community development, and finally, the above mentioned important skills, expertise and experiences could fill capacity gaps in Bangladesh if appropriate engagement modalities can be formulated and put in place.

It is important to note that in general there has been a renewed emphasis and realization on the part of the Bangladeshi academia, civil society members and think tanks about the importance of engaging the diaspora into Bangladesh's on-going development process. However, at the government level, whereas there are some provisions to encourage expatriate remittance senders, businessmen and investors, there is no provision in place at present to recognize the contributions of the diaspora professional whose outstanding contributions have been recognized by the host countries. The existing legal frameworks deal only with the issues relevant to the temporary migrant workers and not the permanent migrants. It is, against this backdrop, the study seeks to suggest a road map for facilitating the engagements of the diaspora in the development process of Bangladesh. To that end, the specific objectives of the study are:

- Identification of specific processes or mechanisms through which the potentials of diaspora can be harnessed
- Suggesting an effective, feasible and practical institutional format for ensuring effective diaspora engagement through participation of diaspora and national partners
- Identification of major challenges for diaspora engagement
- Offering some concrete recommendations on the front of engaging the Bangladeshi diaspora.

To point out the necessity of diaspora engagement in the context of Bangladesh, to understand the current status and to design plans that would facilitate engagement of the NRBs in the overall development process of Bangladesh, this study has adopted a qualitative approach. As part of that, extensive literature review has been conducted to determine the need of diaspora engagement and to understand the existing situation. Related government policies, rules and regulations have also been analyzed. Furthermore, the study has also

reviewed case studies of international best practices and experiences regarding diaspora engagement to see what Bangladesh can learn from these experiences.

In addition to that, a number of migration experts, researchers, academicians, government officials, Non-government and international organization's professionals have been interviewed through following an open-structured interview schedule to gather their ideas about the process of involving the diaspora community as well as potential areas of engagements. Finally, the study has also attempted to understand what the members of the diaspora communities think about engagement, how they wish to be engaged and where they want to get involved. To that end, consultation meetings with the diaspora members have been organized and this has helped us to develop some feasible and practical recommendations for diaspora engagement.

The study provides some specific ideas that can be applied for diaspora engagement in the context of Bangladesh. For that purpose, experiences of different countries regarding diaspora engagement have been analyzed. This analysis shows several things- first of all, the bed stone of diaspora engagement is gaining the trust of the diaspora community, i.e. generating a sense of belief or perception that the government values their contribution, wants them to contribute and a transparent and accountable mechanism would be followed in transforming their contribution in to national development efforts. Secondly, whereas different approaches are taken for involving the diaspora community, these efforts can largely be categorized into three groups- promoting philanthropy for community development, facilitating investment for economic and industrial growth, and ensuring expert engagement for knowledge and skill development. We have defined this focus of diaspora engagement as "PIE framework" and explained briefly how different countries have implemented this framework.

Based on the learnings from international experiences, an effort has also been taken to design an institutional framework that would implement the PIE approach in Bangladesh. While doing so, the necessary conditions required for developing an institutional arrangement has been identified and the study argues that an ideal institutional framework that would embrace the PIE approach should be designed in two phases. In the short-term two alternatives have been proposed- one argues for introducing a project to be housed in ERD where PIE would be introduced in three different sub-clusters, each of sub-cluster being led a specialized ministry. At the same time, different government and non-government actors would work in collaboration within these sub-clusters and the study also outlines detailed activities to be performed by these actors. A project implementation committee will be in charge of the overall coordination. The second alternative follows the same approach except for the fact that it argues in favor of implementing the PIE-based sub-cluster approach while keeping it within the PMO. The study, however, points out that in case of both the alternatives the ultimate goal is strengthening the capacity of the Ministry of Expatriates Welfare and Overseas Employment (MoEW&OE) so that a specialized unit, known as Diaspora Engagement Unit (to be headed by an Additional Secretary) can be established within the MoEW&OE which would eventually take charge of diaspora engagement. The three sub-clusters will be transformed into three specialized sub-units (i.e. philanthropy sub-unit, investment sub-unit and expert engagement sub-unit) placed within the unit and a



national level steering committee to be headed by Prime Minister would be set-up which would provide overall policy guidance and oversee the activities of the unit. The study also identifies possible challenges that may hinder the implementation of PIE approach of diaspora engagement.

The study identifies a number of challenges and categorizes them in three groups-

### General Challenges

- The absence of an online database that contains information of long term migrants.
- The difficulty of collecting information from and engaging permanent migrants who do not have legal stay permit in their country of residence
- The fact that the NRBs have formed many associations abroad with Bangladeshis as members and many of these associations are divided along our national political lines. Choosing the right and appropriate organization/association to work with will be a real challenge for the government
- Involving the members of the diaspora and keeping them interested at all times in every step of the national initiative would be a key challenge which is easier said than done.

### Policy Level Challenges

- Absence of clear policy provisions relating to diaspora engagement may become a key challenge as the existing policy provisions do not clearly address the PIE approach mentioned here.
- The institutional design developed here indicates that different ministries may need to get involved in new activities which may not always fall within their jurisdiction. As a result of this, allocation of business of the concerned government agencies and their mandates must be amended.
- Inter-ministerial coordination on a continuous basis poses a challenge.
- There has to be a special account created for receiving philanthropy funds from the NRB individuals or associations. Not all government agencies can do this without an explicit mandate. The management of such funds has to be done in a transparent manner so that senders can track on line how or where the money is spent. If possible, information about the impact of the projects can also be shared with them on line. All these are not easy to do, on the other hand, success of philanthropy in the short, medium and long term will largely depend on this.
- Lack of comprehensive supply side studies on the diaspora engagement in the context of Bangladesh may also pose a challenge.

### Institutional Level Challenges

- As we have mentioned before, diaspora engagement following a PIE approach requires a major shift in policy which also makes it essential for different government agencies to change their approach. Bringing about organizational changes, especially if it requires change in policy focus, has always remained a challenge in the administrative context of Bangladesh.
- Currently, the MoEW&OE is overwhelmed with huge workload as this Ministry is dealing with the numerous issues of the temporary migrants and therefore it will be

difficult, if not impossible, to devote its efforts with its existing manpower strength to deal with the engagements of the diaspora as this will require special capacity, skills and a lot of inter-ministerial level coordination.

- The NRB's existing perceptions about the investment climate in Bangladesh may not be very positive.
- For the expert affiliation, coupling or matching the interests of the NRB professionals and the host institutions would be a challenge.

## The study offers the following recommendations

In the **Short-Term**, we propose the followings-

### General

- A national initiative has to be taken with a strong government ownership to this end. With the help of Embassies, Missions, and Consulates, the GoB should also start taking necessary initiatives to develop a database of the international diaspora community.
- The expatriates Bangladeshis face a variety of problems such as mistreatment, harassment and demands of illegal gratification by officials at the country's entry points, threats to security and safety upon visiting Bangladesh, and insecurity of properties and local investments. These issues must be addressed.
- Measures to acknowledge the contribution of the NRBs should continue and in fact, the GoB should strengthen its effort to honor the successful NRBs in different areas. For instance, "Probashi Padak" can be given annually to successful NRBs in different areas. The government may also declare a specific day as "Pravashi Dibash" to recognize the contribution of the NRBs and an annual NRB conference may be organized in which Prime Minister may give away the "Probashi Padak" to eligible NRB individuals.
- Cultural integration efforts should be introduced for the young NRBs and people of Bangladeshi origins (PBOs).
- The designation of the position "Labour Attache" may be changed to "Diaspora Relations Officer (DRO)". Name of the ministry may as well be changed from the Ministry of Expatriate' Welfare and Overseas Employment (MoEWOE) to the Ministry of Expatriate' Engagement and Welfare (MoEE&W).
- A supply side study on the Bangladeshi diaspora should be commissioned to capture their aspirations in every 2/3 years.
- Sequencing the PIE appropriate is important as an initial confidence building measure. Ideally, starting with expert affiliation would be a better strategy to start this journey of NRB engagement.

### Philanthropy

- Given that the government should shift its policy focus from serving the migrant laborers (which would continue) towards engaging the diaspora communities in the overall development efforts of the country, a massive awareness-raising campaign should be introduced.
- The current government has focused on local economic development (as per the 7th Five Year Plan) and elected local governments of Zila Parishad (ZP) and the Upazila Parishad (UZP) can play a pro-active role in facilitating the identification of local and

regional development projects for which philanthropic contributions of the diaspora can be sought on line.

- There has to be a special account created for receiving philanthropy funds from the NRB individuals or associations. Not all government agencies can do this without an explicit mandate. The management of such funds has to be done in a transparent manner so that senders can track on line how or where the money is spent.
- The Missions should maintain liaison with the professional diaspora individuals, their groups and associations to work out modalities of their engagement in Bangladesh.
- NRBs are to be provided with some details about the projects with a description of how these projects would benefit people of Bangladesh.

### Investment

- Foreign Missions of Bangladesh should set up a dedicated diaspora engagement cells with an immediate effect to deal with the affairs of the diaspora engagement keeping in view the activities suggested under PIE.
- A special economic zone can be created for the NRB investors.
- Some special sectors of the economy may be kept reserved exclusively for the NRBs to invest or they should be given preferential treatment in this regard.
- The government has a plan to create 100 Special Economic Zones (SEZs). We suggest that on this front, NRBs may also be given the responsibility to develop a number of SEZs and then should also be given necessary flexibility to invite investors of their choice (NRBs or foreign origin).
- There has to be a well laid down strategy to connect the business and investors diaspora with the national and local chambers of commerce within Bangladesh.
- Publicizing among the NRBs the benefits associated with the different types of bonds available in the market for them to purchase and also make sure that the process of purchase of bonds is friendlier and encashment of bonds is hassle free.

### Expert Affiliation

- A list of interested NRB professionals willing to make expert contributions to Bangladesh's should be prepared immediately for every country having major professional NRB concentrations.
- As far as expert engagement is concerned, there are a lot of academics and researchers working already in different private universities and research organizations in Bangladesh. More such opportunities should be created at both the public, private universities and research organizations. Ministry of education in collaboration with UGC and the proposed entity can invite the NRB academics and researches of different disciplines and connect them with the local institutions, local academics and researchers. Also the engineers, doctors, ICT professionals, architects, pharmacists, agriculturalists and other professionals can be engaged through the relevant ministries in collaboration initially with the proposed entity responsible for dealing with this initiative.
- Besides, internet-based professional networks can be effective mechanisms linking NRB professionals to professionals in Bangladesh to pool their collective knowledge and contacts.

- The positions of Education Attache may be created in a few countries where there are Bangladeshi diaspora concentrations.

Once these integration-oriented and trust-building initiatives are undertaken, the GoB can introduce the followings in the **Mid-Term**:

- Design short-term institutional framework and as part of that-
- Develop the necessary business and professional network
- Activate these networks so that they can connect the global diaspora with the local people
- Design and develop a web-based platform which would support the virtual integration
- Design money tracking tools to ensure the trust of the diaspora community
- As the government's policy focus is shifting, effort should be taken to review the existing rules, policies and laws (including the rules of business and allocations of business) of relevant ministries. Based on this review, necessary changes have to be introduced
- A proper involvement of the diaspora, state and non-state actors has to be ensured
- Setting up of Bangla language learning schools by the GoB in collaboration with the Missions abroad and the Ministry of foreign affairs. This will enormously contribute to the NRB confidence building.
- For decades expatriates have been demanding their right to vote in the national election of Bangladesh. Government of Bangladesh should consider the granting the right to vote to the expatriates.
- Specific emphasis should be placed in ensuring proper coordination between different ministries, divisions, agencies;
- It is important to note that without developing a transparent, functional and reliable financial management system, it would be extremely difficult, if not impossible to encourage the diaspora community channel resources to Bangladesh. In order to build a sound system and ensure the trust of the NRBs, we propose that at the initial level the fund management mechanism should be delegated to the Development Partners. This can continue for a while (3 to 5 years) and within this time-frame, with the help of the DPs, an effective financial management system should be introduced within the government agencies.

Finally, in the **Long Term**, the following steps should be taken-

- The National Steering Committee should be established and activated. The role of the top political leadership is significant and that is why effort should be taken to include the Prime Minister;
- The flexibility of the new specialized unit must be ensured;
- The unit must have the necessary capacity to perform its duties;
- The monitoring mechanism (both internal and external) must be put in place. Developing a system of effective feedback mechanism and a yearly review of the progress made is also seen useful and if needed reconfiguration of the whole process would be needed based on the lessons already learnt from the initial activities and challenges encountered.





# CHAPTER ONE

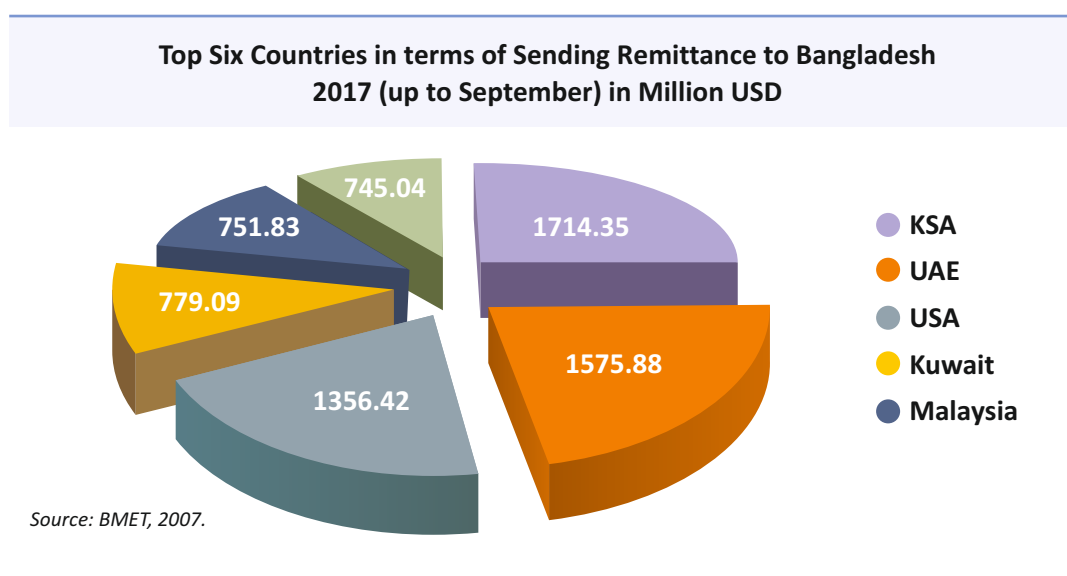
Background, Rationale, Objectives  
and Methodology



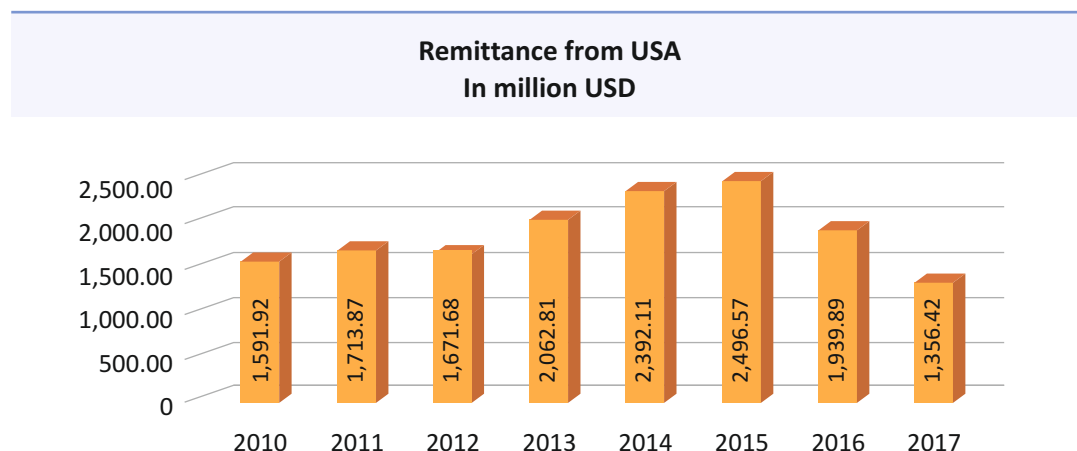
The focus of this study is on the engagement of Non-resident Bangladeshi (NRB) in the process of development in Bangladesh. The deals with the identifying the issues relating to this crucially important phenomenon of NRB engagement and provide a road map or action plan to be undertaken by the government and other relevant agencies in the short, medium and long term with a view to facilitate this process of engagement. The term “NRB” includes the temporary migrant workers of Bangladeshi origin-- who are working or living abroad sending remittance on a regular basis, the term “NRB” also includes “those Bangladeshis who are permanently residing in different countries and continents and their off-springs and who are maintaining some sort of ties with Bangladesh. These permanent migrants living in different continents and countries are known as the “Bangladeshi diaspora” who have the immense potential to make substantial contributions to Bangladesh’s development in terms of sharing their skills, expertise, technology and knowledge.

However, it is important to recognize the importance of the temporary migrant worker’s contributions in terms of sending remittance to Bangladesh and also recognize how greatly the country has benefited from the continuous flow of remittance sent by our temporary migrant workers from different countries. As a matter of fact, Bangladesh has been able to move forward with its aptly designed development agenda at a time when many other countries of the World were witnessing economic down-turn or difficulties. There is no denying the fact that among other things, migrant worker’s remittance has enormously helped Bangladesh achieve most of its development targets in recent years. Remittance has also made a considerable contribution to ease foreign exchange constraint, stabilizing the exchange rate and allowing Bangladesh to import much needed raw materials, intermediate goods and capital equipment. Comfortable reserves of foreign exchange have also contributed to overall macro stability and have reduced aid dependency.

**Figure 1: Top six countries in terms of sending remittance to Bangladesh, 2017 (up to September)**

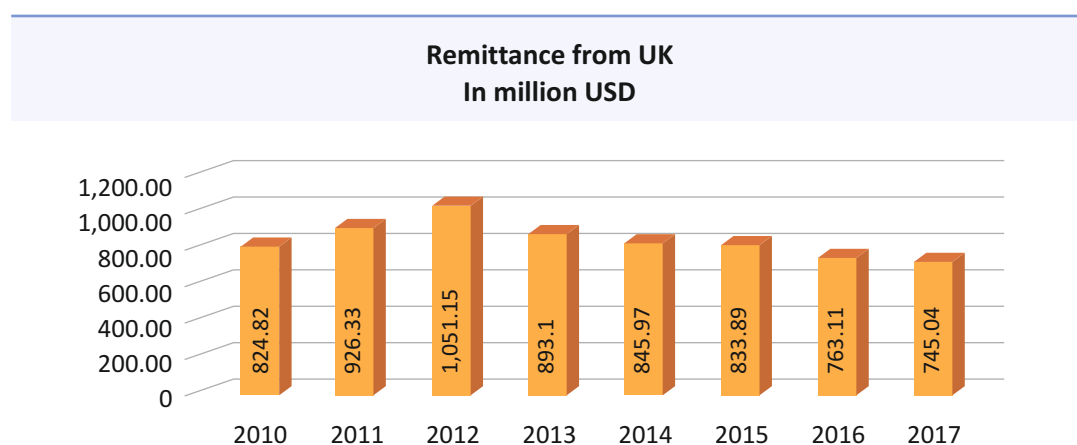


**Figure 2: Remittance from USA**



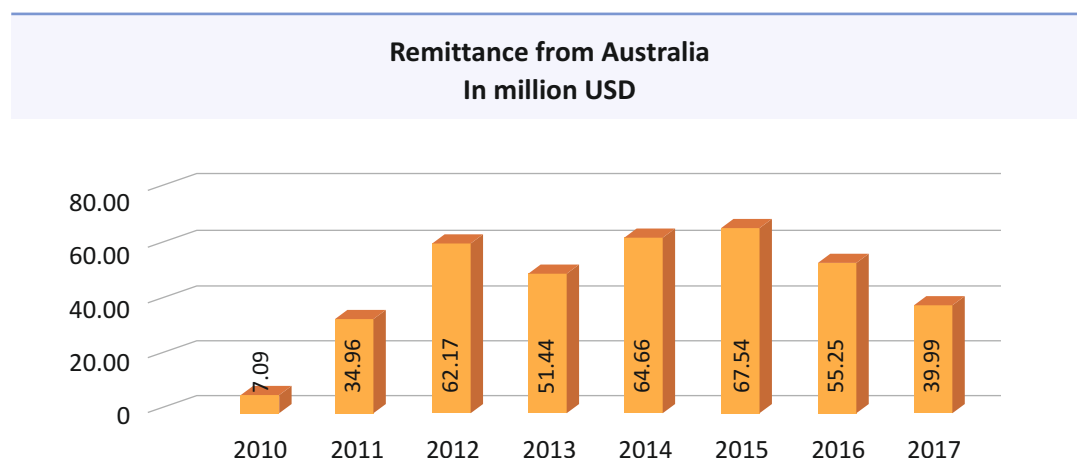
Source: BMET

**Figure 3: Remittance from UK**



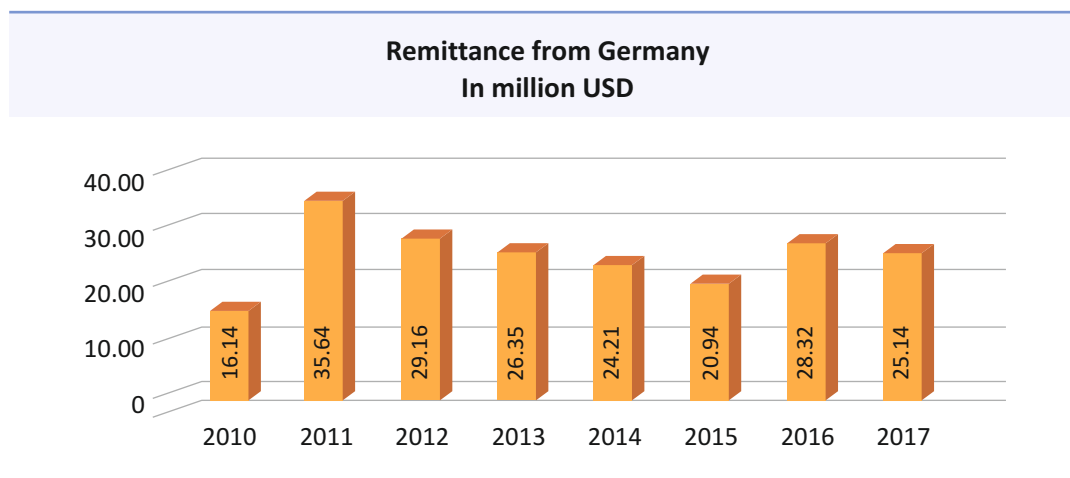
Source: BMET

**Figure 4: Remittance from Australia**



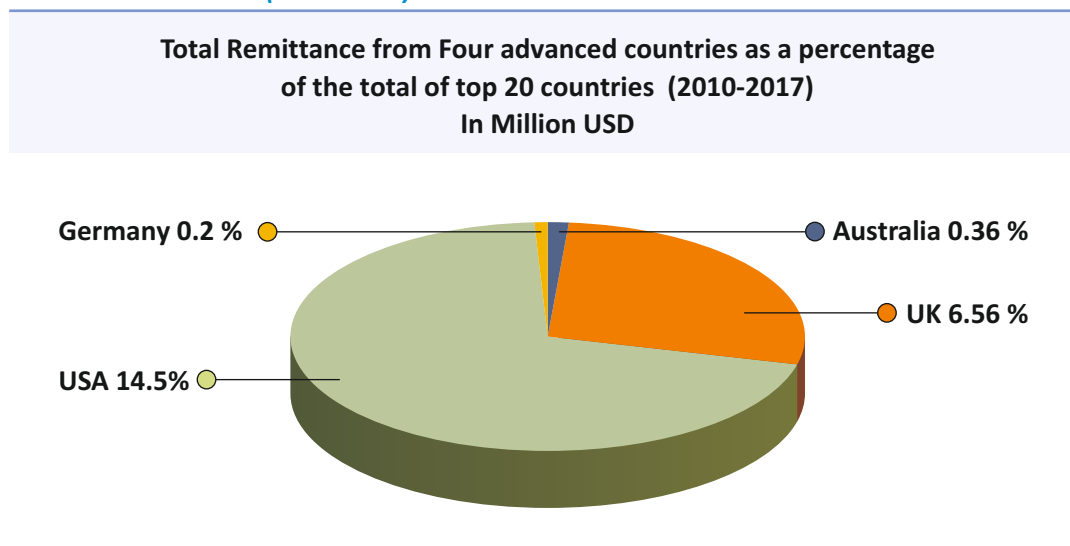
Source: BMET

**Figure 5: Remittance from Germany**



Source: BMET

**Figure 6: Total Remittance from Four advanced countries as a percentage of the total of top 20 countries (2010-2017)**



Source: BMET

Remittances from migrants have positive impacts on poverty reduction and development in Bangladesh substantially contributed to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. As a matter of fact, all these while the opportunities for the diaspora to contribute meaningfully to the development of Bangladesh has remained unexploited largely because of the lack of proper coordination and the inability to envision the importance of the diaspora beyond remittances. There is no denying that these positive impacts would have been greater had remittances been saved and invested in infrastructures and productive capacity (Islam 2012).

However, this study deliberately limits its scope and intends to focus particularly on the “engagement of Bangladeshi diaspora—the permanent migrants or permanent expatriates”

with a special reference to diaspora philanthropy, investment, knowledge sharing. We justify this on the following grounds:

- a. There have been a lot of studies conducted on the temporary migrant workers, remittance inflow and its development potential and impact. Some studies have looked into how remittance inflow can be increased and strategies to be adopted in order for the country to tap into more remittance. In fact, a dedicated ministry has been set up to facilitate the affairs of the migrant workers and look after the well-being of them.
- b. On the other hand, there exist only a few studies which specifically looked into the Bangladeshi diaspora (we are aware of 2/3 studies only), let alone, engagement of diaspora into the process of development of the country. There has not been any study that has particularly focused on identifying the ways and means to harness the potential of the knowledge, skills and intellectual resources of the Bangladeshi diaspora which can help taking Bangladesh to the next level.

Bangladesh government and development organizations are now more interested in tapping into the diaspora population's knowledge, skills and expertise and also financial capital in a sustainable manner by devising effective engagement strategies. However, it must be kept in mind that reaching out the diaspora and engaging them in a productive and meaningful way will require committed leadership, creating institutions and their capacity building, sustaining such institutions amid challenges and also the commitment on the part of the members of the Bangladeshi diaspora. The positive intention of the government has been manifested by the recent initiative undertaken by the Knowledge for Development Management (K4DM) project which is being implemented by Economic Relations Division of the Ministry of Finance and supported by UNDP. The project started its operation in 2015. The key objectives of the project are as follows:

**Box 1: *key objectives of the project***

- Simplify programming procedures and improve knowledge management;
- Promote new knowledge and resource partnerships under the canopy of South-South and Triangular as well as Public-Private Partnership modality; and
- Support a common expert pool, strategic knowledge generation and innovative programming.

One of the major initiatives of the project is to try and establish a platform for engagement of the Non-resident Bangladeshi or Bangladeshi diaspora in the country's development process. K4DM project organized a consultation on "Developing Platform for NRB Engagement in National Development" in 2017 with the participation of senior ERD officials, officials from the Bangladesh Bank and other government agencies for exploring the issues relating to diaspora and the potential contributions which they render to nation building. The participants of the consultation meeting recommended the formation of a national platform for the engagement of diaspora, develop a diaspora strategy and introduce one stop service for diaspora, establishing a separate economic zone for diaspora investment. It can be mentioned here that of the major focuses of the K4DM project is to provide support to ERD in exploring alternative ways of resource mobilization. In this regard, creation a diaspora

platform may prove to be extremely effective. Besides, in general there has been a renewed emphasis and realization on the part of the Bangladeshi academia, civil society members and think tanks about the importance of engaging the diaspora into Bangladesh's on-going development process. It is, against this backdrop, the study seeks to suggest a road map for facilitating the engagements of the diaspora in the development process of Bangladesh. The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

1. How does the Bangladeshi diaspora currently engage with Bangladesh?
2. Assessing why and how the potentials of diaspora can be harnessed?
3. Suggesting the formation of a national platform for ensuring effective diaspora engagement through participation of diaspora and national partners
4. What are the major barriers inhibiting Bangladeshi diaspora engagement in development efforts in Bangladesh?
5. Offering some concrete recommendations on the front of engaging the Bangladeshi diaspora.

## Methodology Used and Sources of Information

**Table 1: Methodology of the Study**

What?	Purpose
Desk Study:	Identifying and reviewing the secondary literature having bearing upon the topic in question. This has helped Internalizing the important issues pertaining to the current study. This has also helped understanding the existing situation, obtaining information and enhancing knowledge about the existing government policies on the front of diaspora engagement and related issues.
Reviewing the Global Experiences of Diaspora Engagement:	Reviewing the case studies of international best practices and experiences on the front of diaspora engagement to see what Bangladesh can learn from these cases and experiences.
Key Informant Interviews:	Interviews with the migration experts, researchers, academicians, government officials, Non-government and international organization's professionals for gathering information from the practitioners, researchers, academics and expert's to have their ideas as to how diaspora can be engaged, potential areas of their engagements etc.
Consultation Meetings with the Diaspora members	For gathering primary information about the diaspora's perceptions about the existing situation, their opinions about how they wish to get engaged, identifying the potential areas of cooperation, their suggestions as to the implementation strategies, identifying the potential restraining forces and way forward.





# CHAPTER TWO

## Diaspora and Diaspora Engagement: Theoretical Underpinnings



Individuals who are migrants or descendants of migrants, and whose identity and sense of belonging, either real or symbolic, have been shaped by their migration experience and background, are often referred to collectively as diaspora. At this point, it must be mentioned that for this study **Bangladeshi diaspora has been viewed as Bangladeshis who have settled or are born abroad, but maintain varying degrees of linkage with Bangladesh and with other diasporic members or communities of Bangladeshi origin. It is to be mentioned here that in this study we have used the term diaspora, NRB and long term expatriates interchangeably.**

The potential represented by migration and diaspora for the development of their countries of origin has increasingly become an issue of policy as well as research interest. The transfers of social, financial and cognitive resources by migrants for the benefit of origin-country development have recently gained substantial attention in the 'migration and development' debate. A large body of literature on the migration-development nexus discusses the various ways in which sending countries benefit of financial remittances, social remittances, skills transfer, and, more broadly, of diaspora engagement in social and community projects aiming at promoting development in countries of origin.

Direct diaspora engagement has, in fact, even been touted by some as a way of harnessing the diaspora potentials for contributing to development in their countries of origin that can integrate the efforts undertaken by other external actors such as government, NGOs and development agencies. Whilst migration has long been a characteristic of societies, the last two centuries have witnessed the mass mobility of populations, with millions of people moving across the planet to take up new lives in new places. In some cases, such migration has been of necessity forced through persecution or starvation or economic hardship, in

**Figure 7: Types of Diasporas**



other cases it has been a strategic choice motivated by ambition and opportunity. Whatever the reason, citizens of one nation have uprooted their lives, negotiated a transnational journey, and made new lives for themselves in a new nation, often within fairly large groupings of fellow migrants. Originally conceived of to refer to populations living in exile, the concept of diaspora has more recently been broadened to concern mass migration in general and to second, third, and later generation descendants. Robin Cohen (1997) thus identifies five different types of diasporas:

Diaspora populations are diverse in nature, shaped by the reasons for migration, the scale, timing, and geography of flow, how they interact with social, political, economic, cultural, and environmental conditions in destination regions and how they were received in their new host country, and how they view their original homeland and its culture. And while they might eventually adopt the citizenship of their host, diasporan identity, and that of subsequent generations, remain inflected with the nation they left, sometimes in very explicit ways through public acts of celebration and memory, sometimes much more implicitly through family histories and stories.

At the same time, for the homeland, losing a sizable proportion of its population to transnational migration often has a significant impact on the national economy and psyche. Whilst the debate on the effects of brain drain on national economies in the short, medium, and long term is clearly a lively and open ended one, it is often the case that the homeland hopes that migrants will return in due course, or will help the homeland economically, culturally, socially, and politically, due in part to continued patriotism or obligations to family still living there. In addition, homelands recognize that they still have obligations to migrants who remain citizens despite being resident abroad. As a result, homelands often seek to stay in contact with their diaspora for a number of reasons, both strategic and obligatory.

In fact, there is a growing recognition that the diaspora communities facilitate increased trade, investment and cultural linkages between different countries that they are connected to, and that they are important development actors. They have been playing this important role long before the international community took notice. The resources of these communities that flow across borders are immensely varied and range from skills, knowledge and ideas to cultural capital, finance and trade links.

**Table 2: Resources diaspora can offer**

Indicators	Description
<b>Human and social capital</b>	This may be described as the human resources that diaspora members constitute through their skills and knowledge, and the extended networks that they maintain. Skills accumulated by diaspora members are invaluable in terms of the development of a variety of sectors such as health, education and technology. The networks that they maintain with the homeland are crucial to facilitating a more open flow of trade, investment, skills and knowledge, and are based on relationships with families, friends, colleagues or associations.

Indicators	Description
<b>Economic capital</b>	This is not only represented by remittances and savings, which constitute only a fraction of total private capital flow, it also includes direct investments made by diaspora members in business activities in the homeland. Members of diaspora communities will often be in a prime position to take advantage of new economic opportunities in the countries where they originate from, and they are more willing to invest as a result of their personal ties.
<b>Cultural capital</b>	The rich and diverse background that diaspora communities bring to the countries they originate from the countries they are currently residing. Cultural capital not only contributes to creating a society that is more dynamic and innovative but also enhances relations between countries. The ideas and different social constructs that diaspora members possess can break down barriers among different groups and contribute to greater gender equity, peace building efforts and enhanced participation in political processes in both countries where these communities reside and originate from.
<b>Enabling</b>	The creation of appropriate conditions is essential to enable the diaspora communities to become effective agents for development in the countries where they originate from. The degree to which diaspora can contribute is directly related to the creation of the enabling environment or a platform by the government in the country of their origin so that they can utilize the acquired skills and resources and serve as architects of economic and social progress and maximize their potential as agents for development.
<b>Engaging</b>	<p>Knowing and understanding diaspora communities is crucial to engaging effectively with them and developing the appropriate outreach strategies towards diaspora. To this end, it is important to mapping out and taking a stock of diaspora communities to assess their socioeconomic profile and their willingness to contribute to the development of their countries of origin, and to improve the understanding of communication pathways within diaspora communities.</p> <p>Outreach can often take place in countries of origin through bodies that connect with returning members of diaspora communities, including investors, skilled professionals or academics. In countries where diaspora members reside, outreach often requires countries of</p>

Indicators	Description
	origin to establish and strengthen their embassies and consulates, including training labour attachés, whose portfolios now increasingly include service provision to these communities.
<b>Empowering</b>	<p>With the right conditions in place, diaspora communities will spontaneously transfer resources and strengthen links between their countries of origin and destination regardless and often in spite of administrative, regulatory and other constraints. However, governments can empower this process by introducing special measures and programmes in a variety of fields. The government may take initiatives to facilitate trade and investment between diaspora and the countries from which they originate, targeting investment in local projects with a positive socioeconomic impact.</p> <p>Besides, financial literacy training and the dissemination of information on remittance services and costs serve to heighten awareness of the various financial services and products available to remittance senders, and to provide options for the productive use of remittances.</p>

Source: IOM 2013

The mobilization of skills, knowledge and expertise can be facilitated via the actual return of skilled diaspora members on a short- or long-term basis. Transfer of knowledge can also take place ‘virtually’ through online support. The government may identify and prioritize key sectors that can be considered crucial to human development and can benefit from diaspora resource mobilization. Examples include health, education, and supporting the entrepreneurial potential of both local and diaspora communities. This diversity in scope across countries is to be expected given differences in the nature of the respective diaspora, where they have migrated to, the economic and cultural conditions in the homeland, and in the varying aspirations of the homeland in engaging with their diaspora.

Strategies and policies adopted by different countries in order to engage with their diaspora generally include the following among others:

**Box 2: *Strategies and policies adopted by different countries to engage with their diaspora***

- Providing consulate and embassy services;
- Extending and upholding citizenship rights;
- Offering welfare assistance to the diaspora living abroad;
- Encouraging return migration and
- providing return facilitation services;
- Extending voting rights and encouraging electoral participation;

- Supporting cultural activities and language learning;
- Creating, facilitating and nurturing diaspora social networks;
- Creating and fostering information flows and portals;
- Facilitating short-term and tourist home visits by the diaspora;
- Counselling advice from diaspora leaders;
- Seeking expert advice and training from diaspora professionals;
- Seeking remittances to support extended families and providing the necessary financial infrastructure;
- Encouraging philanthropy to support the homeland;
- Fostering business partnerships and venture capital investment;
- Supporting diaspora business networks and meetings;
- Creating specialist business knowledge networks;
- Establishing business mentoring and student intern schemes;
- Rewarding diasporians who make a significant contribution to the homeland.

*Source: Delphine Ancien, Mark Boyle and Rob Kitchin (2009), Exploring Diaspora Strategies: An International Comparison, Workshop report.*

Given this diversity of policies, it is not surprising that a critical question concerns how a country seeks to create an effective structure through which all these activities can be best coordinated and harnessed. There is a wide variety of institutional arrangements that look after and oversee diaspora policies and programmes. Differences in administration diverged along two lines:

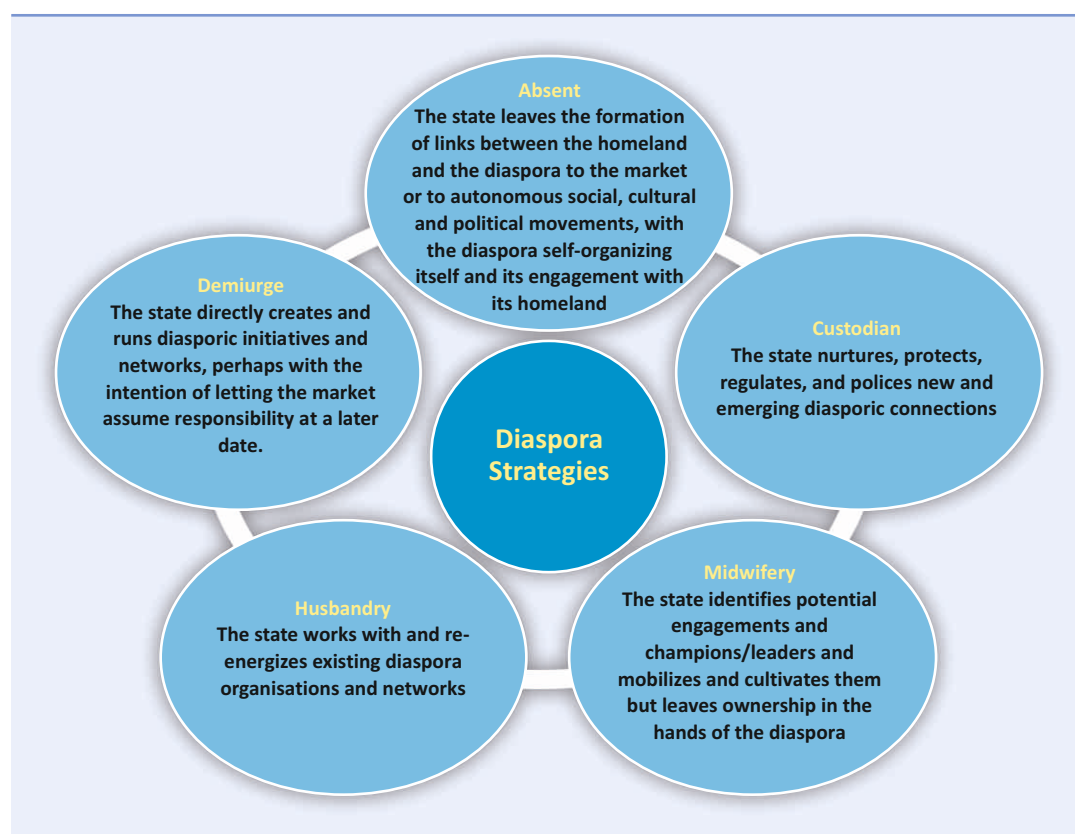
- first, the institutions responsible for engaging the diaspora;
- second, the strategies through which these institutions engage;

In some countries, a diaspora strategy is coordinated through a single or principal government institution such as Lithuania (Department of National Minorities and Lithuanians Living Abroad), India (Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs), Armenia (Ministry of Diaspora) and Jamaica (Diaspora and Consular Affairs Department in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade). As such, there is a government minister to oversee diaspora affairs, with a full government department who oversee issues such as the legal status and voting rights of the diaspora, the welfare and rights of the diaspora in their new locations, cultural and social links to the diaspora, remittances and philanthropy, and the development of business relationships with the diaspora.

In other countries, engagement with the diaspora is the remit of a state agency or the non-profit NGO sector has taken a lead role. For example, in Chile, DICOEX – the Direction of Chilean Communities Abroad, a state agency set up in 2000 – is responsible for the development and coordination of policies aimed at engaging Chilean nationals living abroad. In addition, it seeks to protect the rights of Chilean nationals in their host countries; promotes national identity preservation; encourages the diaspora to take an active part in the development of the country; and works with Chilean organisations overseas. It is supported by the Inter-ministry Committee for the Chilean Community Abroad and ProChile (export promotion). In addition, there are five specialist NGO agencies working with the Chilean diaspora (ChileGlobal; BIONEXA; PymeGlobal; ChileTodos; EuroChile). Advance

(Australia) and KEA (New Zealand) are non-profit NGOs working independently of governments to provide select services to the diaspora. In some cases, such as Scotland and Ireland, there is no one agency that coordinates diaspora policy and programmes, with a plethora of organisations taking an active role with no central oversight or coordination. Irrespective of which agencies within a state choose to engage the diaspora, there also exist differences in how states choose to strike up and fortify relationships. It is important to assess how can a government provide a coherent centralised framework to assure diverse bottom up initiatives that fit specific local circumstances? Drawing on the work of Sean O’Riain (2004) on the nature of developmental states, we can identify at least five levels of state engagement with their diaspora.

**Figure 8: Engagement of Diaspora: The Role of the State**



Source: O’Riain, Sean (2004), *The politics of high tech growth: developmental network states in the global economy*, Cambridge University Press, UK.

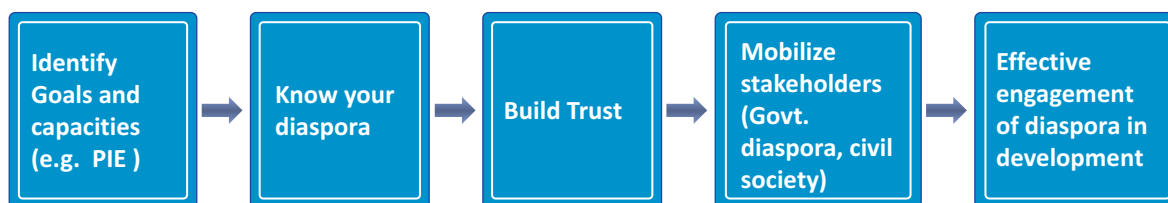
Operating diaspora programmes often involves significant investment by states and other organisations with respect to staffing and infrastructure, programme content development and delivery, and on-going evaluation and expansion. As a result, agencies running programmes seek to measure their success with respect to investment. Measures of success can focus on both tangible and intangible outcomes, and in the case of business-related ventures inevitably concern an economic assessment of the return on investment.

It is pertinent to mention here that diaspora engagement requires strategized continued broad attention. There is no “one-size-fits-all” model for a government working to effectively



engage its diaspora. The unique needs and capabilities of each diaspora is governed by its historical experience and the present realities of its countries of origin and destination. It is, therefore, imperative that government approaches reflect these complexities. An effective strategy for diaspora engagement will almost always include certain basic elements that are necessary components of almost all successful strategies of engagement. A government's strategy for diaspora engagement needs to identify goals, map diaspora geography and skills, create a relationship of trust between diasporas and governments of both origin and destination countries, and ultimately mobilize diasporas to contribute to sustainable development. Throughout its implementation, a diaspora engagement strategy must pay heed to improving the capacity of both government institutions and diaspora communities to work with one another and with other stakeholders (IOM and MPI 2012).

**Figure 9: Developing a Road Map for Engaging Diasporas in Development**



## Identify Goals and Capacities

The first step for any government attempting to devise a strategy to facilitate stronger diaspora involvement is to identify its own objectives in undertaking this pursuit and to define the internal tools and mechanisms (administrative, financial, etc.) required for the task. If, for example, a country of origin's goal is to alleviate poverty or to support the national balance of payment, its diaspora policy (in terms of both content and instruments) will likely to focus on remittances, business investments, capital markets, etc. If its objective is to improve the country's economic competitiveness, its diaspora policy is more likely to emphasize the knowledge and skills that members of the diaspora can contribute to their countries of origin. The country of origin may, for example, facilitate diaspora members' personal efforts to transfer skills to the homeland, or work to bridge home-country institutions of learning and enterprise to advanced institutions in the destination countries in which diaspora members have ties. The government of the Philippines, for example, utilizes a strategy involving large-scale contract labor deployment overseas to reduce unemployment and therefore maintain a stream of remittance income. India and China, by contrast, have in recent years given priority to pursuing diaspora entrepreneurs and highly skilled professionals to develop activities in their countries of origin (IOM and MPI 2012).

The goals of diaspora engagement cannot be set in a vacuum. They should be seen as an integral part of development planning, not as something to be swept to the side. Diasporas can bring important financial, intellectual, and social capital to the development process. However, they cannot substitute for the development of domestic resources — although they accelerate their development. Similarly, diaspora cannot have significant effects when the basic elements of good governance are not integrated into development planning. The

past achievements of governments such as the Republic of Korea and Taiwan in bringing the fruits of diaspora talents and treasures to the table were in large part possible because both governments had solid development strategies in place to invest in education, promote science and technology, build infrastructure, and encourage entrepreneurship. Governments are also more likely to succeed in setting realistic but ambitious goals for diaspora engagement if they consult with diaspora members when setting these goals.

## Understanding the Diaspora

With reasonably clear goals articulated, the second crucial step for a government is to understand the diaspora that it is looking to engage. This involves serious, comprehensive data collection (through a migrant/diaspora census, for example), mapping the diaspora location, compiling diaspora skill and experience inventories, and educating a wide range of diaspora members on what being a part of a diaspora entails in terms of their responsibilities, government responsibilities and their benefits. It is important to pay heed to the diversity of diaspora agendas, interests, and strategies. Through the establishment of a continuous dialogue with diasporas, government policies should try to reconcile — or at least understand — differing and often diverging views. Successful government interventions are the result of years of continuous open engagement. The Indian government, for example, tasked a high-Level Committee on the Indian Diaspora to analyze the location, situation, and potential development roles of the estimated 20 million nonresident Indians (NRIs) and people of Indian origin (PIOs). The information resulting from this two-year study led to a new direction in diaspora policy, which culminated with the creation of a Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (MOIA) in 2004. To facilitate building trust, many governments offer privileges to non-resident citizens (and, in some cases, their descendants) such as duty-free imports of goods, tax-free repatriation of foreign-currency income, and the ability to purchase assets or hold jobs normally reserved for resident citizens. Other governments sponsor cultural events in countries that have a diaspora presence. Still others such as China also promote learning the “mother tongue” by subsidizing lessons and providing teachers to the schools dealing with such activities. Political rights are often a high priority for diasporas, therefore governments can both demonstrate and earn trust by facilitating overseas voting and other forms of political participation for expatriates. Ghana, for example, passed a law permitting dual citizenship in 2000 and another granting voting rights to Ghanaians abroad in 2006. Such actions are designed to instill a sense of belongingness to and engagement with the country of origin (IOM and MPI 2012).

## Building Trust

Building trust is the third element of the diaspora engagement strategy. For the country-of-origin governments, building trust with diaspora populations may involve creating a welcoming environment for diaspora engagement in development activities. This would include steps to improve the home business climate such as greater transparency in regulations and licensing requirements along with more consistent application of property law. Other elements of good governance and rule of law are also important in increasing diaspora engagement. Countries of destination, collectively or individually, can facilitate

these efforts. The European Commission (EC), for example, has supported projects in certain migrant-origin countries to assist their governments with developing sound legal, regulatory, and/or institutional frameworks that promise to encourage accentuated diaspora investment. Few governments have taken gaining the trust of a diaspora as seriously as the Mexican government. Ever since the late 1990s, the government has invested in communications and service to its diaspora. The creation of IME in 2002 (Institute for Mexican Abroad) in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs brought coherence to these efforts using a dense network of over 56 consular offices in North America. Mexico is an example of how the establishment of joint diaspora government decision making is extremely important to building trust (IOM and MPI 2012).

## **Mobilize the Diaspora for Development**

Once trust is established between governments and diasporas, the characteristics of the diasporas is well understood, and the objectives of diaspora engagement are transparently articulated, partnerships for diaspora development can be more successfully mobilized. This may require the creation of new government institutions or the revival or revamping the existing ones. This institutional framework is necessary on a national level to communicate with their diasporas, construct policies, and provide support for and following engagement. In 1993, Senegal pioneered this approach with a landmark initiative that overhauled the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to include oversight for Senegalese citizens living abroad. More and more migrant-origin countries are creating ministries devoted to diaspora issues, such as India's MOIA, Mali's Ministry of Malians Abroad and African Integration, Armenia's Ministry of the Diaspora, and Haiti's Ministry of Haitians Living Abroad. Bangladesh has also established the MOE&OE, although it mostly deals with the temporary migrants as of now. Another school of thought suggests that even if the government succeeds in building trust, a government institution is not necessarily the most effective channel for the mobilization of financial resources from the diaspora if it cannot operate in an efficient, clear and accountable manner. Israel is a case that portrays the advantages of an independent and accountable mechanism for the transfer of philanthropic funds from the diaspora to the homeland. In Israel's case, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee is overseen only by diaspora members. Diaspora Jews and overseas Israelis raises well over \$1 billion in philanthropic contributions annually, from which we can deduce that formal institutions for diaspora engagement can be effectively enhanced by initiatives from civil society. Holland is implementing programmes (Temporary Return of Qualified Nationals, TRQN) in Afghanistan, Georgia, Ethiopia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sudan, and Sierra Leone. It also collaborates with the IOM Migration for Development in Africa (MIDA) program in Ghana to facilitate the temporary return of diaspora medical doctors to Ghana. The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) utilizes numerous techniques to mobilize diaspora groups for development in their countries of origin. It provides monetary support to development projects executed by diaspora groups experienced in establishing development projects, such as the Association of Haitian-Canadian Engineers and Scientists. For diaspora groups without experience, CIDA has created tripartite partnerships within diaspora organizations, Canadian development nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and NGOs in the countries of origin (IOM and MPI 2012).

Diaspora mobilization can be stimulated in a variety of ways, such as high-profile events. An example is India's annual Pravasi Bharatiya Divas ("non-resident Indian day"), the first of which brought together more than 2,000 high-profile Indian diaspora members for a conference attended by most of India's senior politicians alongside Nobel Prize winners of Indian nationality or descent. Jamaica also holds an annual celebratory gathering of expatriates and descendants of emigrants. With or without these events, many countries recognize diaspora members who have made outstanding contributions to their countries of origin, fostered better relationships between their origin and destination countries, and/or demonstrated distinguished merit in their professional lives. Notable awards given to diaspora members are the Presidential Awards for Filipino Individuals and Organizations Overseas, India's Pravasi Bharatiya Samman, the World Class New Zealand Awards, and the Governor- General's Jamaican Diaspora Award for Excellence. Governments of origin countries can also appoint well-known members of the diaspora as spokespeople on issues with diasporas, fund travel to the country of origin for opinion leaders and youth, or establish diaspora volunteer programmes.

### **Building Capacity for Effective Implementation**

Turning a promise into a reality is easier said than done. While many governments understand the importance of diaspora engagement in development, many still do not possess the ability to design concrete policies and implement them in a meaningful fashion. This explains the difference between plans that look good on paper and truly effective policies and programs. Effective engagement almost always requires collaborative efforts toward capacity building. For many countries, the main obstacles to effective engagement seem to center on two issues relating to capacity: methods to acquire adequate funding and methods to improve technical knowledge. The governments that are serious about engaging diasporas commit to funding their efforts as much as possible (and seeking funds to fill in the budget gaps) and to obtaining the operational knowledge and skills required to pursue goals effectively (IOM and MPI 2012).

There is no denying that diaspora engagement strategy of a country depends on its contextual realities, nature, attitudes and other characteristics of its diaspora. Based on above framework, if the role of the state vis-à-vis the diaspora engagement strategy is considered, Bangladesh still stands at the rudimentary stage. Thus far, the Bangladesh state has left the formation of links with the diaspora to 'self-organize itself' basis. Bangladesh needs to make a quick departure from this position if Bangladesh is to make a successful transition from its current state to achieve its "Vision 2021" and sustain this and also to achieve its "Vision 2041". In fact, Bangladesh's recent growth, which has been associated with continuous inflow of remittance, private sector productivity and important economic, institutional, governance reforms, reflects a country that is just ready for further economic transformation. However, for Bangladesh's economy to successfully make the transition from its current commodity-dominated production to high value-added, job-creating production opportunities, the country also has to explore and create other opportunities, design and implement strategies to harness large amounts of re-sources (human and financial) efficiently in order to sustain its growth in the long run. One such opportunity that is grossly underutilized is the engagement of the large Bangladeshi diaspora. In this context,

it is worth mentioning here that for a long time, the diaspora's contribution to development has been viewed only in terms of remittances that go primarily to support families in Bangladesh. However, the Bangladesh diaspora represents a "huge reservoir" or a "gold mine" of human and financial capital and also an important bridge between Bangladesh and developed countries. It is, therefore, imperative for Bangladesh to accelerate its efforts to harness the knowledge skills, expertise and investment potential of diaspora to support transformative development. However, to accomplish this task, Bangladesh needs to be more systematic, structured and strategic in its engagement with its diaspora.



# CHAPTER THREE

An Overview of  
Bangladeshi Diaspora





It is perceived that about 10 million Bangladeshis are living abroad of which about 2.4 million Bangladeshis are living abroad permanently either as citizens or with other valid documents in as many as 162 countries.<sup>1</sup> They make up the ever-growing Bangladeshi diaspora. Long Term Bangladeshis immigrants (diaspora) mostly migrate to the industrial countries including UK, USA, Italy, Japan, Australia, Greece, Canada, Spain, Germany, South Africa, France, Netherlands, Belgium and Switzerland. In both UK and US two distinct groups of migrants are found; they differ in term of social, economic and demographic characteristics. They are also located in almost all the erstwhile federating states of former Soviet Union and the eastern European states of Bulgaria, Hungary, Czech and Slovak Republics, Romania and Poland. However, there is a relatively small presence of Bangladeshis in Africa and Latin America, South Africa being the only exception in this regard (Siddiqui 2004).

In the absence of the accurate database about the diaspora different individuals and institutions in this country seem to make a guess about the total number of Bangladeshi diaspora or exact number of temporary migrants. In fact, the population census data of Bangladesh does not include information on internal or international migration. The Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET), is known to be the national repository of information on migration, but they keep information only on short-term migrants, it has not developed any system as yet to gather or preserve the record on the Bangladeshi diaspora. Siddiqui (2004) made an attempt for the first time to collect and document some information about the long-term Bangladeshi migrants living in some of the advanced countries and that too was based on the educated guess made by the government officials. For this study, we had to also depend on this information and then we tried to update the table based once again at the educated guess of the government officials.

**Table 3: Number of Bangladeshi Immigrant in Industrialized Countries**

Country	Number of Bangladeshi Immigrants
United Kingdom	900,000
USA	800,000
Italy	400,000
Canada	60,000
Japan	40,000
Australia	25,000
Greece	80,000
Spain	20,000
Germany	10,000
South Africa	12,000
France	7,000
Netherlands	6,000
Belgium	5,000
Switzerland	2,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>23,67000</b>

Source: Adapted from "Institutionalizing Diaspora Linkage- the Emigrant Bangladeshis in UK and USA, Ministry of Expatriate's Welfare and Overseas Employment, Government of Bangladesh and International Organization for Migration (IOM), Dhaka, 2004. Educated guess made by Government officials of Bangladesh who have first-hand experience with the immigrant community.

1 Information collected from the Ministry of Expatriate's Welfare and Overseas Employment, Government of Bangladesh.

There is no data about the socio-economic profiles or occupational and other characteristics of these long term migrants. There is no denying the fact that it is important to make a long and short term migrant census by the government institutions. Government can do this through its missions abroad and also relying on ICT led methods.

## A Brief History of Bangladeshi Diaspora

Long-term migration from Bangladesh is not a new phenomenon, however, not many research based literature could be traced having comprehensively covered this issue. However, Siddiqui (2004) noted, Bengalis have a long history of migration. For example, during the British era, a large number of Bengalis migrated to Burma and Assam. Later, large-scale immigration occurred to UK and US. The nineteenth and early-twentieth century, as per speculation, was a time when many groups of Sylheti landless peasants found work at the dockyards of Hooghli once they realized the little job prospects for them in their homeland. At this time, many of them are speculated to have joined British merchant ships (Alam, 1988).<sup>2</sup> Around this time, Bengali seamen from the South-East parts such as Chittagong and Noakhali, which are near the Bay of Bengal, became renowned for their seamanship as they traveled in ships carrying goods from Calcutta to many destinations. There had been also many people who did not come from sea-adjacent areas such as Sylhet, and thus had low levels of experience with it, who also joined the British merchant navy ships at the sight of what they deemed was a golden job opportunity, but worked as mainly 'Khalashis', cooks, cook-mates and cleaners. Experts on Sylheti migration speculate that, this group did not have much experience with the sea and they jumped ship at the first opportunity (Alam, 1988). Eventually, this 'ship-hopping' tendency has led to small settlements of Bengalis being found near the docks in a number of countries such as Burma, Hong Kong, Singapore, the UK, and the US. These small settlements generally consist of Sylhetis, identified as pioneer immigrants of Bengal by Siddiqui (2004). Unfortunately, things were not always pleasant. Naff (1993) states that a number of Bengali immigrants settled in Latin America believing it to be the US. However, written documents on Bengali immigrations show that a small number of Bengalis jumped ship in major US port cities, Detroit and Michigan, around the 1920s and 1930s. This sea-jumping tendency explains the Bengali settlements in London, Liverpool and Bristol, mainly by Sylhetis, from sea-men who jumped ship in the UK.<sup>3</sup>

Bengali long term immigration did not end there. Even before WWII, many urban well-educated Bengalis having relatively high socio-economic status migrated and settled as citizens upon entering their new professions after completing their higher education in UK. Ever since the seamen, a new second wave of migration began in the mid-twentieth century. Around the 1950s, when emigration to Britain was rapidly growing, The British Government enacted policies to ease and encourage migration from its previous colonies, due to labor shortage and expense since the quite expensive WWII. These new policies worked like a green signal to the previously settled sea faring Bengali migrants who encouraged and brought their relatives living in their old hometowns. Generally, these young men worked in heavy labor industries in northern cities including Birmingham and Oldham (Siddiqui 2004),

<sup>2</sup> Mentioned in Tasneem Siddiqui (2004), *Institutionalizing Diaspora Linkage- The Emigrants Bangladeshis in UK and USA*, MoEW&OE and IOM, Dhaka.

<sup>3</sup> Mentioned in Tasneem Siddiqui (2004), *Institutionalizing Diaspora Linkage- The Emigrants Bangladeshis in UK and USA*, MoEW&OE and IOM, Dhaka.

while others who wished to work in the clothing industry as pressers or tailors resided in London. Bengali immigration to UK took another increase in the 1980s, once these people began bringing their wives and children. Most people who migrated generally were working immigrants – only a small number of non-economic immigrants existed.

Unlike the second wave of Bangladeshi immigrants to the UK, those travelling to the US in the 1960s were Professionals and skilled migrants. Many young Bengali students began migrating to the US at the time of pursuing their higher education there. Many of these students never returned to the then East Pakistan, some discouraged by the prospect they had in their homeland which was dominated by the West Pakistanis at that time. Most of the students changed their immigration status to legal residents.

The immigration trend has continued with time. ‘Opportunity Visa’ (OP-1 1990-91) and Diversity Visa (DV 1995-96) have encouraged Bangladeshi migration to the US since the 1990s, but unlike the second wave, most of these immigrants are neither skilled professionals nor students. Nevertheless, most of the immigrants under the latter two categories also have finished secondary education. A sense of community is building up in large metropolitan cities where these people have settled, mainly in the East Coast or the South. These new immigrants search for relatives or acquaintances when choosing their new resident, and so the more these people settle in big cities, the faster the Bengali population will grow in those cities. This greatly aids in creating a strong sense of community among these immigrants, aiding the acclimatization of new immigrants (Siddiqui 2004). According to a study of the Migration Policy Institute, the highest members of Bangladeshi immigrants in the United States reside in the state of New York. California, Texas, New Jersey, Michigan, and Florida are also popular places for Bangladeshi settlements. Among metropolitan areas, the Bangladeshi immigrant population is most heavily concentrated in New York City and its surrounding communities. The Washington, DC; Detroit; and Los Angeles metropolitan areas are also significant Bangladeshi immigrant population centers (MPI 2014).

Apart from USA and UK, many Bangladeshi long term migrants had gone to other countries of different continents including Italy, Australia, Greece, Canada, Spain, Germany, France, Netherlands, Belgium, Sweden, Norway, Switzerland, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, South Africa, and also in most of the Middle Eastern countries including Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Iran, Iraq, Bahrain, Jordan, UAE at different point in time either as students, workers, professionals or as simply visitors since 1970s and many of them started living in those countries permanently with their families after they were naturalized. It is also known that many of them are living and working in those countries without any legal residence permit. In the absence of the data, it is difficult to determine the actual number of these long-term migrant populations living in these countries, their demographic and occupational profiles. In the context of USA a study from 1986 showed that 61% of Bangladeshi aliens, adjusted to permanent residents, were students.<sup>4</sup> Later in 1992 it estimated that 90% of all Bengali immigrants in the US were professionals (Mali 1996). It is also known that Bengali immigration to the USA has grown over time.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Mentioned in Tasneem Siddiqui (2004), *Institutionalizing Diaspora Linkage- The Emigrants Bangladeshis in UK and USA*, MoEW&OE and IOM, Dhaka.

<sup>5</sup> Mentioned in Tasneem Siddiqui (2004), *Institutionalizing Diaspora Linkage- The Emigrants Bangladeshis in UK and USA*, MoEW&OE and IOM, Dhaka.

A recent study observes (MPI 2014) that, Bangladeshi immigrants in United States have a median age of 39, and the vast majority of the population is working age (84 percent). The children of Bangladeshi immigrants (the second generation) have a median age of 9, and only 20 percent are working age. Seventy – nine percent of those in the second generation have both a mother and father who were born in Bangladesh. The same study further states that the Bangladeshi diaspora population is better educated than the general U.S population and has a higher household income level. Diaspora members are more likely to have bachelor's degree than the U.S. population overall, and they are more than twice as likely to hold advanced degrees. Bangladeshi diaspora households have a median income of \$54,000, or \$4,000 above the median for all U.S. households. The diaspora in the United States transferred approximately \$694 million in remittances to Bangladesh during 2012. In general, employment indicators among members of the Bangladeshi diaspora closely resemble those of the general U.S. population, with both groups having similar rates of labor force participation, employment, and share in managerial or professional occupations (MPI 2014).

In UK the first generation emigrants represented both the professionals such as doctors, engineers, chartered accountant, teachers, businessman, nurses, economists, researchers and also unskilled workers. However, the second and third generation Bangladesh diaspora populations in UK are naturally much more educated and enlightened and they represent nearly all professional categories.<sup>6</sup> This observation can be substantiated by a study conducted by Siddiqui (2004) who revealed that the new generation of Bangladeshi diaspora has prospered in the UK. They work and thrive in a wide range of fields. Innovative and new contributions have been made by some in fields such as research, education, health, and so on. Many of the second generation emigrants proved very useful and popular upon entering journalism and media related jobs, and some have even displayed success in the field of politics too. On the other hand, very little is known about the diaspora populations of the other countries of Europe, Africa or Asia. There has not been any study that focused on this front covering these regions at all. But it is assumed that in all the other advanced countries the Bangladeshi diaspora population represents a very diverse occupational category. It is, however, well known that in Australia and Canada most Bangladeshi emigrants represent various professional categories too alongside unskilled worker category.<sup>7</sup>

Over the years, Bangladesh has gained significantly from the contributions of its diaspora population although these contributions were made sporadically. The Long-term emigrants played a glorious role during the war of independence of Bangladesh. The Bangladeshi diaspora members have been contributing to the development of the country in many ways. One of the major contributions is in the form of remittances, which accounts for a significant part of the foreign exchange reserve. But the diaspora populations have other potential and there has not been any serious attempt made in the past by the government to tap into those potentials systematically. Unfortunately, knowledge on the Bangladesh diaspora remains inadequate. It is essential to build understanding of the nature of the Bangladeshi diaspora and various avenues to engage them in a way that they can contribute to the on-going process of development in Bangladesh.

<sup>6</sup> Based on the discussion with the President, British-Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industries, 2017. <sup>7</sup>Based on the interview with an officer of the MoEW&OE, 2017.

# CHAPTER FOUR

## Diaspora Engagement in Bangladesh: An Overview of the Current Status



Diaspora engagement is generally viewed as the government of a given country is increasingly recognizing the value that diaspora populations bring to development efforts and is seeking ways to magnify the human capital and financial resources that emigrants and their descendants contribute to development in their country of origin. Beyond the remittances, the diaspora members fulfill a key development role in their countries of origin: as major direct investors in critical and emerging industries, generous philanthropists, and in the development of human capital and sharing and transfer of knowledge from the countries of residence to the country of origin in various ways.

As mentioned already, millions of Bangladeshis live permanently in different countries. While reasons for their departure vary—jobs, education, improved standard of living—individuals within diaspora communities maintain a special affinity with Bangladesh, a desire to maintain a connection (cultural, social or economic) to their country of origin. With this affinity comes an interest in matters related to the development in their homeland, be it the social and economic well-being of remaining friends and family members, humanitarian concerns, business interests, professional aspirations, or even a desire to return “home” someday. It can be said that when this interest becomes engagement, whether collective or individual—diaspora community can use their financial, time and intellectual resource to help reduce poverty, contribute to the expansion of the private sector and enhance global competitiveness and overall development of the country.

The link between migration and development has achieved high standing in the international agenda in recent years, demonstrated by the growing number of studies, conferences, pilot projects and initiatives funded by various countries and development actors. In Bangladesh also there is a growing realization by the government, policy makers and donors that the migration link demands greater consideration within the wider development context.

### **Why is it Important for Bangladesh to Harness the Diaspora Potential?**

The conventional thinking that migration undermines prospects for economic development and yields a state of stagnation and dependency has changed following a decade of re-appraisal of the migration-development nexus. Since 2006 United Nations reports have indicated that international migration constitutes an ideal means of promoting development, that is, the coordinated or concerted improvement of economic conditions in both origin and destination countries based on the complementarities between them.

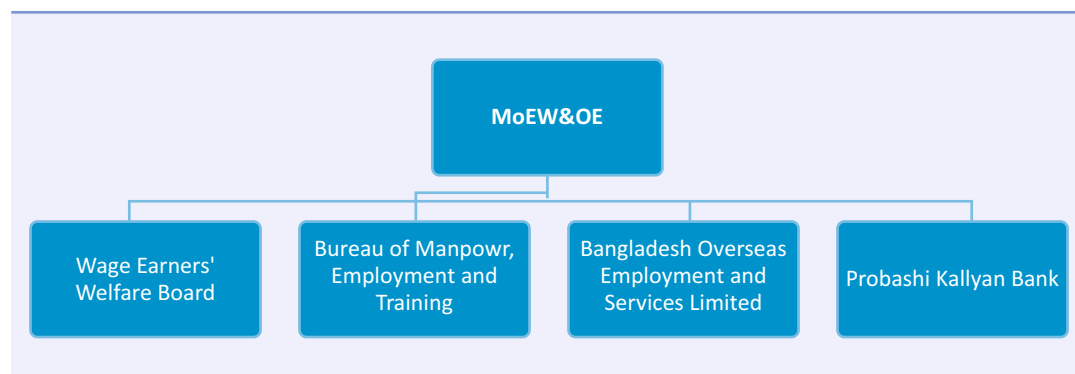
As seen already, Bangladesh has a large diaspora and this has been growing in the last few decades. A majority of them are migrants in USA, UK, Canada, Australia and different European countries, Africa and apart from the Middle Eastern countries. In general, a huge number of diaspora populations have higher levels of education, special skills, technical expertise and significantly higher incomes and larger amounts of money in banks in the country of their residence. The above mentioned important skills, expertise and experiences could fill capacity gaps in Bangladesh if appropriate engagement modalities can be formulated and put in place.

In this regard, it is important to recognize that Bangladesh can learn lessons from other emerging and developing countries that have successfully engaged their diasporas for economic and social development. For example, in Malaysia, TalentCorp—a partnership between the government, the private sector and the overseas diaspora—works to bring educated and highly skilled Malaysians living and working abroad back to the country. South Africa has a similar setup as Malaysia. The South Africa Network of Skills Abroad (SANSA) helps connect highly qualified and skilled individuals in the diaspora with opportunities to advance education, research and development in the country. Similarly, Nigeria has set up the Nigerians in the Diaspora Organization (NIDO) in various countries throughout the world. Rwanda recently started a solidarity fund, in which the diaspora can contribute to the development of their country. While it is too early to assess the success of these African initiatives, there is hope that they will help contribute to the broader development of the region (IOM and MPI 2012).

## An Overview of Diaspora Engagement: Where does Bangladesh stand?

Foreign Employment and Immigration Act of 2013 defines migrants in the following manner: **“A Bangladeshi citizen who has gone to an overseas country and living there with a view to engage him or her in a work or a profession”**. The Wage Earner Board’s Act 2016 (draft) further clarified that expatriate would mean both the expatriate (long term) and expatriate workers. Bangladesh now has a large number of long term migrants or ‘diaspora’ contributing in numerous ways to the development of Bangladesh but all these are happening in a sporadic and incoherent manner. With a serious commitment and some creative thinking, the government could double or even treble the already substantial economic value of diaspora contributions by carefully designing a set of policies/strategies to exploit the talent, industriousness and patriotism of those living abroad. Bangladesh has already demonstrated it’s serious about managing its relationship with the migrant workers by establishing a separate Ministry called “Ministry of Expatriates’ Welfare and Overseas Employment” (MoEW&OE) in 2001. This Ministry has the mandate and potential to act as the non-resident Bangladeshis voice across various Bangladesh government agencies and promote engagement with NRB’s to help Bangladesh’s larger cause. The main objective of the Ministry is to ensure welfare of the expatriate workers and enhancement of overseas employment with a principle of equal opportunity for the people of all areas of the country.

**Figure 10: MoEW&OE and its attached agencies**



Source:



To that end, the Ministry is responsible for formulating policies, plans, enacting laws, rules and regulations, developing projects, programmes and monitoring mechanisms relating to the management of overseas employment as well as overall welfare of expatriate workers. It comprises seven wings namely:

**Box 3: Existing Wings of MoEW&OE**

- Administration and Finance
- Mission and Welfare
- Overseas Employment
- Organization Administration
- Planning and Development
- Monitoring and Enforcement and
- Training

Implementation of the policy, planning and programmes of the Government relating to the management of overseas employment are being carried out by agencies attached to this ministry namely Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET), Wage Earner's Welfare Board (WEWB), Bangladesh Overseas Employment Services Limited (BOESL) and the Probashi Kallyan Bank (PKB).

**Box 4: Ministry of Expatriate Welfare and Overseas Employment: Allocation of Business**

**Ministry of Expatriate Welfare and Overseas Employment: Allocation of Business**

1. Welfare of Bangladeshi expatriates and protection of their rights
2. Complaint of their expatriates and their redress
3. Facilitation of investment in Bangladesh by expatriates
4. Projects for the participation of expatriates in economic and social welfare activities in Bangladesh
5. Registration of recruiting agencies
6. Overseas employment at all levels.
  - 6 A. Training and skill development relating to overseas employment.
7. Matters relating to Bangladesh Overseas Employment Services Limited
8. Organizations and Companies in the public sector dealing with overseas employment including BMET
9. Administration of Labour Wing in Bangladesh Missions abroad and appointment of officers and staff thereof
10. Administration of Wage Earner's Welfare Fund
11. Promotion of Bangladeshi culture among expatriates abroad
12. Liaison with associations of Bangladeshi abroad
13. Secretarial administration including financial matters
14. Administration and control of subordinate offices and organizations under this Ministry
15. Liaison with International Organizations and matters to treaties and agreements with other countries and World bodies relating to subjects allotted to this Ministry
16. All laws on subjects allotted to this Ministry
17. Inquiries and statistics on any of the subject allotted to this Ministry
18. Fees in respect of the subjects allotted to this Ministry except fees taken in courts.

*Source: Allocation of Business among the Different Ministries and Divisions (Schedule I of the Rules of Business, 1996). Revised up to December 2014, Cabinet Division, Government Bangladesh.*

## Overseas Labour Wings

This Ministry now has 29 Labour Wings in 27 Bangladesh Missions abroad. Officials are engaged for enhancing overseas employment along with ensuring welfare of the migrants. Missions normally extend the following services to the migrant workers:

- Efforts to mitigate problems of non-payment of salary and other benefit through labour courts and other related offices by providing legal aid assistance to the workers.
- Promotion of manpower export and this task entails market survey and contacts with large corporations and potential employers, both in the government and private sector.
- To look after the welfare of migrant workers, visiting their work places, responding to their queries and complaints. In case of violation of contracts, labour wing try to solve the problems getting in touch with the concerned employers, lobbying the host government particularly those dealing with the foreign workers for monitoring violations of contract by employers and recruiting agents, facilitating legal support, providing shelters to those who are in need, and so forth.
- Extending necessary financial assistance to the stranded workers for repatriation and for emergency treatment for distressed workers.
- Burial of dead body or repatriation of human remains of Bangladeshi workers abroad where their employers do not come up.
- Collection of death compensation money and arrear dues through filing cases by legal aides.
- Providing consular services to the expatriate workers in various prominent cities by visiting of consular team.
- Attestation of papers relating to demand for recruitment checking genuineness of visa papers.

## Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training (BMET)

BMET is a department under the control of the Ministry, which was established in 1976 to execute all plan and policy of the Ministry for enhancing the labour migration as well as protecting welfare of the migrants and training of the workers. BMET is controlling and monitoring the activity of the recruiting agent. The main functions of BMET are involved in registration of job seekers for local and foreign employment; promoting employment in home and abroad; ensuring right of migrant workers and extending welfare services to the migrants. BMET collect, compile and disseminate different information on labour market. BMET is also engaged in human resources development programs providing skill development training in various employable trades through its infrastructural facility of training centers countrywide.

## Bangladesh Overseas Employment and Services Limited (BOESL)

Bangladesh Overseas Employment and Services Limited (BOESL) is only the "State owned" Manpower exporting Company in Bangladesh. The Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh established Bangladesh Overseas Employment and services Limited (BOESL) in

1984 to earn more foreign exchange by way of exporting skilled and unskilled manpower. Its motto is to offer best services as a development partner based on mutual trust and to minimize migration cost in comparison to others. BOESL's main objective is to provide right person for right job to valued foreign Employer. BOESL realizes service charge from the selected workers as no profit no loss basis.

This is the only Company created by the Government to operate in healthy and professional competition with other private agencies working in this sector and to ensure transparent and safe migration. Since 1984 we achieved one goal of low migration cost and our continuous efforts are to minimize the cost. The main purpose of creating this company is to provide honest, efficient and quick services to the valued foreign employers in the field of recruitment and deployment of manpower with the full satisfaction of the foreign employers. The potential temporary migrant applicants are now given information through mobile apps.

### **Probashi Kallayan Bank (PKB)**

Probashi Kallayan Bank was established by the Government in 2010 to provide collateral free loan to workers going abroad for employment, provide loan to returnees to help them out finding employment within the country, facilitate sending remittance and encourage the wage-earners to invest in the country. Currently, PKB has 54 branches across the country and number of booths at different international airports in Bangladesh. It accepts deposits, extends loans to the migrants and returnees, buys and sells foreign currencies etc. Up to March 2017, PKB has sanctioned loan worth of Tk. 214.6 crore with a recovery rate about 86% and granted migrant loans to 22490 people. PKB not only provides loan, it also handles daily about 2000 overseas job-keepers everyday and collects various fees from them. The money is sanctioned to the migrants after securing employment contract, visa and passport. Maximum processing time for loan is 3 days. Usually PKB provide loans to jobseekers intended to migrate in any country, there is no restriction on it. The maturity period of loan provided by PKB depends on the employment contract. If one migrant goes abroad for 2 years, then first 2 months are considered as grace period. The migrant has to repay the loan at interest rate of 9% within next 22 months. The amount of loan for migrant is Tk. 84,000 for the Middle Eastern countries and Tk. 1,40,000 for Europe region. PKB faces no processing problem in sanctioning loans. However, there is a little problem in funding. Migrants are not interested in opening savings account at PKB as it has no clearing house of its own. However, PKB has the facility of savings account from 3 years to maximum 10 years at 5% to 7.5% interest rate. PKB has to take the help of other banks to clear the cheque of migrant workers and it is a time consuming process. If migrants could directly process their cheque through PKB, it can raise more funds to invest in different projects. Government is taking the necessary steps to turn this bank into a scheduled commercial bank so that it can extend services to migrant workers like any other bank alongside serving its specific purposes.

### **Wage Earners' Welfare Board (WEWB)**

In 1990, Government established "Wages Earners' Welfare Fund" to extend welfare services to the migrant workers. Currently, the "Wage Earners' Welfare Board" has been established

in the name. Migrant workers and their family members are being assisted through this fund. A Board of Directors comprising of inter-ministerial representatives operates this fund. It comprises senior level representatives of Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare & Overseas Employment, BMET, Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism, Bangladesh Bank, WEWB, Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agencies (BAIRA). WEWB has been working to promote and protect the rights and interests of the migrant workers and their families by providing with monetary, legal and technological supports. The vision of the board is "to ensure lasting and meaningful welfare of the migrant workers at home and abroad" The mission of the board includes: WEWB aims to achieve sustainable improvements in-

- the quality of lives of the family members of the workers who died abroad,
- Social reintegration of the returnee migrant workers, and
- Pursuing the desired education for the meritorious children of the workers who are legally working abroad.

At present, on behalf of the Ministry, the WEWB are providing the following services to the temporary migrants.

**Table 4: Services provided by WEWB**

Name of the services	What services are provided?
Pre-Departure Briefing	Pre-departure briefing about the life abroad, consular and embassy services abroad is provided to the workers ready to fly.
Probash Bandhu Call Centre for the migrant workers	24/7 Hot-line services for the migrant workers about passport, information about the bringing back the ill or accidentally disable migrant workers, information about the scholarship schemes of the migrant workers, providing legal assistance through Missions, helping the stranded migrant workers return home.
Deceased Workers and Family Welfare Services	To bring the dead bodies of the deceased wage earners to the country from abroad. To hand over dead bodies to family members at 3(three) airports. Bear the cost of dead bodies of the deceased wage earners to the country from abroad and also hand over a cheque of taka 35,000/- paid at the airports for the carrying and burial of each dead body of the wage earners. Also, 3 lakhs taka is provided to the members of the family of the workers died abroad.
Services for Sick/distressed Migrant Workers	Provide financial assistance and other co-operation to the distressed migrant workers. Ambulance help for disabled and sick migrant workers, help the Wounded, sick and disabled workers to return home also helping them with hospital treatment.

Name of the services	What services are provided?
Services for the Migrant Workers Families Living in Bangladesh	Provide Scholarships to the meritorious children of the migrant workers. 1500 Scholarships are given annually. Provide certificates to the migrant workers family members for different purposes, provide resources to protect migrant workers family members and eliminate various difficulties in providing assistance to the local administration, Provide services to migrant workers and their families in District Employment and Manpower Office(DEMO) through Welfare Desk in DC offices.
Services for the Migrant Workers abroad Other Services	Providing safe home facilities to the migrant workers and also legal assistance through missions. Bringing back workers home from the troubled regions, providing them with the smart ID card.

## Some Observations about the Activities of the Ministry and other Entities

The Ministry's BMET electronically stores information about the number of migrants and remittance sent by them between 1976 and to date. It also has the country wise information breakdown of the workers who have gone abroad legally. However, the ministry does not have information about those who went outside the country before 1976 or those who went abroad and settled overseas illegally. It does not have any system of keeping information about the Bangladeshi population living in advanced countries particularly those who are professionals of various categories, businessmen or investors. However, very recently, the Ministry has introduced an electronic NRB registration app developed by BUET. The aim of this initiative is to map out the NRBs. This app was shared with the Labour Wings of our Missions abroad for publicizing the matter and also to help foster the registration process of the NRBs. This registration is also meant for the diaspora meaning the long term migrants. "The response is not bad so far" as it was pointed out by one of the senior officials of the Ministry." The temporary migrants who are now going abroad have to complete this registration formality. They are also given a smart ID card for a fee of 3500 which gets deposited on to the welfare fund of the Ministry run and managed by the Wage Earners' Welfare Board. The long term migrants can also have the smart ID card once they complete the registration and on payment of 3500 taka like the temporary migrants. It is difficult to ascertain whether the permanent Bangladeshis living in advanced countries would want to take advantage of this registration process. In fact, there a number of problems on this front:

First, many permanent migrants are not aware of the service yet.

Secondly, even if they are aware, the permanent migrants would not be excited automatically to register on their own as they may not require the services attached to these registration and smart ID card as much as the temporary migrants do.

Thirdly, there are permanent migrants who do not have legal stay permit in their country of residence and therefore they may not be at all interested to provide their information unless there is enough trust built around this new system and its objectives—which will obviously require some actions to be undertaken by the government and other stakeholders.

In order to encourage the NRBs to send remittance through the formal and legal channels the Ministry has also started providing “Commercially Important Persons (CIPs)” status to the NRBs. This status is given to the NRBs upon fulfilment of some conditions set forth by the government.

**Table 5: Criteria for and Number of NRB Awards**

Criteria	Number of Awards
NRB Individuals sending more than 200,000 USD or more remittance.	50 top individuals chosen per year
NRB Individuals who are investing in Bangladesh.	20 top investors chosen per year
NRB Individuals who are investing or having business concerns in their countries of residence but importing raw materials from Bangladesh.	20 top businessmen/investors (importers) are chosen per year

From the table it appears that there is a clear government provision to encourage expatriate remittance senders and businessmen and investors. But there are other categories of Bangladeshi diaspora who are professionals and many of whose outstanding contributions have been recognized by the host countries but there is no provision in place in Bangladesh at the governmental level at present to recognize the contributions of these professionals. It is also important to recognize the contributions of the worker’s remittance. They may not be awarded the CIP status but other recognition can be given to them annually by our Missions abroad.

The existing legal frameworks deal only with the issues relevant to the temporary migrants workers and not the permanent migrants. It was admitted by a senior officer of the Ministry of Expatriate’s Welfare and Overseas Employment when he said “currently there is no law to support diaspora engagements as such”. However, during the KI interviews it was reported that separate legal framework has already been formulated first draft of which was placed before the Cabinet. Prime Minister has already approved the draft and it was then sent to the MoL&PA for vetting and once the vetting is done it would be sent to the Cabinet again later this year and then to the Parliament for approval. We were informed that in the draft law there are some specific legal provisions for the diaspora registration and welfare and under which some programmes for the diaspora could be initiated.

## Bangladesh Bank’ initiatives for NRBs

Initiatives of Bangladesh Bank are also primarily aimed at encouraging remittance inflow and procedural simplification of banking facilities to attract more remittance inflow. Bangladesh

Bank permits banks in Bangladesh to establish drawing arrangements with foreign banks and Exchange houses for facilitating remittance by Bangladeshi nationals living abroad. Persons willing to remit their earnings through official channels can buy either Taka draft or US dollar draft from these foreign banks and exchange houses having drawing arrangements with different banks in Bangladesh. Bangladeshi nationals living abroad can send foreign exchange very easily and directly to their own bank accounts maintained in Bangladesh or to their nominated person's/relative's bank accounts in Bangladesh.

Furthermore, recently banks have taken some major steps towards crediting the proceeds of remittances to the beneficiary's account promptly, maximum within 3 days. There are other facilities for the NRBs including different types of Bonds, namely, Wage Earners Development Bond, US dollar Premium Bond, US dollar Investment bond. However, the tools were found not much attractive to the NRBs, and therefore could not make significant headway thus far.

**Table 6: NRB Investments in Bonds (in million USD)**

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-2016
Wage Earner's Development Bond (WEDB)	20.37	18.96	9.51	16.60	55.10	130.97
US Dollar Premium Bond (UDPB)	2.39	8.98	3.88	3.36	1.03	0.63
US Dollar Investment Bond (UDIB)	16.58	37.67	33.03	5.66	16.09	0.02

Source: Department of National Savings (DNS), GoB, 2017

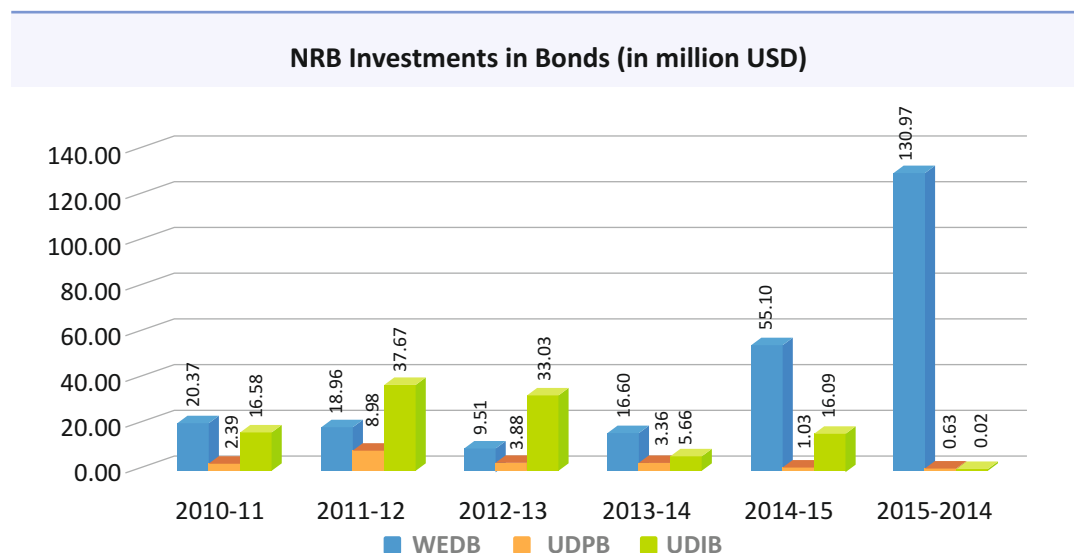
The NRBs were facing some difficulties in obtaining bonds because of some policy barriers such as the mandatory presence of investors to buy bonds from authorized dealers. This condition practically discouraged them from investing in the tools devised for them. With a view to remove the obstacle and make the investment tools more attractive government has recently amended the rules under which now the Non-resident Bangladeshis (NRBs) can directly buy bonds from abroad (The Financial Express, 23 September, 2017). It was also reported by a senior official of the Bangladesh Bank that “the low level of awareness of NRBs about these bonds due mainly to lack of a well-designed and robust publicity campaign is partially responsible for the low NRB responses on this front”.<sup>8</sup>

Until July 2012, the NRBs investing in bonds were not eligible to get the CIP status. Now a NRB investing 8 cores or more taka are given the CIP status by the Bank. Earlier, it was necessary for the NRBs to have a foreign currency account to buy and to repatriate the funds after the completion of the investment cycle. There no provision for the NRBs to buy bonds through the exchange houses commercial banks operating abroad, but now this is possible. Earlier, there was a mandatory provision to have the passport and other required documents attested by the Bangladesh Missions abroad but now this has been simplified and NRBs are only required to send a copy of the passports to the Bangladesh Missions before they

<sup>8</sup> Interview with a Bangladesh Bank official in connection with this study.



**Figure 11: NRB Investments in Bonds**



Source: Department of National Savings (DNS), GoB, 2017

purchase the bonds. It was learnt during the interview that the central bank also had discussions with some NRBs who were interested to invest in these securities. Based on the discussion output, it was suggested mitigating liquidity risk of non-resident investors by allowing them to garner liquidity by availing local-currency- and foreign-currency loans against the debt instruments. Earlier, the central bank had cleared the way for non-resident Bangladeshis or NRBs to borrow home loans in the local currency. It was in principal decided that the loans will be provided to NRBs at a maximum debt equity ratio of 50:50, meaning that at least half of the property price was to be paid by the borrower to qualify for the credit. In 2016, Bangladesh Bank provided remittance awards to 12 NRB individuals under the skilled remitter category, 9 NRB individuals under the unskilled remitter category and 5 NRB individuals from among the top bond investors (Bangladesh Bank, 2017). Besides, Bangladesh bank has also introduced an on line NRB registration process. But it was informed by a central bank official that “the rate of registration is low as there is still an information gap. External publicity may help NRBs to be aware of this newly introduced system and get registered”.

### **Tax Benefits Accorded to NRBs**

Owing to the relentless efforts of the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment, the National Board of Revenue has announced the following tax facilities for Expatriate Bangladeshis on 29 July 2002.

- Tax Identification Number (TIN) certificate is not required for buying immovable property in Bangladesh.
- Investment initiatives by expatriate Bangladeshis in the field of business, commerce and industry from 01.02.2002 to 30.06.2005 will be accepted without any question and without considering the amount of investment.



- c. Income earned from agro-based industries setup by expatriate Bangladeshis from 01.07.2002 to 30.06.2005 will be tax-free.
- d. Interest accrued from their non-resident foreign currency deposit account will be tax-free.
- e. Wage Earners Development Bond purchased by expatriate Bangladeshis is also tax-free.
- f. Expatriate Bangladeshis and their family members holding foreign passports will not be required to produce income tax clearance certificates at the time of departure from Bangladesh.
- g. Investment in agricultural processing industrial sector of the Expatriate Bangladeshi will be tax free.
- h. Tax deduction from the interest of Non-resident Foreign Currency Deposit Account has been waived.

### NRB investment through Capital Markets

Currently, a quota of 10 percent shares through Initial Public Offerings (IPOs) is kept for NRBs and another 10 percent for mutual funds. Non-residents Bangladeshis are free to invest in shares/securities quoted in the stock exchanges, with foreign exchange sent or brought into Bangladesh. They may also invest in new, yet-to-be-listed public issues of Bangladeshi shares/securities. In such cases investors are not required to transact through any registered broker/member of stock exchange. Non-Resident Bangladeshi (NRB) can purchase/subscribe securities in foreign currency through "Foreign Currency Account for IPO" opened for the purpose only by the issuing company. Over subscription can be repatriated after completion of formalities.

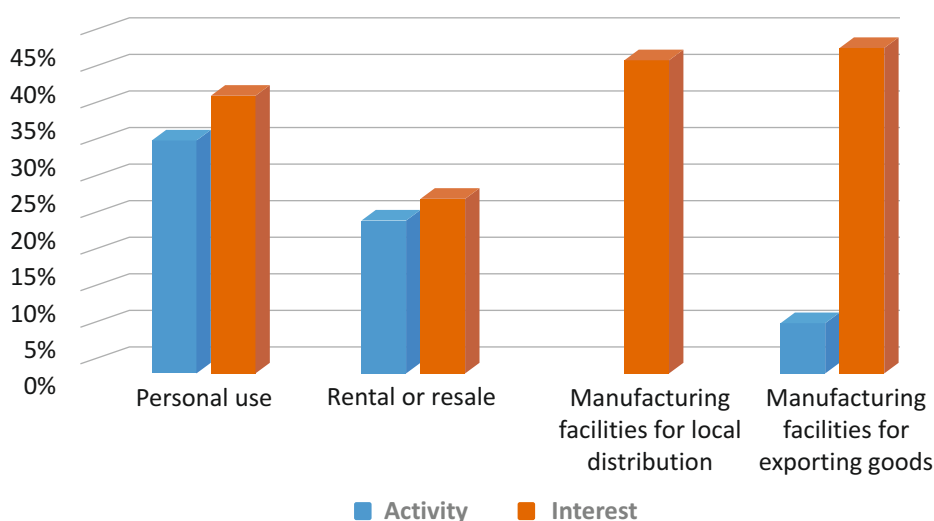
However, the non-resident Bangladeshis (NRBs) were slow in taking advantage of the bull-run in the capital market from 2007 to 2010 and thus missed a great opportunity to invest directly in the capital market, but there are still substantial opportunities available not just in the local capital market but also by attracting foreign institutional funds from Europe and the Middle East. International capital flows both from the NRBs and international institutions have significant potential benefits for Bangladesh economy. Countries with good macroeconomic policies and well-functioning institutions are in the best position to reap the benefits of capital flows and minimize the risks. Traditionally, asset management companies based in Bangladesh have focused only on mutual funds and have not expanded their portfolio of products and service offerings that can create and provide better return to local retail investors. This shortfall in flexibility and lack of diverse product offerings is where there is great opportunity to assist in gaining back the confidence and appetite for local retail and institutional investors in the Bangladesh capital market. The government could move to influence both the size and composition of capital flows from the international markets by leveraging on both the local institutions and also taking advantages of the skills and professional resources of the NRBs.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Based on the KI interviews with a NRB investor now residing in Bangladesh.

## Direct Investment by NRBs

There has not been concerted efforts made thus far to tap into the potentials of the direct investment by the Bangladeshi diasporans. Although the government has a liberal policy for the foreign direct investment, yet, diasporan's responses on this front has generally been low in the past. That said, in recent times, however, we have seen diasporans are demonstrating their growing interests in investing in different sectors of the economy including banking and energy sectors. The USAID study revealed that while the interest in direct investment and social-impact investment options is substantial, there are gaps between levels of investment interest and actual investment activity. Among direct investment options, US Bangladeshi diasporans are most interested in establishing manufacturing facilities for export sale and the direct purchase of equity in companies in Bangladesh. Contributing to funds that lend capital to micro-enterprises in Bangladesh is an attractive portfolio investment option for many US Bangladeshi diasporans. Interest in investment in a fixed-income security that would lend money to small- and medium sized enterprises in Bangladesh in social-impact sectors (like the current US India Diaspora Investment Initiative) also was notable.

**Figure 12: Diaspora investment preference: Stated interest and actual activity**



Source: Bangladesh Diaspora Assessment, USAID 2015

In general, USAID study found out that among the diasporans there are real concerns about the infrastructure issues – the cost and time it takes to transport goods and get access to energy – are major impediments to diaspora investment in the country. Property right concerns, including worries about property-right protection and difficulties in obtaining building permits, also are perceived to be impediments to diaspora investment by the community. US Bangladeshi diasporans also voice that the high importance of personal relationships in the Bangladeshi business environment can also be an important obstacle to diaspora investment in Bangladesh, particularly in terms of finding access to reliable suppliers in the country (USAID (2015). In another study it was indicated that the diasporans perceived the following as the some of the reasons for low level of direct diaspora investment in Bangladesh:

#### **Box 5: Reasons for low level of direct diaspora investment in Bangladesh**

- Import/customs delay
- Utility connection delay
- Safety and security concerns
- ‘Speed money’
- Lack of HR Skills (management, technical)
- Land acquisition complications
- Weak IPR enforcement
- Unavailability of appropriate credit
- Complicated money transfer (both ways)
- Lack of focal point in govt/one-stop-shop

*Source: Anir Chowdhury, Keynote presentation made at the FOBANA conference, October, 2017*

### **Private, Voluntary Initiatives for Engaging with NRBs on Knowledge Network**

In many countries of the World there are many private, voluntary or NGO level initiatives to engage the diaspora through the medium of knowledge networks. In Bangladesh, however, such initiatives are scant. TechBangla is known to be one such initiative. It was a non-profit organisation registered in the US and in Bangladesh was formed in June 1998, with the vision that technology, not aid, can bring lasting solutions to economic problems of Bangladesh. TechBangla’s activities focused on playing a catalytic role in the transfer of technology to Bangladesh. The fundamental strategy of TechBangla was to provide a platform for technological collaboration between the resident and non-resident Bangladeshis (RBs and NRBs) with a focus on joint ventures and foreign direct investment. TechBangla IT Research Cell was formed with the commitment that a dedicated market research team for IT issues could resolve the vacuum of information. At the time of its inception, TechBangla found a complete absence of research on IT in Bangladesh and there was hardly any understanding of its possible impact on economic development. TechBangla IT Research Cell (TBITRC) strongly felt that Bangladesh did not have enough resources to go through a trial and error method in adopting IT for economic development. IT, particularly e-commerce, may emerge as an opportunity for Bangladesh, but as a threat if not structured and utilized appropriately. This initiative produced some commendable initial results for the development of Bangladesh, particularly in the ICT sector before it lost its momentum due mainly to some internal administrative and other problems. However, the member of those who were involved with the initiative are still contributing to Bangladesh’s development in different other capacities.

Another notable private initiative was undertaken by the owner of a privately managed organization called “Scholars Bangladesh Foundation” (<http://www.scholarsbangladesh.com/foundation.php>). It has developed a virtual knowledge network for the Bangladeshi scholars and professionals. It has been able to register as many as 37000 Bangladeshi professionals living in different parts of the World. This network is also making an effort to engage the young second generation people of Bangladeshi origin. In its bid to engage the NRBs and Scholars Bangladesh organized a NRB

conference meant for the NRB professionals. As many as 5000 NRB professionals of different categories registered and attended this conference. In 2007, this foundation organized another conference for the temporary migrants and it was attended by 2800 individuals who discussed different issues of migration, remittance and role they expect from the government as a whole and the Bangladesh Missions abroad. It was gathered that following the success of these two conferences and the enthusiasm it generated the foundation organized another NRB conference in 2009 and it was also attended by more than 5000 NRB professionals came from 52 different countries. In those conference NRB professionals showed immense interests in getting engaged somehow in the process of development of Bangladesh and this was something they were considering as a way of repaying their debts to the country. It is to be noted that those who attended the conference paid for their air tickets and local hospitality during their stay was shared between the foundation and the participants. The foundation also recognized the contribution of important NRBs by giving away crest and certificates. These conferences paved the way for registering a large number of NRBs. The foundation has a website and the registration process is still on. The lessons that we can learn from these private initiatives are as follows:

- NRBs are very enthusiastic about getting engaged
- They want to contribute to the country in their own capacities
- Organizing annual conference is an important vehicle for NRB engagements
- Organizing NRB conference will help initial mapping of the NRBs through a registration process and this could also be followed up by developing a dedicated website
- Government may as well recognize NRB's contribution in different areas by giving away awards
- A mechanism is to be developed to integrate the 2nd and 3rd generation NRBs

There are many examples of Bangladeshis in the diaspora who are committed to Bangladesh's national development. Some good examples of these organizations include SpaandanB (CA), which implements education, health, and nutrition projects in Bangladesh; Agami (CA) which works to provide quality basic education for underprivileged children in Bangladesh; and The Optimists (NY), who run child sponsorship and family medical assistance programs, including a program specific to help the children of the garment workers killed when the Rana Plaza building collapsed in 2013.

There is a wide array of organizations serving professionals in the Bangladeshi diaspora. The Network of Young Bangladeshi American Professionals serves Bangladeshi American professionals in the early and middle stages of their career, regardless of industry. The sciences are also well-represented among diaspora professionals. Examples of these include American Association of Bangladeshi Engineers and Architects and Bangladesh Medical Association of North America. Journalists and academics have also organized professional associations, as in the case of the South Asian Journalists Association, Bangladeshi American Professional and Academic Network, and the Bangladesh Development Initiative, the latter serving to facilitate scholarly exchange between Bangladesh and overseas scholars through educational programs, an academic peer-reviewed journal, and a book publication program (USAID 2015).

The Government of Bangladesh can think in terms of initiating such programmes that are economically viable from the point of expatriate Bangladeshi professionals. A pilot project can be designed involving the renowned professionals of Bangladeshi origin. Under the project, professionals will come to Bangladesh for a stipulated period of time and share their expertise. To provide incentive to him/her the income can be made tax exempted. Such partnerships may be more appropriate with private sector institutions. In that respect Government role will be to create space for such linkage building (Siddique 2005).

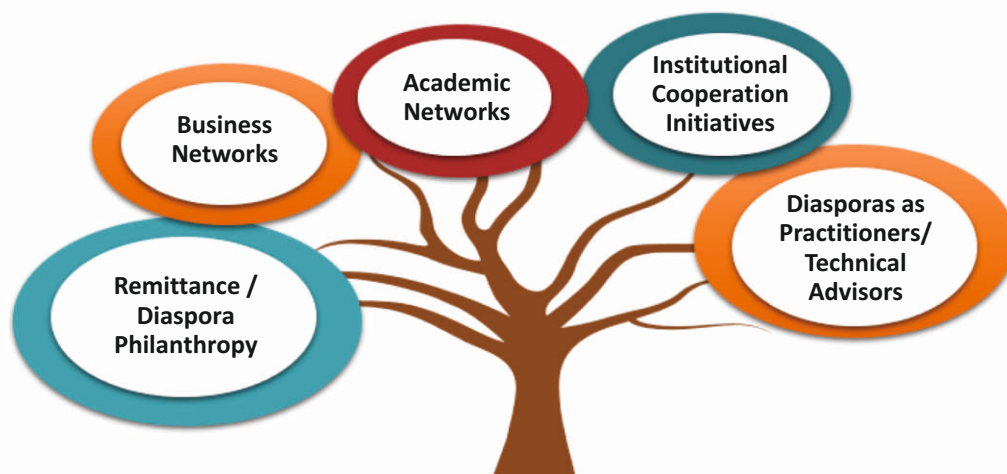
Many private universities, private medical colleges, hospitals and other private organizations are already taking advantage of the professional diaspora member's expertise by employing them on a short-term basis and at a mutually suitable period of time. These collaborations are now happening in a sporadic manner as well in the absence of a formal government led initiative. There are also other on line networks covering philanthropy, investment, cultural, environment protection and also for sharing other professional knowledge but many of these networks are run "on again" and "off again" basis.

USAID study noted (2015) that there is a perception in the US Bangladeshi community that there is not enough communication or structured activity between the US diaspora and USAID/Bangladesh specifically, or with the Government of Bangladeshi in general. US Bangladeshi diasporans indicate that they believe a lack of frequent communication between USAID/Bangladesh and the US diaspora community and the lack of a point person to spearhead this communication are very important obstacles to further US Bangladeshi diaspora engagement. They also believe that a lack of regular communication between the Government of Bangladesh and the lack of a one-stop-shop in Bangladesh to promote and facilitate diaspora investment is an important obstacle to engagement. Although a Ministry for Expatriate Welfare and Overseas Employment exists, many in the diaspora believe that its activities are focused on low-skill workers, particularly in the Middle East, and that their focus could be expanded to better address the needs and opportunities in the global diaspora. Many US Bangladeshi diasporans suggested that a lack of a government involvement in managing the diaspora Affairs was an obstacle to further diaspora engagement in Bangladesh.

As a matter of fact, there are a host of areas where diaspora engagement can take place. The diagram below demonstrates some of the important avenues where the potential diaspora engagement activities may focus on. It is to be noted that there are opportunities and challenges attached to the each of these avenues identified below. It is, therefore, important for us to devise mechanisms considering the specific contextual realities of the country.

What is at issue it that the current level of diaspora engagement in Bangladesh is not very promising. However, there has been a widely held view that the government should try and create a permanent platform to institutionalize the diaspora engagements with a view to foster country's development goals. In doing so, the government may launch various win-win schemes to make it more attractive for its diaspora to step up participation in Bangladesh's development. Bangladesh should formalize a diaspora platform wherein top diaspora scientists, engineers, doctors, academics, managers and other professionals serve Bangladeshi public sector organizations for a brief period, lending their expertise. Besides,

**Figure 13: Major Avenues of Engagement**



*Source: Anir Chowdhury, Keynote presentation made at the FOBANA conference, October, 2017.*

Bangladesh should aggressively court diaspora to invest in Bangladesh — especially for projects which focus on its development. Social media tools have made it easy and inexpensive for Bangladeshi diaspora to stay in touch with family and friends back home, and their links to Bangladesh has never been stronger. It is time that the government of Bangladesh leverages this strong bond for the greater good of the nation. As mentioned earlier, at this point of time, the biggest way the diaspora is contributing is through sending regular remittances. There is a growing interest among all concerned about the other advantages which diaspora populations can bring to Bangladesh. The members of the Bangladeshi diaspora are more prone to donating to domestic charities because of the strong cultural and emotional feelings that they nurse. Alongside, if an enabling environment can be created and sustained then diaspora members are likely to invest in different sectors of the economy. They can also bring technical and scientific expertise to the country once an appropriate platform can be set up and sustained--involving all important and relevant stakeholders.

# CHAPTER FIVE

## Diaspora Engagement: International Experiences





Up to this point, we have discussed different policies, rules developed by the GoB to engage the diaspora community of Bangladesh. This section, on the other hand, looks into the experiences of different countries regarding diaspora engagement and through analyzing the strategies of different countries focuses on the following aspects-

- A brief description of the best practices adopted by different countries which will essentially allow us to determine the main areas of diaspora engagement;
- Justification of these main areas;
- Identification of the necessary factors in designing the necessary institutional design.

## India

Strategies adopted by the Government of India in creating linkages with the diaspora communities can be categorized into different groups. They are-

### Information Dissemination

The Government of India (GoI) has developed a two-way information channel for the purpose of disseminating information. At one end, the government produces monthly e-magazine ([www.overseasindian.in](http://www.overseasindian.in)) to keep the diaspora informed about what is happening in their country of origin and on the other hand, it has taken formal arrangement to create a channel for consultation with the diaspora to understand and address their views, concerns, and queries. In fact, the government has established the Prime Minister's Global Advisory Council of Overseas Indians for this purpose. At the same time, the government also "...hosts events to meet with its diaspora twice a year, in India in January and overseas each September" (Ancien et al 2009: 14).

### Identification and Citizenship Services

Whereas a large number of NRIs is living all around the world, the GoI has taken various initiatives to identify and link them with the home country. As explained below, Overseas Citizenship of India scheme has been introduced and to get that service, the NRIs have to register through a website. Moreover, there is an e-registration portal for Pratishtitho Prabashi (<https://www.pratishthit-pravasi.gov.in/index.php>). Furthermore, the GoI also collects and updates information about migrant workers.

Whereas the Government of India does not offer 'dual citizenship', in 2005, Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI) scheme was introduced through amending the Citizenship Act, 1955. All persons of Indian Origins (who were citizens of India from January 26, 1950) can be registered as OCI and OCI documents consist of Registration Booklet and a Universal visa sticker. Even though OCI is not dual citizens, a registered OCI enjoy several facilities including multiple entry, multi-purpose, life-long visa for visiting India, exemption from registration with Foreign Regional Registration Officer or Foreign Registration Officer for any length of stay in India, and they are entitled to general 'parity with Non-Resident Indians in respect of all facilities available to them in economic, financial and educational fields except in matters relating to the acquisition of agricultural or plantation properties'<sup>10</sup>.

<sup>10</sup> <http://eoi.gov.in/eoisearch/MyPrint.php?4771?001/0020>

## Protection and Welfare Support

To protect and serve the interest of the Indian workers proceeding abroad for employment purposes, The Office of the Protector General of Emigrants (PGE) in the Ministry of External Affairs has been established. PGE is the Registering Authority to issue Registration Certificate (RC) to the Recruiting Agent (RA) for overseas manpower exporting business. He also performs the following responsibilities-

- Exercise power to suspend, cancel and revoke the RC of the RAs;
- Issue permit to the Foreign Employer (FE) and Project Exporter (PE)
- Sanction prosecution for offences and penalties to CBI or State Police Departments etc.

Furthermore, to support the migrant workers, Overseas Indian Affairs Division of Ministry of External Affairs has also established the Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) in the 43 Indian Missions across the world. The goal of the ICWF is to provide the following onsite welfare services -

- “Boarding and lodging for distressed overseas Indian workers in Household / domestic sectors and unskilled laborers
- Extending emergency medical care to the overseas Indians in need
- Providing air passage to stranded overseas Indians in need
- Providing initial legal assistance to the overseas Indians in deserving cases
- Expenditure on incidentals and for airlifting the mortal remains to India or local cremation/burial of the deceased overseas Indian in such cases where a sponsor is unable or unwilling to do so as per the contract and the family is unable to meet the cost”<sup>11</sup>.

Another important service provided by the Government of India is Pension and Life Insurance fund scheme known as Mahatma Gandhi Pravasi Suraksha Yojana (MGPSY) for the Overseas Indian workers (<http://www.mea.gov.in/mgpsy.htm>). The goal of this program is to encourage the “...overseas Indian workers by giving government contribution to:

- Save for their Return and Resettlement (R&R)
- Save for their old age,
- Obtain a Life Insurance cover against natural death during the period of coverage”<sup>12</sup>

## Building diasporic patriotism

The Government of India has also taken few initiatives to strengthen the connection of the diaspora communities around the world with their home country. Of these different initiatives, the flagship programme is known as “Know India Programme (KIP)” which aims at familiarizing the Indian-origin youth (18-30 years) “...with their Indian roots and contemporary India, through a three-week orientation programme” organized by the Ministry of External Affairs. Indian-origin youth can submit their applications through the Indian Missions/Posts. Each programme contains 40 participants and they are provided with full hospitality in India. The programme lasts for 45 days with a 10-day visit to one or two states. “90% of the total cost of international airfare is also paid by the Ministry. The entire process of applying, processing etc. is now done through a portal ([kip.gov.in](http://kip.gov.in))”<sup>13</sup>.

<sup>11</sup> [https://archive.india.gov.in/nowindia/overseas\\_indians\\_affairs.php?pg=3](https://archive.india.gov.in/nowindia/overseas_indians_affairs.php?pg=3)

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.mea.gov.in/mgpsy.htm>

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.mea.gov.in/nowindia-programme.htm>

## Recognition of the Contribution of the NRIs

Whereas the KIP tries to build a linkage with the Indian-origin youth living in different countries, to reach, honor and connect the members of diaspora communities belonging to other age groups, Government of India has introduced a number of different initiatives. For instance, to honor the contribution of Indian diaspora at the national and global level, the Gol annually presents the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards to up to 20 members and “Given the high profile awards ceremony and the limited number of awards, the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award has quickly become established as a high status and valued honour”. Furthermore, the Ministry of External Affairs also organizes Regional Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (RPBD) periodically outside India to connect with the Indian Diaspora in specific regions. The goal of this event is to familiarize them with the “...policies and programmes of the Government, enable them to contribute to India’s development and growth, and address their concerns” (Aicen et al 2009: 19).

## Transfer and utilization of Voluntary and Philanthropic Contributions

In 2006, India launched the Remittance Gateway which allows people of Indian origin to send money instantaneously to 14,500 locations across India for far less cost than commercial money wire companies.

Furthermore, to ensure a productive use of remittance, the India Development Foundation of Overseas Indians (IDF-OI) has been established which is a not-for-profit Trust aiming at helping the Overseas Indians to send contributions to implement social and development projects in India. An important aspect of the IDF-OI is whereas it encourages the NRIs to contribute to national projects, it also offers them an opportunity to work with the state governments. In fact, through this initiative, the Overseas Indians can browse through the web-site of different state governments, get an idea about different development projects currently being run or under consideration by the these governments and choose the one they prefer to finance. This also strengthens their link and bondage with the communities. In fact, “...March, 2017, IDF-OI has received a total contribution of Rs. 4.36 crore from Overseas Indians which enabled construction of Community toilets in Vijayawada, Tirupati in Andhra Pradesh; and a Public toilet in Amritsar (Punjab) through Municipalities, State Govt agencies. Projects in 11 districts with funding from overseas Indians are under implementation. To enable small and regular contributions to projects and to IDF-OI Pool fund, an online Payment Gateway was launched on 31 July 2016.”<sup>14</sup>

## Encouraging the Diaspora Community to Invest in Different Sectors

To this end, a number of initiatives have been taken-

- The government runs the Overseas Indian Facilitation Centre – a one stop-shop for investment advisory services and business to business partnerships.
- The government reduced hindrances from property purchase by diaspora in India. It also “...withdrew restriction from opening of repatriate-able accounts by diaspora and provided tax incentives. The central bank of India floated special bonds targeting diaspora investment” (Siddiqui & Parvin 2012: 21)
- **The Government of India also provides some necessary services through the Indian Investment Center (IIC), i.e. the focal agency of Gol for providing information or**

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.mea.gov.in/IDF-OI.htm>

assistance for investments, technical collaborations and joint ventures. In fact, in addition to providing the usual assistance available to other potential investors, IIC provides the following special services for NRIs and PIOs-

odata to assist in the selection of investment opportunities;

- performs as a one-stop-shop for necessary services for establishing projects with NRI investment;
- Informing NRIs and PIOs of government policies and procedures, as well as the facilities and incentives available to them;
- Moreover, "...the agency maintains an industrial information service that provides the status of industries and profiles for potential industrial projects. ...The agency's Web site provides answers to an expansive list of NRI investment questions on bank accounts, repatriation of profits, investing in securities, shares, company deposit and property, as well as special facilities to repatriating NRI investors" (Johnson & Sedaca 2004: 42).
- For the NRIs, sovereign bonds have also been issued. "...The bonds, which were floated in 1998, mobilized close to \$4.2 billion of diaspora resources for the development of the infrastructure sector, which is in great need of financing" (Johnson & Sedaca 2004: 51). Many in the financial industry felt that the impressive show helped boost the foreign institutional investors' sentiments and stabilize the rupee, which had been sliding for a number of years. A similar bond, the India Millennium Deposits (IMD) floated in 2000 and raised over \$5.4 billion from the diaspora.
- The central government also works in close collaboration with the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry's (FICCI) Diaspora Division which aims at increasing the inflow of FDI and utilizing the network of the NRIs and PIOs to integrate with the global economy.

### Developing Knowledge Platform and linkage with Different Professional Groups

The Government has close working relationship with organizations like Silicon Valley Indian Professional Association (SIPA) which provides a platform for entrepreneurs from the expatriate Indian community to contribute to cooperation between the host and home country in high technology areas. At the same time, as mentioned above the GoI also organize regular programmes, conferences, and seminars to engage the NRIs and to honor them for their services.

### Lebanon

Of different initiatives introduced by the Lebanese government and other institutions to engage the diaspora communities worldwide, two are significant- the Lebanon Business Network and Live Lebanon.

### Investment through Business Network- LBN

Of these two, Lebanon Business Network (LBN) is non-profit business vehicle set up to promote private sector growth. The aim of the LBN was to promote the economic growth of the country which it planned to achieve by re-energizing the private sector of the country

through linking it with overseas Lebanese and “...facilitate the return of Lebanese Brainpower and capital back to the country” (Johnson & Sedaca 2004: 35). In a way, through LBN, Lebanon attempted to merge two different activities- business promotion and knowledge management. LBN eventually became a collaborative effort where the government, the private sector, the non-profit sector and the international development organizations participated and worked in partnership. In fact, “...Using analysis of the database from a supply and demand perspective, LBN shares opportunities with its partners and uses their connections to attract network users to fill specific needs” (Johnson & Sedaca 2004: 36).

LBN essentially became an online marketplace where opportunities were identified and connections were built between Lebanese entrepreneurs, business diaspora and international businesses while introducing Lebanese firms to international financial and business opportunities and vice versa. In addition to using internet as an international marketplace, LBN connects the international diaspora in the following ways-

- Ensuring participation of the diaspora community in local and international events;
- Building relationship with international Lebanese associations and spread out information related with the network’s activities;
- Disseminating information “...via printed media outlets, links to other relevant websites and online marketing campaigns” (Johnson & Sedaca 2004: 36).

Furthermore, LBN has created alliances with different government, non-government and private sector actors and shares opportunities with its partners while using their connections to “...attract network users to fill specific needs” (Johnson & Sedaca 2004: 36). Interestingly enough, this network is managed and funded by a non-profit organization known as Indevco Foundation and to date, it has attracted approximately 1000 members.

### **Live Lebanon- Philanthropy for Implementing Community Development Projects**

Whereas LBN focuses on creating business and investment opportunities through and for the diaspora communities, Live Lebanon has a completely different focus. This initiative was introduced by UNDP in 2009 in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants of Lebanon. This effort focuses specifically on supporting the underprivileged communities of Lebanon and allows the Lebanese diaspora worldwide to support the people in their homeland “...that are in need with important community based initiatives”<sup>15</sup>. To this end, this initiative has introduced a transparent mechanism and crowd funding platform for channeling financial resources to support local level development projects. In Live Lebanon, projects are submitted by the NGOs and the municipalities and projects are selected while relying on four criteria- need, feasibility, sustainability and potential impact on the beneficiaries. Projects mainly aim at improving health, environmental and educational and from a list of potential projects and crowd funding initiatives, the international diaspora communities can choose the projects to fund. Since 2010, Live Lebanon has raised \$2.5 million and implemented 55 projects.

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<sup>15</sup> <http://livelebanon.org/Page/13/5/Mission>

## China

Like India, China has also focused on engaging the diaspora communities with economic development and to attract diaspora investment the Chinese government brought about widespread and meaningful economic reforms. For instance, “it provided stable investment environment, good infrastructure and flexible labour policy. Along with economic incentives packages the Chinese government decentralised the decision-making authority up to the lowest possible administrative unit. 70 percent of foreign direct investment to China came from its diaspora. Labour intensive export processing sector and real estate are the two major areas where the diaspora investment has taken place” (Siddiqui & Parvin 2012: 21).

At the same time, a key focus of the Chinese government is to engage well-placed entrepreneurs of the foreign countries so that they can play a pivotal role in attracting foreign direct investment through joint ventures, “...promotion of domestic companies’ exports and directing outsourcing opportunities to their country of origin” (Johnson & Sedaca 2004: 32). A key successful example of this initiative is the development of Taiwan’s technology sector which was made possible by engaging highly educated Chinese Americans, and by providing them adequate incentives so that they can return to Taiwan and establish new ventures.

## Sri Lanka

In Sri Lanka, the Sri Lankan Bureau of Foreign Employment (SLBFE), a Public Corporation that falls under the purview of the Ministry of Employment and Labor, is in charge of promoting, developing, and regulating foreign employment and ensuring protection and welfare for migrant workers and their families. One of the key responsibilities of SLBFE is to offer mandatory training and orientation to “...outgoing migrants in collaboration with licensed recruitment agencies”. Another important contribution of SLBFE is to establish and maintain an Information Data Bank on all employed and returned migrants and “...Its Information Technology Division provides information on the activities of SLBFE and employment agencies and functions as a job bank. Any interested person can apply for employment to this job bank and information on applications and procedures are disseminated through Post Offices all over the country” (Siddiqui 2008: 20).

## Philippines

In Philippines, effort to mobilize migrant resources for different productive purposes including community development was introduced through UNLAND-Kabayan. This organization facilitated “pooling” of migrant savings, helped the migrant workers in identifying appropriate project and investment opportunities while assisting their access to credit facilities. The UNLAND-Kabayan provided different services including “savings accounts, investments in existing businesses, special start-up funds and skills training, logistical support and network” (Johnson & Sedaca 2004: 15).

## Mexico

Whereas India made an effort to link the diaspora community with local government and Philippines allowed opportunities for migrants to contribute in community development

through an organization, Mexico adopted a different approach in engaging the diaspora community. In 1992, a programme called Iniciativa Ciudadana 3x1 was introduced by the Mexican state government of Zatecas which matched the dollars donated by emigrants with “...funds from federal and state government” (Johnson & Sedaca 2004: 28). It was called three for one matching fund as for every dollar invested by the diaspora community, three dollars was provided by the government and funds raised through this process financed different community development projects.

## South Africa

### Investment Opportunities through Facilitating the Development of a Network

To promote economic growth through diaspora engagement, the South African Diaspora Network (SADN) was launched in 2001 with support from the World Bank Development Marketplace Competition. This network has the following objectives-

- “To facilitate networking between respected and influential ex-South African business people in key overseas markets and young, high potential South African based startup ventures;
- To make quality international market and competitor information available to high potential South African based start-up ventures; and
- To reduce the cost, time and risk of obtaining reliable information from overseas markets by high potential South African based start-up ventures” (Johnson & Sedaca 2004: 37-38).

This network has been developed in two phases. During the first phase, the project concentrated on two groups of business contacts- potential South African based businesses that had the intention to expand to international markets provided that they can receive assistance, guidance and financial support and well-placed, highly connected South African expatriates who had the willingness to support the South African business. The SADN recruited the local businesses by interviewing and surveying the businessmen and visiting the businesses to determine their suitability. On the other hand, “...Overseas members were recruited by way of presentations held at South African business clubs and associations in London.” The basic tools utilized by the network was facilitating dialogue between the South African Businesses and expatriates, bringing together potential alliances and partnership by “...introducing suitable appropriate members to each other” (Johnson & Sedaca 2004: 37-38).

## Network for Knowledge Management

In case of knowledge management, connecting different professional groups and linking these groups or experts with their country of origin, South Africa’s approach is quite successful and unique. Known as South African Network of Skills Abroad (SANSA), it is considered as one of the most well-known diaspora knowledge networks that connects “...skilled people living abroad who are interested in contributing to South Africa’s economic and social development with local experts and projects”. It has a database system which includes professional profiles (including fields of interest and expertise) of over 2000 members living in 57 countries and information on “...research projects in natural sciences, engineering, technology and health sciences; research and professional associations and conferences” (Johnson & Sedaca 2004: 56). Members’ contribution to the network include-

- Receiving South African graduate students in laboratories, or training programs;



- Participating in training or research with South African counterparts;
- Transferring technology, information and results of research to South African institutions;
- Initiating research and commercial projects

## **Making Sense of the Findings of Different Countries: Developing the PIE Framework**

If we consider the experiences of different countries, it is possible to argue that these countries focused on the following areas to engage the diaspora communities in overall development of their countries-

### **A.General Approach towards Trust-Building**

To this end, it is important to take notice of the following issues-

- First of all, in all of these countries, a major shift has happened in case of diaspora engagement. Whereas in the past, expatriate welfare mainly concentrated on supporting the short-term migrant workers and addressing their needs, problems and concerns, these countries are now diverting most of their efforts to engage the professional long-terms expatriates who have become successful in different endeavors including business, knowledge management etc. Whereas supporting the migrant workers has still remained an important focus of these countries' diaspora management activities, they are now concentrating more on developing strategies that would allow the international diaspora communities to contribute socio-political, economic and academic development;
- Secondly, needless to say, this drive for shift in policy focus has come from the highest level of the government and in most cases, the change in focus has been initiated by the chief executive of these countries (be it Prime Minister or the President). From that perspective, strong political commitment has played a pivotal role in determining the policy initiatives of these governments related with diaspora engagement;
- Thirdly, in devising strategies for diaspora engagement, these countries have focused strongly on developing a trust-based relationship with the diaspora communities. The role and significance of the international diaspora communities have been acknowledged by the governments and this has played an important role in ensuring the commitment of the members of the diaspora communities. For instance, in case of India, the introduction of Pravasi Bharatiya Samman for the NRIs and the Regional Pravasi Bharatiyo Dibash have made the international diaspora community that they are an integral part of the government of India's development effort;
- Fourthly, in addition to introducing these initiatives, these governments have also taken several other initiatives to ensure the cultural integration of the diaspora communities with their homelands;
- Fifthly, it is important to note that in all cases, the governments have concentrated on network development and in every aspects, be it investment for national development projects, community development projects or expert engagement, network development and management played a significant role in pushing these governments' initiatives towards next level.



## B. Philanthropic Approach for Community Development

As the experiences of different countries indicate channeling financial contribution of the expatriates towards funding community development projects designed to promote local economic development has become a popular method of diaspora management. This particular strategy has been adopted by India (through the involvement of local government institutions), Philippines (through an institutional set-up called UNLAND-Kabayan which facilitates “pooling” of migrant savings and helps the expatriates in identifying appropriate project and investment opportunities), Mexico (through a program called Iniciativa Ciudadana 3x1 which matches the dollars donated by emigrants with “...funds from federal and state government”) and Lebanon (through an initiative known as Live Lebanon which allows opportunity for expatriates through crowd funding to invest in development projects. It is, however, important to note that whereas this initiative has mostly focused on community development efforts, funding mechanism and distribution channel have varied as different countries have undertaken different approaches-

- In some countries, where the trust of the diaspora community on the government is quite high, funding mechanism has been introduced and managed by the local government authorities;
- In some cases, (e.g. Mexico), to encourage the diaspora community to contribute, the government has adopted a ‘matching-fund’ approach; and,
- Some countries have allowed the development partners to take the key role in this particular aspect.

## C. Facilitating Investment

Encouraging the diaspora community to investment in different projects related with economic and industrial development has remained a key focus of diaspora engagement in all the countries mentioned above. However, engaging the diaspora for this particular goal has taken different routes in different countries-

- In some countries, emphasis has been placed on creating opportunities for the diaspora communities for investment. To this end, different incentives have been offered to them and the governments concentrated on making sure that relevant information is made available to them;
- In line with the approach mentioned above, countries have encouraged the well-placed and powerful expatriates to be the ‘first movers’, i.e. “investors who come first to an emerging market of the home country when other investors (including those within the country of origin) are not interested. By acting as first movers, these business diaspora change market expectations and advance the flow of more conventional investment” (Johnson & Sedaca 2004: 33).
- Some governments, on the other hand, focused on utilizing the business knowledge and skills of the expatriate entrepreneurs to transform the national economy. In this particular case, the governments encourage the business diaspora to perform the following activities-
  - “Serve as behavioral models for other economic agents to follow;
  - Transfer crucial knowledge of operational, management and productive techniques that enhances efficiency and profitability at both the enterprise and industrial levels;

- Contribute to the introduction and promotion of new technologies that may increase the efficiency of production processes” (Johnson & Sedaca 2004: 34)
- Developing business networks that would connect the local business chambers or business entities with the well-placed and powerful business diaspora has been considered as an important instrument for facilitating investment by all the governments.

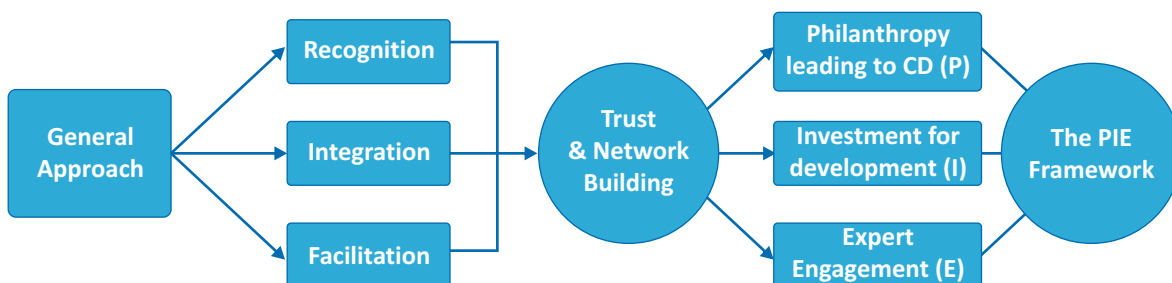
#### D. Expert Engagement

An important approach for ensuring engagement of diaspora is involving the experts of different fields in developing knowledge, skills and efficiency of local people. Whereas some countries have tried to promote “permanent return of the expatriate population”, this has, in most cases, failed to bring about the expected outcome. In contrast, establishing connections with the diaspora professional which allows information exchange and knowledge transfer through short-term physical engagement or virtual networks have proved to be more promising. In fact, through this process, “...the country of origin gains access to not only the knowledge and expertise the diaspora individual may possess, but also the knowledge networks he or she are involved with in the host country” (Brown 2000: 3). Expert engagement has also taken different format in different countries-

- The most common mechanism used by the countries mentioned above is developing an internet-based professional networks which attempts to link expatriate professionals with the professional of their homeland. The most common examples of this particular approach are SANSA, South Africa; SIPA, India and The Brain Drain Project, Serbia, FRY. In this process, “professionals from the country of origin and the diaspora enter an Internet portal and fill out an online registration for a database that serves as a matching tool other members can access. Using information provided through the database, members connect with potential research or project partners and network with members of similar interests, fields of experience and geographical regions”(Johnson & Sedaca 2004: 58);
- Different countries and organizations have also emphasized on developing a virtual network where the experts of the diaspora community get an opportunity to provide distant learning, contribute to design and implement development projects or “...find ways for those remaining in the country of origin to gain skills and knowledge without necessarily migrating themselves” (Johnson & Sedaca 2004: 58). Examples include South Asia Initiative introduced by Digital Partners (DP) Digital Diaspora Networks, Digital Diaspora Network-Africa (DDN-A) etc. ;
- Some countries also focus on facilitating short-term physical return of the expatriates through short-term consultancies. One example of such initiative is TOKTEN (Transfer of Knowledge Through Expatriate Nationals), introduced by UN, which facilitates the return of expatriate professionals to their home countries “...for a short period of time to share the skills they have gained during their residence in developing countries. These professionals volunteer their services, often motivated by the desire to play a role in the development process of their home country” (Johnson & Sedaca 2004: 58).

Based on the discussion above, it is possible to develop the following framework-

**Figure 14: An overview of the PIE framework**



Therefore, it can be argued that considering the experiences of the countries mentioned above, it is possible to argue that if the Government of Bangladesh wants to engage the diaspora community in an effective and efficient way which would link them with different developmental activities and allow them to contribute adopting the “PIE Framework” would be the most appropriate approach. However, this raises two important questions- first, what are the key factors that help the countries mentioned above in moving towards the PIE approach? Second, if we want to adopt this approach in the context of Bangladesh, what should be the most appropriate institutional design? This section concludes with the answer of the first question (which is provided in the table below) and the next section provides answer to the second question.

**Table 7: Critical Success Factors relating to Diaspora Engagement: At a Glance**

Name of the country	Critical Success factors
India	Strong political commitment from the top level; trust of the diaspora community towards the government; flexible institutional design; decentralized local government system; network building capacity of the government; adequate capacity of the government institutions
Lebanon	Political commitment of the government for diaspora engagement; strong support and initiative of the Development Partners (DPs); effective collaborative relationship between DPs, NGOs and GOs; fund management by the DPs which made the Live Lebanon initiative trustworthy to the diaspora community; developing network; introduction of innovative approach (e.g. crowd funding)
Philippines	Strong local government institutions; network building; support from the development partners; willingness of the government to work with the DPs; network building capacity; institutions with adequate capacity and focus
Mexico	Availability of strong local government bodies; network building; innovative funding mechanism (matching funding)

Name of the country	Critical Success factors
South Africa	Government commitment for diaspora engagement; flexible institutional design; Network building
China	Specific policy focus on diaspora engagement; political commitment towards economic development leading to involvement of diaspora communities in investment; strong institution
Sri Lanka	Network building capacity of the government; political commitment

# CHAPTER SIX

## Institutional Design for Adopting the PIE Framework



In this section, effort has been made to introduce an institutional design through which the PIE approach can be adopted to ensure the engagement of the diaspora community. However, if we consider the critical success factors mentioned above, it is possible to argue that in order to develop a sustainable institutional design, the presence of the following conditions is necessary-

- Strong political commitment which should come from the very top level of the government. In fact, the successful case studies of different countries indicate that in these countries, the Prime Minister or the President has taken an active role in engaging the expatriate community and this active initiative eventually generated an enabling environment for diaspora engagement.
- These studies also indicate that the governance structure necessary for diaspora engagement is somewhat different if compared with regular or traditional government activities. In fact, engaging the expatriate community requires working together of the government, non-government, private sector organizations, CSOs and development partners which essentially indicates a transformation from government to governance. From this perspective, diaspora engagement becomes not the sole responsibility of one government agency or ministry instead it converts into a collaborative effort where different organizations work for achieving some common goals in a coordinated way.
- Important to note that the success of diaspora engagement relies significantly on the presence of a strong institutional framework. A 'strong' institution, in this particular aspect, means an entity or a group of entities--which clearly understand its mission, has embraced a vision, possess the capacity to perform its duties and responsibilities, enjoys a distinctive status within the governmental set-up and has the necessary flexibility to ensure a transparent, effective and efficient management.

In addition to the factors mentioned above, while designing an effective institutional design that will eventually implement the "PIE", the following things should be taken under consideration-

**First** of all, it is important to understand that whereas most of the developing countries have understood the necessity of diaspora engagement, different countries have adopted different approaches in determining the purposes of diaspora engagement. As explained before, considering the need, policy aspiration and developmental goals, countries adopt different goals while considering diaspora engagement. In the context of Bangladesh, the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment, for a long period of time, has mainly focused on ensuring the welfare of migrant laborers and ensuring the engagement of the diaspora community is a pretty recent phenomenon. Given that this study proposes to engage the broader diaspora community in three different areas- philanthropy, investment and expert engagement, it is important to understand that diaspora engagement is no longer a monolithic issue. Instead, the concept will have multiple dimensions and the **institutional mechanism must be capable enough to capture this multi-dimensionality**. In effect, adopting the PIE approach means that diaspora engagement will have at least three different dimensions, which is extremely difficult for one government agency or ministry to carry out.

This essentially calls for a new, innovative institutional framework which will include different government ministries, agencies, divisions and departments where these bodies need to work in a collaborative manner.

**Secondly**, the multi-dimensionality of diaspora engagement and the need for collaborative management brings the issue of coordination in the forefront. This essentially means that to establish an institutional framework, the lead role must be played by a government agency which has the capacity, knowledge and experiences of ensuring coordination among different ministries.

**Thirdly**, to ensure collaboration and coordination in implementing such a multi-dimensional program essentially means that the lead organization or the organizational set-up must have the necessary authority and acceptance within the broader governmental set-up. From this perspective, the success of an institutional framework will depend on whether the lead organization or the coordinating organization enjoys the authority, command and respect of the other government organizations as this will eventually encourage these organizations to follow-through the directions provided by the lead organization.

**Fourthly**, it is important to note that for the lead organization or the coordinating authority, commanding the respect or adherence of the relevant government organizations is not enough. In fact, to be successful and effective, an institutional framework must be led by an organizational entity which is trusted by the diaspora community.

**Fifthly**, whereas an effective institutional framework should clearly reflect the different roles, responsibilities, tasks and activities of different government organizations, it should also be noted here that the organizations involved within the framework must have the necessary capacity to carry out their activities.

In developing our institutional design, we have taken these issues under consideration. In addition to that, we have interviewed government officials from different Ministries, Divisions including but not limited to MoEW&OE, PMO, ERD, CSO representatives and based on their feedbacks, we have developed the following conclusions-

- Since the GoB already has a specialized Ministry to look after expatriate affairs, the institutional framework should consider this. From this perspective, the institutional design should not try to develop or construct an entirely new entity. Rather, effort should be taken to ensure how the Ministry of Expatriates Welfare and Overseas Employment can be effectively involved (and indeed can take the lead) in engaging the worldwide diaspora community;
- However, as we have mentioned in the previous sections, the MoEW&OE is still concentrating on supporting the labor migrants and even though it has recently started thinking about diaspora engagement, at this point in time, the Ministry does not have adequate capacity to carry out the multi-dimensional (PIE) activities related with diaspora engagement. Moreover, engaging in PIE may require specific changes within the mandate of the ministry (along with changes in allocation of business) and without bringing about these changes, the Ministry cannot be entrusted with this



complicated responsibility. Furthermore, implementing PIE would require coordinating the work of different ministries/divisions- an experience which the Ministry seriously lack. Therefore, whereas the MoEW&OE should take the lead in the long-term, in the short-term a different approach should be adopted.

- It is, however, important to point out that in the long-term we are expecting that a specialized Diaspora Engagement Unit would be developed within the MoEW&OE which would conduct different activities in line with PIE. The short-term approaches would be taken to allow MoE&OE to design and build the capacity of the specialized unit (a detailed description of the unit is provided later).

### **The Short-Term Framework**

Considering these factors, in the short-term, we propose two alternatives-

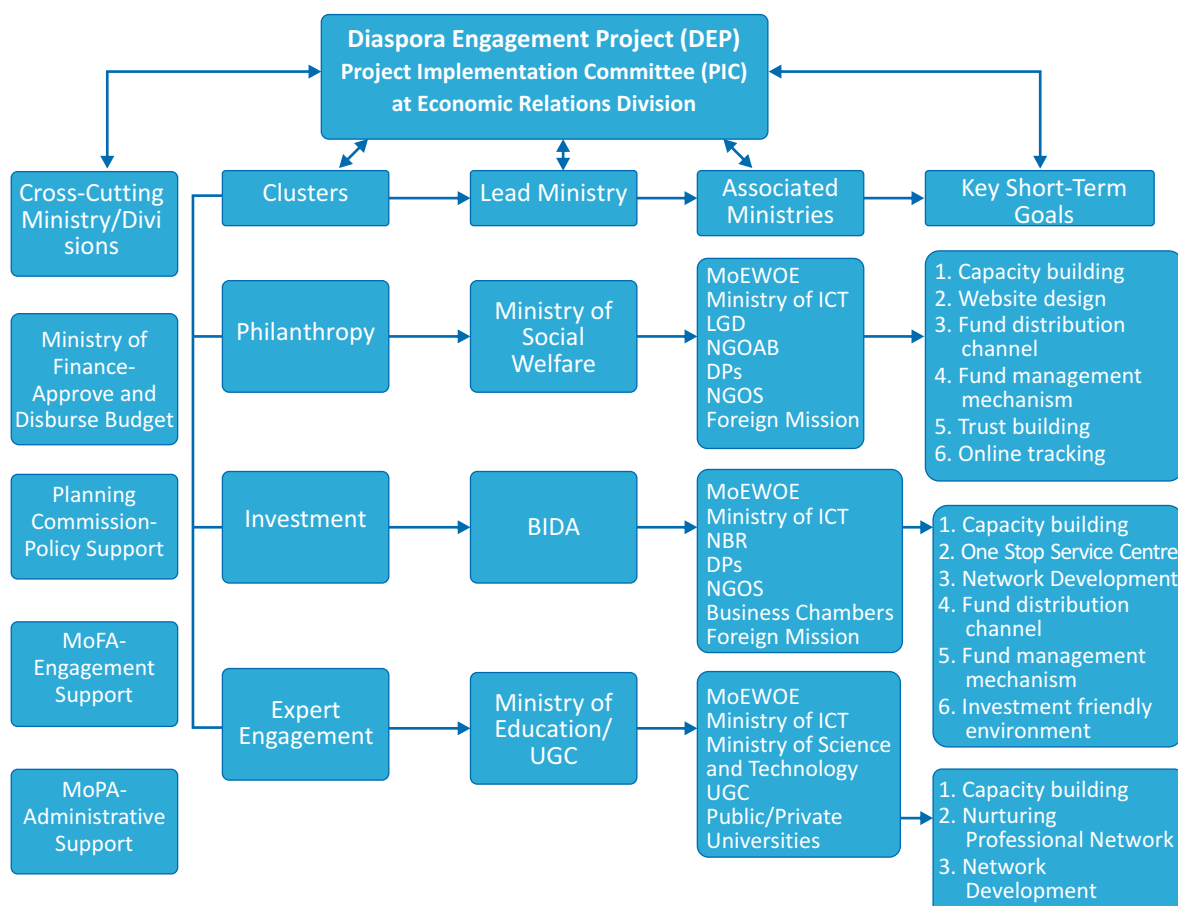
#### **Alternative 1: Ensuring Diaspora Engagement with a Focus on PIE through a Project-based Approach Housed in the Economic Relations Division (ERD)**

Our first proposal is to introduce diaspora engagement within the broader framework of the GoB through a project which can be housed in the Economic Relations Division (ERD). We consider the introduction of a project-based approach viable for the following reasons-

- Given that this particular focus of diaspora engagement is quite new, implementation of PIE would require experimentation with different innovative approaches which would not be possible without flexibility. The best thing about a project-based approach is it would allow the Project Implementation Committee (PIC) to exercise necessary flexibility.
- We propose that the PIE-based approach is eventually introduced as a three-year long project which can later be expanded.
- At the same time, project based approach would also allow the PIC to exercise necessary financial and administrative flexibility essential for the initial success of the project.

The structure of the project can be the following-

**Figure 15: Structure of the Diaspora Engagement: Short-Term Option 1 -The Project Approach**



As the figure above indicates, the PIC will be housed in the Economic Relations Division (ERD) and there are few specific reasons behind this-

- If we look at the structure above, it becomes quite clear that the Economic Relations Division is not directly involved with any of the activities related with PIE. Henceforth, it would be possible for the ERD to take a broader outlook and take/approve decisions without considering its institutional interest.
- ERD is closely related with external resource mobilization, donor coordination and negotiation and it also works closely with the ministry of foreign affairs and thus, the institution is in a good position is finding ways for engaging the international diaspora.
- As mentioned earlier, implementing PIE would require coordinating multidimensional activities carried out by different ministries. Importantly, ERD is one of the very few organizational entities within the GoB which has extensive experiences in coordinating the activities among the bilateral and multi-lateral development partners and countries. Given their long experience in coordination and negotiation, it is expected that ERD is better positioned to successfully carry out the inter-ministerial coordination to implement the activities under the PIE framework.

As the figure above also indicates, to engage the diaspora communities, the project would carry out activities in three clusters. In other words, within the project, there will be three separate clusters, known as Philanthropy Cluster (which would aim at directing philanthropic contributions of the expatriates towards community development projects), Investment Cluster (create opportunities for the business diaspora to invest and link the local businesses with business diaspora), and Expert Engagement Cluster. Each of these clusters would be led by three different ministries/divisions/agencies. The PIC would perform the following responsibilities-

- Would set the vision and mission of the project and would determine its overall goal;
- Would focus on ensuring commitment of the relevant actors;
- Function as a bridge between the cross-cutting ministries and cluster ministries/divisions to ensure that all the actors within the clusters are receiving necessary financial, administrative and policy support;
- Would coordinate the activities carried out by different clusters while ensuring that they are contributing towards supporting the overall goal determined earlier;
- Would ensure that all the partners within the cluster are contributing and sharing resources (information, financial resource, human capital, physical capital) in an effective and efficient way;
- Would resolve conflict within and between clusters, if emerge.

The specific activities to be performed by different actors within the clusters is shown in the below table-

**Table 8: Specific Activities to be performed by different actors**

Cluster	Actor	Activities	Output	Goal
Philanthropy	Ministry of Social Welfare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will perform the role of lead Ministry</li> <li>• Coordinate activities within the cluster</li> <li>• Maintain connection with the PIC</li> <li>• Provide necessary support to the cluster members</li> </ul>	Effective Coordination	Philanthropic Contribution towards CD
	Ministry of Expatriate Welfare & Overseas Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will be involved with all the activities within the cluster</li> <li>• Support all the other ministries</li> <li>• Will emphasize on building capacity of its own members who are working within the cluster</li> </ul>	Ministry officials with adequate capacity	Will take the lead when the short-term intervention is over
	Local Government Division	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will collect data from UP, UZP and ZP about community development projects currently going on or being considered;</li> <li>• Prioritize the projects based on need, feasibility and impact on beneficiaries</li> <li>• Provide that list to the ICT Ministry which will then be included in a website</li> </ul>	List of projects that would require financial support	Will provide options/choices for the diaspora community

Cluster	Actor	Activities	Output	Goal
	Ministry of ICT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide necessary technological support including developing a website where list of projects would be displayed</li> <li>• Develop an online tracking system which would allow the expatriates to follow their money in the real time</li> </ul>	Website, Online Tracking System	Ensuring Transparency Accountability and Monitoring
	NGOAB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will help in identifying NGOs that contribute in community development</li> <li>• Collect community development projects from these NGOs</li> <li>• Select the projects and supply that list to the Ministry of ICT</li> </ul>	List of NGO-preferred projects	Participation of non-state actors, providing wider choices to the diaspora community
	Development Partners (DPs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At the initial level, design a fund management mechanism</li> <li>• Manage funds that are channeling from the international diaspora community</li> <li>• Introduce innovative funding tools like crowd-funding, matching funding etc.</li> </ul>	Fund Management	Ensuring trust of the diaspora community; help the MoEW&OE in developing a sound financial management system
	Foreign Mission/ Consulate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide/disseminate information about the initiative of the cluster to the diaspora</li> <li>• Link the diaspora with the relevant actors of the cluster</li> </ul>		Trust building, network development
Investment	BIDA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will take the lead role on this front</li> <li>• Coordinate activities within the cluster</li> <li>• Maintain connection with the PIC</li> <li>• Suggest and introduce investment facilities to the business diaspora</li> <li>• Information dissemination</li> <li>• Concentrate on developing business network (e.g. BBN or Bangladesh Business Network) that would connect the local business with the business diaspora worldwide</li> </ul>	Effective coordination, information dissemination	Ensuring contribution of diaspora community through investment
	Ministry of Expatriate Welfare & Overseas Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will be involved with all the activities within the cluster</li> <li>• Support all the other ministries</li> <li>• Will emphasize on building capacity of its own members who are working within the cluster</li> </ul>	Ministry officials with adequate capacity	Will take the lead when the short-term intervention is over

Cluster	Actor	Activities	Output	Goal
	Ministry of ICT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Designing and developing a virtual network where members of local and international business diaspora can join</li> <li>• Online tracking so that the international business diaspora can keep track of their investment.</li> </ul>	Network and trust building	Network development
	National Board of Revenue (NBR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify the tax related rules that discourage the NRBs to invest</li> <li>• Assessing the areas of investment meant for the NRBs on which tax break can be given for a specific period of time</li> <li>• Lowering the import duty for the NRB investors importing machinery/raw materials from abroad for manufacturing plants they want to set up locally.</li> </ul>	Encouragement for the NRB investors	Support the NRB investment and also contribute to NRB engagement
	Business Chambers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Membership of the network</li> <li>• Connect with the international diaspora</li> <li>• Identify opportunities where investment is required</li> <li>• Identify areas where skill development, expertise etc. is necessary</li> <li>• Work in collaboration with the international diaspora to compete in the international market</li> </ul>	Connecting with the international business diaspora	Compete at the global level with support from the business diaspora
	Development Partners (DPs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At the initial level, manage the business network and build the capacity of the MoEW&amp;OE so that the ministry can manage the network in the long term</li> <li>• design a fund management mechanism</li> <li>• Manage funds that are channeling from the international diaspora community</li> </ul>	Fund Management	Ensuring trust of the diaspora community; help the MoEW&OE in developing a sound financial management system
	Foreign Mission/ Consulate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide/disseminate information about the initiative of the cluster to the diaspora</li> <li>• Link the diaspora with the relevant actors of the cluster</li> </ul>		Trust building, network development
Expert Engagement	Ministry of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will perform the role of lead Ministry</li> <li>• Coordinate activities within the cluster</li> <li>• Maintain connection with the PIC</li> <li>• Provide necessary support to the cluster members</li> </ul>	Effective Coordination	Creating opportunities for expatriate professionals

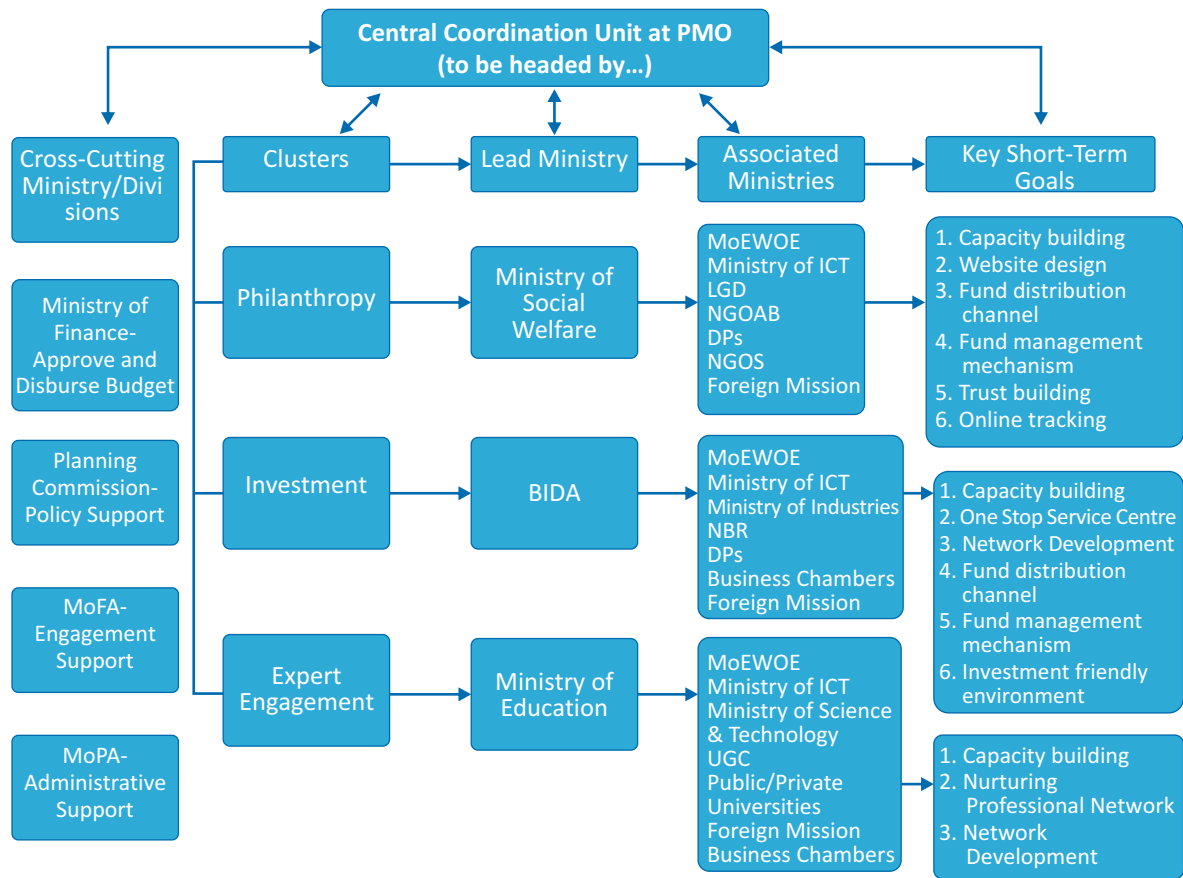
Cluster	Actor	Activities	Output	Goal
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take necessary initiative to develop a professional network which would allow diaspora communities to get involved in knowledge management and skill development</li> </ul>		
	Ministry of Expatriate Welfare & Overseas Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will be involved with all the activities within the cluster</li> <li>• Support all the other ministries</li> <li>• Will emphasize on building capacity of its own members who are working within the cluster</li> </ul>	Ministry officials with adequate capacity	Will take the lead when the short-term intervention is over
	UGC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will be in charge of managing the network developed by MoE</li> <li>• Connect the professionals with relevant educational institutions</li> <li>• Will allow the diaspora community to engage in virtual learning</li> <li>• Provide opportunities for short-term consultancy</li> </ul>	Connecting diaspora community with educational institutions/research institutions	Knowledge development, transfer
	Ministry of ICT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Designing and developing a virtual network where both the representatives from research/educational institutions (local) and diaspora community can join</li> <li>• Develop a platform from where the diaspora community can learn about local need and provide necessary support</li> <li>• Can provide online training/learning</li> </ul>	Network and trust building	Network development
	Ministry of Science and Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can seek and avail support</li> <li>• Provide short-term consultancy</li> </ul>		Knowledge management and transfer
	Universities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can seek and avail support</li> </ul>		Knowledge management and transfer
Cross-Cutting Ministries	Ministry of Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will provide budgetary support (approve and disburse budget)</li> </ul>		
	Ministry of Public Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will provide administrative support (human resources)</li> </ul>		
	Planning Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure policy support</li> <li>• Review mandates of relevant ministries including MoEW&amp;OE and suggest changes if necessary</li> </ul>		
	Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review laws, rules and regulations and suggest changes if necessary</li> </ul>		
	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that the foreign missions are providing adequate support</li> </ul>		

## **Alternative option 2: Ensuring Diaspora Engagement with a Focus on PIE through Establishing a Central Coordinating Unit at the Prime Minister's Office**

Our second alternative in the short term is very much like our first alternative except for few changes- first, it will not be a project-based initiative. Rather, a separate entity will be established within the Prime Minister's Office which will be in charge of coordinating the activities of different clusters- Philanthropy, Investment and Expert Engagement. Secondly, as it is quite clear now, this particular entity will be housed in the Prime Minister's Office. This is, however, again a short-term process which will last for five years and we expect that within this five years, the capacity of the MoEW&OE will be developed the outcome of which would be a separate specialized unit at the Ministry. If we consider alternative 2, we need to understand that it has some certain benefits. Specifically, in the context of Bangladesh, where different agencies often compete with each other for budgets, policy space and influence, it is quite unlikely that these agencies will all of a sudden decide to work together in a collaborative manner. Ensuring collaboration is a real challenge and collaborative management practices cannot be established unless and until the directives of doing so comes from the very top level, i.e. in case of Bangladesh, the PMO. At the same time, within the administrative structures of Bangladesh, a common tendency for the agencies who are involved in multi-dimensional activities is to follow their own rules of business and allocation of business without ignoring the direction of other ministries. In case of implementing PIE, we have identified three different lead ministries for three clusters. However, there is always a risk that the associated ministries/agencies/actors will simply ignore the direction provided by the lead ministry. If that happens, the whole effort of engaging the diaspora will fail. It is important to note that this situation can be reversed only in one situation, i.e. if the direction for following the instructions of lead ministry comes from the top political echelon and that top level political entity, in case of Bangladesh is- the PMO.

Except for this small change, i.e. replacing the project based structure with a central coordination committee at the PMO, the basic institutional structure and roles and responsibilities of different ministries will remain the same-

**Figure 16: Structure of diaspora engagement: Short-term option 2- PIE through a Central Coordinating Unit at the Prime Minister's Office**

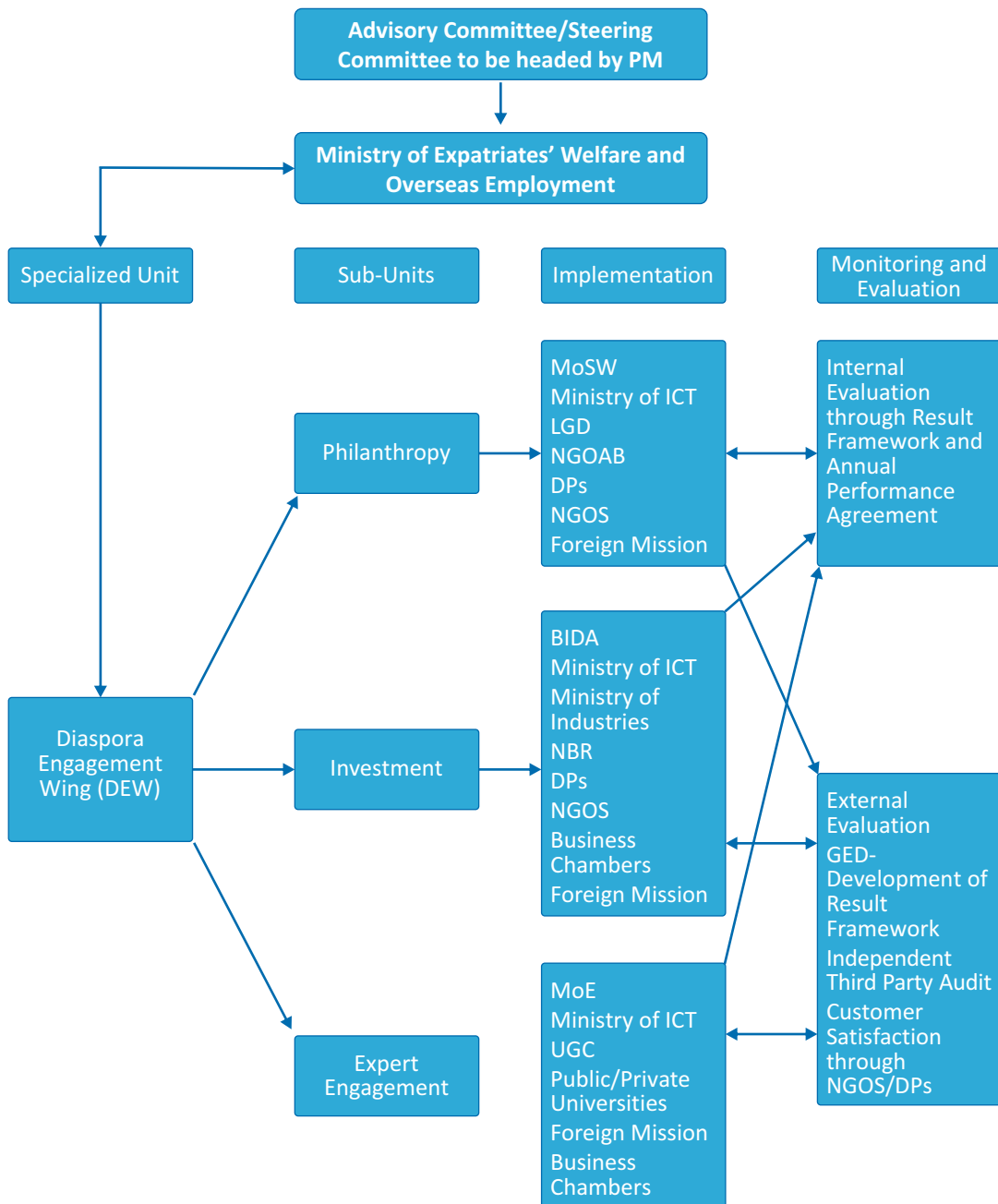




## The Long-Term Framework

In the long term, we propose to develop the following institutional framework-

**Figure 17: Structure of diaspora engagement: The Long-term institutional framework**



According to the figure above, this new institutional framework will have the following components-

According to the figure above, this new institutional framework will have the following components-

### **National Level Steering Committee headed by the Prime Minister**

As we have mentioned earlier, to ensure the success of diaspora engagement, political commitment from the very top level is essential. To that end, we propose to develop a National Level Steering Committee headed by the Prime Minister. The other members of the committee can be Secretaries of the relevant ministries (e.g. MoEW&OE, MoF, MoFA, MoSW, MoPA, ERD, MoE, MoICT, MoST, BIDA, MoI, MoLJA, Principal Secretary, Cabinet Secretary), representatives from the CSOs, DPs, NRB representatives. The Secretary of the MoEW&OE can function as the Member-Secretary. This steering committee will replace the Central Coordinating Committee and will perform the following functions-

- Provide the overall vision of diaspora engagement
- Define roles and activities of different ministries and ensure their commitment
- Provide necessary financial, administrative, policy and legal support
- Coordinate their activities
- Resolve conflicts

### **Specialized Unit- Diaspora Engagement Wing (DEW)**

We have mentioned above that in the short-term our goal is to build the capacity of the Ministry of Expatriate Welfare and Overseas Employment so that in the long term the Ministry can take the lead in facilitating diaspora engagement. In line with that, we are proposing that once the capacity of ministry officials is developed a specialized unit known as Diaspora Engagement Wing (DEW) will be developed within the ministry. It is, however, important to note that even though this unit will be within the Ministry, it will enjoy autonomy in managing its administrative functions, financial resources and human resources. The unit will have the authority to hire outside experts to perform its designated duties. To this end, necessary changes in rules of business and allocations of business will be made and the DEW will be headed by an Additional Secretary (at least). This unit will have the following responsibilities-

- Determine the goals, responsibilities and roles of different sub-units (i.e. clusters)
- Ensure that the sub-units collectively achieve the organizational goals
- Ensure coordination within and between sub-units
- Monitor the activities of the sub-units and ensure that they meet their targets

### **Three Sub-Units (Philanthropy, Investment, and Expert Engagement)**

All of the clusters will be upgraded as sub-units and each of these sub-units will be headed by a Joint Secretary level official. All of these sub-units will embrace multi-dimensional approach and henceforth, within each sub-units different ministries, divisions will work together to achieve some common goals.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

We propose both internal and external monitoring. To that end, the following approach will be adopted-

- APA will be used to measure the performance of the unit regularly;
- In addition to that, with the help of the GED, a result-framework will be developed which will take under consideration the uniqueness of this specialized unit. Based on this result-framework, the activities and performance of the unit will be monitored which will be managed by the National Level Steering Committee;
- Since fund distribution and fund management responsibility will be performed by the unit, independent third party audit will be conducted regularly to ensure financial transparency;
- Furthermore, with the help of NGOs and DPs, survey of the diaspora community will be conducted regularly (once in two year) to measure and track the satisfaction of the expatriates about the support and services provided by this unit;
- Online tracking mechanism developed in the previous phase will continue.



# CHAPTER SEVEN

NRB Engagement in Development of  
Bangladesh: An Overview of the  
Major Challenges



## A. General Challenges

1. The absence of a central organization to collect philanthropic contributions.
2. In order to engage the diaspora community, it is extremely important to develop an online database of long term migrants. Such a database will be useful for the government agencies, business chambers, universities and research organizations to contact them and seek for necessary assistance. Unfortunately, up to this point in time, no reliable data base of Bangladeshi long term migrants exists. The Ministry of MoEW&OE has an online registration system but most of the permanent migrants are not aware of this initiative yet. Even if they were aware, the permanent migrants would not be excited automatically to register on their own as they may not require the services attached to these registration and smart ID card as much as the temporary migrants do.
3. There are permanent migrants who do not have legal stay permit in their country of residence and therefore they may not be at all interested to provide their information unless there is enough trust built around this new system and its objectives—which will obviously require some actions to be undertaken by the government and other stakeholders.
4. The NRBs have formed many associations abroad with Bangladeshis as members and many of these associations are divided along our national political lines. For the implementation of PIE, it would be necessary to mobilize all the NRBs within the shortest possible time. This mobilization will not be an easy and a straight forward task. It is therefore important to choose which associations/organizations to work with during the initial years of confidence building. In fact, it would be good idea to start PIE activities with few selective individual organizations abroad at the outset but we suggest that the publicity about the government interest and initiative among the larger diaspora community may continue alongside.
5. Involving the members of the diaspora and keeping them interested at all times in every step of the national initiative would be a key challenge which is easier said than done. However, for this different mechanisms can be devised while keeping in mind that the right set of people are must be chosen for the initial collaboration while paying equal importance to the other individuals and groups. If we fail to select the right individual or group then this will drive many NRBs away from this noble initiative.

## B. Policy Level Challenges

1. Absence of clear policy provisions relating to diaspora engagement may become a key challenge. The existing policy provisions do not clearly address the PIE approach mentioned here and to ensure the collaboration of different ministries, it may become essential to formulate a new policy.
2. The institutional design developed here indicates that different ministries may need to get involved in new activities which may not always fall within their jurisdiction. As a

result of this, allocation of business of the concerned government agencies and their mandates must be amended to incorporate all the important aspects of diaspora engagement. Although there is a Ministry but its current allocation of business does not include all the aspects (PIE) of diaspora engagement.

3. Inter-ministerial coordination on a continuous basis poses a challenge. We suggest that within each relevant government Ministries and agencies a 'diaspora engagement cell' (e.g., innovation cells which have been set up within the government machinery by the current government) may be established to facilitate such coordination.
4. Philanthropy cannot be sustained without appropriate confidence building of the NRBs. Some NRBs would be skeptical about it, if the appeal for philanthropy is not done against a carefully listed national or local level development projects. NRBs are to be provided with the some details about the projects with a description of how these projects would benefit people of Bangladesh.
5. There has to be a special account created for receiving philanthropy funds from the NRB individuals or associations. Not all government agencies can do this without an explicit mandate. The management of such funds has to done in a transparent manner so that senders can track on line how or where the money is spent. If possible, information about the impact of the projects can also be shared with them on line. All these are not easy to do, on the other hand, success of philanthropy in the short, medium and long term will largely depend on this.
6. Lack of comprehensive supply side studies on the diaspora engagement in the context of Bangladesh may also pose a challenge.

### C. Institutional Level Challenges

1. As we have mentioned before, diaspora engagement following a PIE approach requires a major shift in policy which also makes it essential for different government agencies to change their approach. Bringing about organizational changes, especially if it requires change in policy focus, has always remained a challenge in the administrative context of Bangladesh and given that the PIE approach requires performance and commitment of a number of agencies and a collaborative working practice, encouraging them to do that will become a major challenge. At the same time, the government may also find it difficult to make different ministries (other than MoEW&OE) understand the value of diaspora engagement given that it does not necessarily fall under their jurisdiction.
2. There is no national level initiative or institutional set up to engage the diaspora with a view to tap into NRB's important resources apart from remittance. From this perspective, the institutional design proposed here will be a new one which would likely invite significant resistance to change. Overcoming this resistance would be a challenge.



3. Currently, the MoEW&OE is overwhelmed with huge workload as this Ministry is dealing with the numerous issues of the temporary migrants and therefore it will be difficult, if not impossible, to devote its efforts with its existing manpower strength to deal with the engagements of the diaspora as this will require special capacity, skills and a lot of inter-ministerial level coordination.
4. The NRB's existing perceptions about the investment climate in Bangladesh may not be very positive. The GoB through its Missions abroad involving particularly the 'Economic ministers' and Commercial counsellors are to organize consultation meetings with the potential diaspora investors and motivate them to investment in Bangladesh.
5. For the expert affiliation, coupling or matching the interests of the NRB professionals and the host institutions would be a challenge.



# CHAPTER EIGHT

## Conclusion and Recommendations



Our discussion so far indicates that even though the Ministry of Expatriates Welfare and Overseas Employment has started focusing on diaspora engagement, it is still very early and limited efforts have been taken to identify avenues for involving the international diaspora community in the overall development of Bangladesh. This will require major shift in policy and programmatic interventions and the drive for this shift must come from the highest echelon of the political sphere. Whereas there are indications that the policymakers are gradually moving towards the right direction, it is important to note that the Ministry (and the government machinery) is still concentrating mainly on supporting the labor migrants and ensuring their protection while they are on duties overseas. As pointed out in this study, in addition to the short-term labor migrants, there exists vibrant, professional, high-skilled and well-connected diaspora communities throughout the world, who would be more than interested in supporting different development initiatives of the government of Bangladesh or in providing necessary technical assistance if appropriate channel for diaspora engagement is designed. We have found that whereas there is an understanding within the government and the ministry that much broader efforts should be taken to encourage the diaspora community, up to this point in time, no concrete action plan has been developed to achieve this particular objective. This research report, from this perspective, can be considered at the important first step towards developing a feasible action plan for diaspora engagement.

This study not only identifies the significance of diaspora engagement and specifies the potential impact of engaging NRBs in the development efforts, it also provides some specific ideas that can be applied in the context of Bangladesh. For that purpose, experiences of different countries regarding diaspora engagement have been analyzed. This analysis shows several things- first of all, the bed stone of diaspora engagement is gaining the trust of the diaspora community, i.e. generating a sense of belief or perception that the government values their contribution, wants them to contribute and a transparent and accountable mechanism would be followed in transforming their contribution in to national development efforts. Secondly, whereas different approaches are taken for involving the diaspora community, these efforts can largely be categorized into three groups- promoting philanthropy for community development, facilitating investment for economic and industrial growth, and ensuring expert engagement for knowledge and skill development. We have defined this focus of diaspora engagement as “PIE framework” and explained briefly how different countries have implemented this framework.

Based on the learnings from international experiences, an effort has also been taken to design an institutional framework that would implement the PIE approach in Bangladesh. While doing so, the necessary conditions required for developing an institutional arrangement has been identified and the study argues that an ideal institutional framework that would embrace the PIE approach should be designed in two phases. In the short-term two alternatives have been proposed- one argues for introducing a project to be housed in ERD where PIE would be introduced in three different sub-clusters, each of sub-cluster being led a specialized ministry. At the same time, different government and non-government actors would work in collaboration within these sub-clusters and the study also outlines detailed activities to be performed by these actors. A project implementation committee will be in charge of overall coordination. The second alternative follows the same approach

except for the fact that it argues in favor of implementing the PIE-based sub-cluster approach while keeping it within the PMO. The study, however, points out that in case of both the alternatives the ultimate goal is strengthening the capacity of the Ministry of Expatriates Welfare and Overseas Employment (MoEW&OE) so that a specialized unit, known as Diaspora Engagement Unit (to be headed by an Additional Secretary) can be established within the MoEW&OE which would eventually take charge of diaspora engagement. The three sub-clusters will be transformed into three specialized sub-units (i.e. philanthropy sub-unit, investment sub-unit and expert engagement sub-unit) placed within the unit and a national level steering committee to be headed by Prime Minister would be set-up which would provide overall policy guidance and oversee the activities of the unit. The study also identifies possible challenges that may hinder the implementation of PIE approach of diaspora engagement.

However, the question is- how can these challenges be addressed? What specific actions should be taken? By whom and how? In this section, we try to address these questions through suggesting specific recommendations that can be implemented in the short, mid and long term.

## Recommendations

To ensure the engagement of the diaspora community through adopting the PIE framework and to establish the institutional framework mentioned above, we propose a number of things.

### Short-term recommendations

In the Short-Term, we propose the followings-

#### General

6. There is no national level initiative or institutional set up to engage the diaspora with a view to tap into their important other resources apart from remittance. A national initiative needed with a strong government ownership to this end. Both virtual and real physical presence in terms of a secretariat of such an entity is indispensable.
7. With the help of Embassies, Missions, and Consulates, the GoB should start taking necessary initiatives to develop a database of the international diaspora community; As a matter of fact, migration explicit targets appear under the SDG. The means of implementing SDG 17, (SDG 17:18) states that “By 2020, enhance capacity-building support to developing countries, to increase significantly the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by migratory status. In order to achieve the goal of creating the NRB data base following measures can be considered: a). Existing registration process of the MoEW&OE should continue as it is now being done and but alongside it important to share the site link with Bangladeshi Missions so that they can publicize and expedite the process. b). There has to be periodic review of the progress on this front. Our Missions have some info already or a list of professional diaspora, MoEW&OE may request the Missions to share the information with them. c). Different Chambers of commerce may already have information about the diaspora, investors and those information can be obtained if formal request is made by the MoEW&OE.

8. The expatriates Bangladeshis face a variety of problems which keep them away from maintaining good contacts with Bangladesh, such as mistreatment, harassment and demands of illegal gratification by officials at the country's entry points, threats to security and safety upon visiting Bangladesh, and insecurity of properties and local investments. The Ministry of EW&OE has set up welcome booths at the main airport to extend support to the expatriates upon arrival and during departure. But the immigration and custom officials at international airports should be given special training and orientation to deal with immigration and custom related issues of expatriates. The officers should be advised to be respectful, friendly and courteous. As a matter of confidence building measure, it is important to make them feel important, serve them in friendly manner and also make sure that they can enter and leave the airport with a feeling of comfort and nice memories. To monitor the behavior and service provided by airport officials, closed circuit surveillance cameras should be placed around the airport, especially in places where officials and passengers interact, including immigration, customs and security areas.
9. Measures to acknowledge the contribution of the NRBs should continue and in fact, the GoB should strengthen its effort to honor the successful NRBs in different areas; "Probashi Padak" can be given annually to successful NRBs in different areas. In this regard, some criteria may be set by the GoB keeping in view the short and long term migrants. In this regard among other following general criteria could be followed: noteworthy role of NRBs in Bangladesh's liberation war, their exceptional contributions in science, technology, education, medicine, architecture and other disciplines whose contributions have been acknowledged by the host nation's Governments, their contributions to the progression of the cause of Bangladesh during times of crisis, extraordinary presentation of Bangladesh's rich cultural heritage abroad, playing a crucial and critical role for the Bangladeshi communities abroad; extra-ordinary philanthropy, large remittance senders, also those who set examples of effective utilization of remittance and for major investment which created employment or otherwise benefitted Bangladesh.
10. The government may declare a specific day as "Pravashi Dibash" to recognize the contribution of the NRBs and an annual NRB conference may be organized in which Prime Minister may give away the "Probashi Padak" to eligible NRB individuals. Expatriate Bangladeshis who would want to participate in the annual event should receive invitations to register, and the Bangladesh Missions abroad, local print and electronic media, and appropriate websites should contain information on the program with adequate time and accessibility given to them to register. A celebration committee should be established to ensure that a few selected guests receive full hospitality and comfort. Some distinguished NRBs may be invited and government may provide their airfare and local hospitality, while the other interested participants would have to arrange and pay for their individual airfare and lodging.
11. Cultural integration efforts should be introduced for the young NRBs and people of Bangladeshi origins (PBOs). Following India's examples, the GoB can introduce "Know Bangladesh" program for the next-generation NRBs so that they remain connected with

the culture and heritage of their parents' homeland. To create and maintain strong ties with their roots, plenty of expatriates visit Bangladesh with their children, and the young expatriates recognize the significance of these trips as it allows them to interact with Bangladeshi people, culture, and tradition. Such family and community efforts should be matched with institutional efforts to allow expatriates to comprehend and appreciate a wider cultural identity. We suggest that efforts should allow come schemes to be put in place which would incorporate student exchange programmes both at school and tertiary levels. The Ministry of EW&OE, with assistance and full cooperation of the Ministry of Education and appropriate agencies and institutions such as the UNDP, British Council and the USIAD, can sponsor such student exchange programmes.

12. The designation of the position "Labour Attache" may be changed to "Diaspora Relations Officer (DRO)". If necessary, their charters of duties may also be changed with a view to include the needs, issues and objectives of diaspora engagement. There are 27 labour attaches in 29 countries which can be used for the philanthropy and also for other PIE activities.
13. Name of the ministry may as well changed from the Ministry of Expatriate' Welfare and Overseas Employment (MoEWOE) to the Ministry of Expatriate' Engagement and Welfare (MoEE&W).
14. A supply side study on the Bangladeshi diaspora should be commissioned to capture their aspirations in every 2/3 years. In this regard, it is important that special attempt is also made to find out the interests and aspirations of the second and third generation expatriates. It is important to nurture the bondage in a way that is mutually beneficial. Once this is achieved Bangladesh will continue to receive benefits from them in the years to come.
15. Sequencing the PIE appropriate is important as an initial confidence building measure. Ideally, starting with expert affiliation would be a better strategy to start this journey of NRB engagement. Philanthropy and investment related activities can be undertaken in turn once the initial confidence building is done.

## Philanthropy

1. Given that the government should shift its policy focus from serving the migrant laborers (which would continue) towards engaging the diaspora communities in the overall development efforts of the country, a massive level awareness-raising campaign should be introduced. This should be done at both the national and international level as at the national level, the government agencies need to reorient their focus and activities and at the international level, the diaspora community need to know about this initiative along with the opportunities it may offer for them.
2. Establish a contact point and institutional mechanism for philanthropic contributions from abroad. Channeling philanthropy contributions through on central body will help stopping terror financing in the shape of NRB philanthropy. It is also important to make



sure that. However, in this regard it is important to try and reduce the lengthy bureaucratic process so that substantial contributions can be made by NRBs with ease.

3. Fixing a specific target regarding the collection philanthropic contributions for each year.
4. The current government has focused on local economic development (as per the 7th Five Year Plan) and elected local governments of Zila Parishad (ZP) and the Upazila Parishad (UZP) can play a pro-active role in facilitating the identification of local and regional development projects for which philanthropic contributions of the diaspora can be sought on line. The ZP and UZP should focus on disseminating information through web-portal to proposed entity in charge of implementing PIE framework. It is important to mention here that NRBs many have different mindsets—some may want to support the national project, some may want to extend their support to a district level development project, while others may want to support the Upzaila or Union level development projects. Therefore, the portal through which the philanthropic contributions would be solicited should have all these options available so that the interested members of the diaspora have a long list of projects to choose from while deciding about their philanthropic contributions. In this regard, lessons can be drawn from model that the Indian government is following on this front.
5. There has to be a special account created for receiving philanthropy funds from the NRB individuals or associations. Not all government agencies can do this without an explicit mandate. The management of such funds has to done in a transparent manner so that senders can track on line how or where the money is spent. If possible, information about the impact of the projects can also be shared with them on line. The success and sustainability of philanthropy in the short, medium and long term will largely depend on the system of transparency that is being used.
6. For mobilizing and sensitizing the NRBs our Missions abroad may organize NRB conventions or NRB registration fair in their respective countries in a pompous manner with different cultural and other activities. This should be organized in collaboration with the Bangladeshi Associations abroad which will help publicizing the matter as a national priority also facilitate the creation of the NRB data base. To add a special momentum to these events our PM, senior Ministers and other national leaders may join through the medium of video conferencing.
7. The Missions should maintain liaison with the professional diaspora individuals, their groups and associations and explore and identify the interested members of the diaspora and work out modalities of their engagement in Bangladesh and subsequently share this information on a regular basis initially with the entity responsible for managing this affair.
8. Government of Bangladesh with the help of Embassies, Missions, and Consulates should start taking necessary initiatives to appoint focal points (either individual or association) in different cities abroad who/which would work as the linking-pin between the Missions and the diaspora communities and facilitate the NRB engagement.

9. Philanthropy cannot be sustained without appropriate confidence building of the NRBs. Some NRBs would be skeptical about it, if the appeal for philanthropy is not done against a carefully listed national or local level development projects (following Indian and Live Lebanon examples of crowdfunding). NRBs are to be provided with the some details about the projects with a description of how these projects would benefit people of Bangladesh. This can be done using on line portals and mechanism is to be developed so that philanthropic payments can be made at will of the diaspora members without any hassle.

## Investment

1. Foreign Missions of Bangladesh should set up a dedicated diaspora engagement cells with immediate effect to deal with the affairs of the diaspora engagement keeping in view the activities suggested under PIE. One of the main activities of the proposed cell would be to publicize among the NRBs the regulatory reforms to improve the investment climate which are being undertaken recently in Bangladesh. The positive image of the country is to be projected at all times to the NRBs by officials of the Missions and also by the proposed entity in charge of implementing PIE.
2. A special economic zone can be created for the NRB investors. One stop service centers are to be made truly NRB investor friendly so that they do not feel challenged while setting up businesses in Bangladesh. Tax holiday may be offered to the NRB investors for a certain period with a view to encourage them invest in Bangladesh. They may be given local banking facilities to the fullest possible extent. They may also be allowed to open RFC dollar accounts, given the opportunity to change their money in taka without any charge and also if they want to take the money back to their country of residence with interest then that should also be allowed.
3. Some special sectors of the economy may be kept reserved exclusively for the NRBs to invest or they should be given preferential treatment in this regard.
4. The government has a plan to create 100 Special Economic Zones (SEZs). Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (BEZA) is in charge of this initiative at the moment. Government is now focusing on developing 10 such special economic zones. Recently, a local private business group has been given the responsibility to develop one of the 10 SEZs. We suggest that on this front, NRBs may also be given the responsibility to develop a number of SEZs and then should also be given necessary flexibility to invite investors of their choice (NRBs or foreign origin) to take advantage of these developed infrastructure and facilities. This way, government will also be able to creating and developing its already declared SEZs within the relatively short span of time.
5. There has to be a well laid down strategy to connect the business and investors diaspora with the national and local chambers of commerce within Bangladesh.
6. Publicizing among the NRBs the benefits associated with the different types of bonds available in the market for them to purchase and also make sure that the process of purchase of bonds friendlier and encashment of bonds is hassle free.

7. At present, a quota of 10 percent shares through Initial Public Offerings (IPOs) is kept for NRBs and another 10 percent for mutual funds. Non-residents Bangladeshis are free to invest in shares/securities quoted in the stock exchanges, with foreign exchange sent or brought into Bangladesh. This quota can be enhanced but the concerned authorities will have to make sure that the IPOs are actually being bought by the NRBs.
8. The local governments including Zila Parishad, Upazila Parishad may be able to play a pro-active role to facilitate the participation and investment of NRBs in local development with support from the district business chambers. The ZP and UZP should focus on disseminating information regarding competitive advantage of their localities and the opportunities they can offer through web-portal either directly to the NRBs or through the proposed entity in charge of implementing PIE initiative.
9. Government may consider allowing the full retail banking operation at the UK, USA and EU capitals as a start-up project ( not only the finance houses for remittance) to get hold of diaspora cash flows, funds for investment and to increase the remittance flows.

### Expert Affiliation

1. A list of interested NRB professionals willing to make expert contributions to Bangladesh's should be prepared immediately for every country having major professional NRB concentrations. Our Missions abroad or other individuals and organizations run by the NRBs abroad may provide us with such initial lists which can be extended in due course through a "network approach".
2. As far as expert engagement is concerned, there are a lot of academics and researchers working already in different private universities and research organizations in Bangladesh. More such opportunities should be created at both the public, private universities and research organizations. Ministry of education in collaboration with UGC and the proposed entity can invite the NRB academics and researches of different disciplines and connect them with the local institutions, local academics and researchers. Fellowship can be offered to the NRB academics and researchers. Also the engineers, architect, pharmacists, agriculturalists and other professionals can be engaged through the relevant ministries in collaboration initially with the proposed entity responsible for dealing with this initiative. Ministry of health in collaboration with the proposed entity can organize health camps and invite the NRB doctors. It can also connect them with the public and private hospitals and engage them to provide health services. In every public hospital there could be a special health outdoor created for the NRB doctors to provide specialized health check-ups and medical advices. Ministry of ICT in collaboration with the proposed entity may invite the expatriate ICT professionals to contribute to cyber security, development of IT sector, other IT support and IT related consultancies. NRB consultants may also be hired for national and regional projects, where necessary, on short, medium and long term basis. In the short term, it is expected that a website will be created and through which NRB professional's expression of interests (Eols) would be solicited on line. Once the Eols received, the proposed entity would assess these Eols and take appropriate measures to facilitate the engagement.

3. Besides, internet-based professional networks can be effective mechanisms linking NRB professionals to professionals in Bangladesh to pool their collective knowledge and contacts. In such networks, professionals from Bangladesh and the NRB enter an Internet portal and fill out an online registration for a database that serves as a matching tool other members can access. Using information provided through the database, members connect with potential research or project partners and network with members of similar interests, fields of experience and geographical regions. Depending on the commitment and interest of the its members, NRB professionals can use the internet and e-mail as a means to provide virtual or distant learning opportunities, contribute to the implementation of development projects, or find ways for those remaining in Bangladesh to gain skills and knowledge without necessarily migrating themselves. By using the Internet as a project tool, these types of activities help to increase social capital in Bangladesh and help transfer crucial skills in business, manufacturing, finance, agriculture and other areas that can contribute to economic development. The proposed entity in charge of implementing PIE may take lead in making this network happen and also provide its constant support to these networks.
4. NRB expert's contributions must be recognized in the proposed annual NRB conference.
5. The positions of Cultural Attache may be created in a few countries where there are Bangladeshi diaspora concentrations. The will keep constant contacts with the Bangladeshi professionals and also help facilitate finding the match between the interests of the professionals and a suitable host institutions in Bangladesh. They will closely work with the proposed entity in charge of implementing the PIE activities.

### Mid-term recommendations

Once these integration-oriented and trust-building initiatives are undertaken, the GoB can introduce the followings in the Mid-Term:

1. Design short-term institutional framework and as part of that-
  - Develop the necessary business and professional network
  - Activate these networks so that they can connect the global diaspora with the local people
  - Design and develop a web-based platform which would support the virtual integration
  - Design money tracking tools to ensure the trust of the diaspora community
2. As the government's policy focus is shifting, effort should be taken to review the existing rules, policies and laws (including the rules of business and allocations of business) of relevant ministries. Based on this review, necessary changes have to be introduced
3. A proper involvement of the diaspora, state and non-state actors has to be ensured
4. Setting up of Bangla language learning schools by the GoB in collaboration with the Missions abroad and the Ministry of foreign affairs. This will enormously contribute to the NRB confidence building.

5. For decades expatriates have been demanding their right to vote in the national election of Bangladesh. There are good examples of other countries providing their citizens living abroad with such rights. The members of Bangladeshi diaspora, during consultation, also mentioned that government of Bangladesh should consider the granting the right to vote to the expatriates especially when use of EVM is being considered by the Election Commission of Bangladesh for the upcoming general election. This will generate a lot of enthusiasms among the expatriates. Besides, this would directly help mapping out the Bangladeshi diaspora living in different countries also facilitate the engagement process further.
6. Specific emphasis should be placed in ensuring proper coordination between different ministries, divisions, agencies;
7. It is important to note that without developing a transparent, functional and reliable financial management system, it would be extremely difficult, if not impossible to encourage the diaspora community channel resources to Bangladesh. In order to build a sound system and ensure the trust of the NRBs, we propose that at the initial level the fund management mechanism should be delegated to the Development Partners. This can continue for a while (3 to 5 years) and within this time-frame, with the help of the DPs, an effective financial management system should be introduced within the government agencies.

### Long-term recommendations

Finally, in the Long Term, the following steps should be taken-

1. The National Steering Committee should be established and activated. The role of the top political leadership is significant and that is why effort should be taken to include the Prime Minister;
2. The flexibility of the new specialized unit must be ensured;
3. The unit must have the necessary capacity to perform its duties;
4. The monitoring mechanism (both internal and external) must be put in place.
5. Developing a system of effective feedback mechanism and a yearly review of the progress made is also seen useful and if needed reconfiguration of the whole process would be needed based on the lessons already learnt from the initial activities and challenges encountered.

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# APPENDIX





## APPENDIX-1

### Name and other details of the Individuals Interviewed

Name	Occupation/other details
Dr. AK Abdul Momen	Former Diplomat and Chairman, Bangladesh Study Trust
Dr. C.R Abrar	Academician/researcher, DU and RAMRU
Dr. Tasneem Siddiqui	Academician/researcher, DU and RAMRU
Ambassador Humyaun Kabir	Former diplomat
Dr. Atiur Rahman	Former Governor Bangladesh Bank/Academician
Dr. Debapriya Bhattacharya	Economist/researcher, CPD
Dr. Mustafizur Rahman	Economist/researcher, CPD
Shaila Khan	ACD, UNDP
Anir Chowdhury	Policy Adviser, A2I, PMO/NRB
Barrister Manzoor Hasan	BRAC University/NRB
Dr. Salahuddin Aminuzzman	Academician/researcher, D.U.
Dr. AMM Quamrul Alam	Academician/researcher, Monash University, Australia
Kazi M. Aminul Islam	Executive Chairman, BIDA
Abul Kalam Azad	Chief Coordinator for SDG affairs in PMO
Shamima Nargis	Member, Planning Commission, Government of Bangladesh.
Mr. Jalal Ahmed	National Project Director (K4DM) and Additional Secretary to Government of Bangladesh.
Mr. Gazi Mohammad Julhash NDC	Additional Secretary to Government of Bangladesh.
Mr. Selim Reza, DG	DG, BMET.
Dr. Nurul Islam	Director, BMET.
Mr. Maran Kumar Chakraborty	Additional Secretary to Government of Bangladesh.
Mr. Mohammad Azharul Huq	Additional Secretary to Government of Bangladesh.
Mr. Aftab Ahmed	Joint Secretary to the Government of Bangladesh.
Mr. A.N.M. Masrurul Huda Siraji	Banker
Ms. Nurun Akter	Deputy Secretary to the Government of Bangladesh.
Mr. Shameem Al Mamun	Deputy Secretary and former Labour Attache, Bangladesh Embassy in Bahrain.
Mr. Aftab Hossain Pramanik	Joint Secretary, former Labour Attache, Bangladesh Mission in KSA.
Ambassador Allama Siddiqui	Current Ambassador of Bangladesh to Turkey
Mr. Iqbal Abdullah Harun	Joint Secretary, current economic minister, Bangladesh mission in USA
M E Chowdhury	Scholars Bangladesh
Golam Mohiuddin,	Bangladesh Bank
Dr. Abu Shahin M. Ashaduzzaman	Project Manager (K4DM) and a Deputy Secretary to Government of Bangladesh.
Ananya Raihan	CEO, Dnet, Dhaka
Muhammad Anisul Kabir	NRB Business Network, USA
Shariful Islam	MD and Editor, Bangladesh Brand Forum
Addesse Haile	International Consultant, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Dhaka.

## APPENDIX-2

### Select list of the Bangladeshi Diaspora Associations

#### Bangladeshi Diaspora Associations in USA

Name of the association/Entities	Contact Details	Main Objectives	Comments (Total Members/their Activities)
Bangladesh Association of Phoenix (Arizona)	Bangladesh Asso.of Phoenix (BAP): Phoenix, Arizona, USA, Call (President): 623-229-1969, E-mail (President): mlasker@yahoo.com, E-Mail: admin@baphx.com	Community Ass.	BAP organizes cultural-program, social-gathering, picnic, educational-program, Eid reunion, Baishakhi Mela, sports-program etc. The Association also involved in different charity activities. Bangladesh Association of Phoenix's present President, who is chief of the association, is Mohammad Lasker (Khasru).
Bangladesh Theater of Arizona (Arizona)	3244 E Washington Ave Gilbert, Arizona 85234. E-Mail:	Cultural Ass.	Bangladesh Theater of Arizona (BTA) – a cultural organization of Bangladeshi community living in Arizona – is a non-profit charitable tax exempt organization under the IRS code 501c (3). BTA was established in Phoenix, Arizona on Feb 6, 1999.
American Association of Bangladeshi Engineers and Architects (Arizona )	PO Box 2853, Cupertino, CA 95015, Phone: 408-865-0340, Alt. Phone: 310-367-6202, Contact Person: Shak Hossain Location: California, USA	Professional Ass.	American Association of Bangladeshi Engineers and Architects, AABEA – Silicon Valley chapter, a non-profit organization to empower the global network of professionals, scholars, families, and individuals with the latest innovations in technological and humanistic sciences in effort to advance the lives of our global community. It is AABEA's mission to enable this solution with technologies, expertise, and our human network to enrich our generations now and in the future.
Charity Organization of Bangladeshi Arizonans (Arizona)	3171 W Genoa Way Chandler , AZ 85226	Social Service Ass.	The key objectives of this organization are to: a) provide financial assistance to the underprivileged people of Bangladesh to promote basic education, to support social and health service projects on a short and long term basis (b) provide assistance.
Greater San Diego Bangladesh Association (California)	17309 Eagle Canyon Pl San Diego, CA 92127 Tel: 858-943-1757 email:	Community Ass.	Greater San Diego Bangladesh Association GSBA is an organization to promote and enhance communication and cooperation, and build relationship between the Bangladeshi community and the American people. GSBA is a non-profit, non-political and secular organization dedicated to Bangladeshis in Southern California and in Bangladesh. Our objectives are to promote goodwill and understanding among the members of the organization as well as between the members and other ethnic groups in the San Diego Area, to help

Name of the association/Entities	Contact Details	Main Objectives	Comments (Total Members/their Activities)
			Bangladeshis arriving in the San Diego Area adjust to the social, economic and cultural conditions of this country. We like to nourish the cultural heritage of Bangladesh alive among the Bangladeshi residents in Southern California through cultural and educational programs and exchanges.
Little Bangladesh Improvements (California)	3717 W. 3rd Street, # 208 Los Angeles CA 90020 USA LBImprovement@gmail.com	Community Ass.	<p>To beautify Little Bangladesh magnificently; and Improve quality of life of the Residents and Stakeholders by availing Knowledge, Information and Resources at their reach.</p> <p><b>"Goals or Objectives"</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Beautify and transform Little Bangladesh and surrounding areas into an exciting and enduring tourist and business spot that it will reflect culture and heritage, life style and natural treasures of Bangladesh and the visitors walking or driving through this corridor, will have immediate feelings of difference and pleasure.</li> <li>2. Improve the quality of lives of the Residents and Stakeholders of Little Bangladesh.</li> <li>3. Make Federal, State, Municipal, non-governmental and private resources accessible to the Residents and Stakeholders of Little Bangladesh.</li> <li>4. Build or facilitate creation of projects that would benefit both USA and Bangladesh.</li> <li>5. Raise and/or distribute charitable giving to the poor/victim residents or stakeholders of Little Bangladesh</li> <li>6. Promote Friendship, Trade and Commerce between USA and Bangladesh.</li> </ol>
Bay Area Bangladesh Association Inc (California)	If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please insert your information below and we will contact you shortly. Please see the BABA Executive Committee page for personal contact information. Email: baba@baba1.com	Community Ass.	The Bay Area Bangladesh Association (BABA) was formed by several individuals in the year 1985 in hopes to promote the goodwill, understanding, and heritage of Bangladeshi culture through cultural and educational programs and exchanges in the Bay Area community and beyond. Since that period, the organization has grown and flourished as the umbrella organization for many other non-profit organizations in the Bay Area.
Dakshini Bengali Association of California (California)	Address: Dakshini Bengali Association of California, P.O. Box #14385 Torrance, CA 90503	Cultural Ass.	Dakshini Bengali Association of California is a non-profit organization in the United States of America dedicated to fostering cultural and social heritage of Bengali speaking living in the United States of

Name of the association/Entities	Contact Details	Main Objectives	Comments (Total Members/their Activities)
	Tel: 323-610-2620 Email: info@dakshini.org dakshinila@yahoo.com		America and promotes Bengali literature and culture.
Ogrojatra- Bangladeshi Association for San Diego and Vicinity (California)	SDOgrojatra2014@gmail.com Ph: (858) 521 -9671	Cultural Ass.	Ogrojatra- San Diego Bangladeshi Organization was founded on October, 2011. Ogrojatra is a community based organization operated by a Board of Directors which consists of 5 to 7 Board Members. Board of Directors is elected democratically for two years per term, max two consecutive terms. In 2014, Ogrojatra became 501c Non-Profit organization striving to help the local Bangladeshi-American community in San Diego as well as help the underprivileged in Bangladesh.
Agami (California )	Agami Incorporated PO Box 3178 Fremont, CA 94539 USA E-Mail: education@agami.org	Development Ass.	All children in Bangladesh will have equal opportunity for a quality education.
Hridoya Bangladesh (California )	State of California with 501© status Reg. No. Ct0179092 Tax ID 26-1088675	Development Ass.	Hridoya Bangladesh is a non-profit organization founded in 2007. We provide scholarship to brilliant and financially challenged students to continue their education. We are supporting over 100 students a year through various activities like working with schools for autistic children and slum kids, supporting S.S.C and H.S.C students, etc.
Spaandan B (California )	E-Mail: usdatago+californiacompanyinfo@gmail.com	Development Ass.	The mission of SpaandanB is to bring forth fundamental socio-economic change in the lives of the less advantaged people of Bangladesh by addressing the needs in the three major areas: Establishment of education : Support less advantaged academic and vocational merits to achieve excellence and advancement of education system in Bangladesh. Generate awareness in dormant aptitude and success potential. Remedy for health needs: Make basic health services available to disadvantaged people. Support advancement of medical service infrastructure in Bangladesh. Promotion of sustained subsistence: Provide income generation opportunities among the disadvantaged people of Bangladesh. Provide food, medical, shelter and rehabilitation support to distressed humanity during time of emergency.

Name of the association/Entities	Contact Details	Main Objectives	Comments (Total Members/their Activities)
Bangladesh Relief Fund (California)	Main Address 519 STASSI LN SANTA MONICA , CA 90402	Human Rights Ass.	To match hundreds of thousands of volunteers with urban ministries and short term urban mission opportunities
Educational Charitable Humanitarian Organization (California)	EIN 71-0913828 (408) 238-1457 Po Box 4120Santa Clara CA 95056 USA	Human Rights Ass.	Primary exempt purpose of echo is to help the people of developing countries in the following ways:a. To educate and provide technical training to disadvantaged youths; b. To provide starving people with food, clothiing, and healthcare;c. To help disadvantaged people with training and resources so that they become self-reliant.
Human Rights Congress for Bangladeshi Minorities (California)	Contact: Dhiman Chowdhury (212) 592-3627	Human Rights Ass.	HRCBM is a human rights and humanitarian Organization dedicated to protect the human rights of people in Bangladesh. In particular, we work for minorities in Bangladesh. We stand with victims and activists to prevent discrimination, to uphold political freedom, to protect people from inhumane conduct, and to bring offenders to justice.
American Association of Bangladeshi Engineers & Architects - Silicon Valley Chapter (California)	PO Box 2853, Cupertino, CA 95015	Professional Ass.	American Association of Bangladeshi Engineers and Architects, AABEA – Silicon Valley chapter, a non-profit organization to empower the global network of professionals, scholars, families, and individuals with the latest innovations in technological and humanistic sciences in effort to advance the lives of our global community. It is AABEA's mission to enable this solution with technologies, expertise, and our human network to enrich our generations now and in the future.
Bangladesh Medical Association of North America – CA (California)	87-46 168 street Jamaica, NY 11432 Ph: 718 794 4414 919 749 0389 Kabir Choudhury, MDPhone: 386-344- 2800 Email: zamal118@hotmail.com	Professional Ass.	The Bangladesh Medical Association of North America (BMANA) is a nonprofit, nonpolitical, educational and humanitarian organization. Its members are medical professionals of Bangladeshi descent. The objectives of BMANA encompass a wide range of professional, educational, charitable, humanitarian and cultural activities.
Bangladesh Medical Association of North America Connecticut Chapter (Connecticut)	503 clyden cove Raleigh, NC 27612-2676 Email: BMANACC@yahoo.com Tel: 3362074305	Professional Ass.	To Promote Health, Education, Culture, Fraternity, and Charitable Work Within Bangladeshi Medical Professionals and the Wider Community.
Community Bangladeshi Association of America Inc (District of Columbia)	13113 Brushwood Way, Potomac, MD 20854	Community Ass.	Bangladesh Circle is mostly about anything and everything beyond Bangladesh – about the Bangladeshi community living outside

Name of the association/Entities	Contact Details	Main Objectives	Comments (Total Members/their Activities)
	Sajda Solaiman, President Phone: 301-258-0088 Email: p2013@baaidc.com		of Bangladesh. We follow life, experience and events related to Bangladesh – happening outside of Bangladesh.
Bangladesh American Foundation of Central Florida (Florida)		Community Ass.	BAFOCF activities include working with local authorities, to develop closer working ties and share information on opportunities and resources available in central Florida or various communities. BAFOCF serves as a liaison between our community and various local, state and federal law enforcement agencies, like FBI, HPD, Airport Security, etc., and discusses issues and concerns to find solutions that relates to our community. These interactions provide us a forum to discuss community concerns and work towards greater understanding. BAFOCF will provide free medical services to the community members. Supports educational seminars, provides immigration services, offers mobile consular services, and provides counseling for man and women. BAFOCF promises to keep the FOUNDATION sound today while keep working to make the community united and stronger for the future. We have profound respect for the community's support and we thank our community and its members for their support. We can make it better by working together to keep our heritage and culture alive.
Bangladeshi American Society of South West Florida (Florida)	Principal Address 13056 VALEWOOD DRIVE NAPLES, FL 34119	Community Ass.	BANGLADESHI AMERICAN SOCIETY OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA, INC. is a Florida Not For Profit Corporation. Company Number assigned to this company is N12000008125. US Federal EIN/TIN number of this company is 46-1093012. BANGLADESHI AMERICAN SOCIETY OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA, INC. was incorporated on Thursday 23rd August 2012 so company age is five years, two months and fifteen days. The company registration status is ACTIVE.
Bangladesh Medical Association of North America Florida Inc. (Florida)	7958 Quailwood Dr Jacksonville FL 32256	Professional Ass.	Bangladesh Medical Association Of North America, Florida, Inc. is a Florida nonprofit corporation based in Jacksonville. They registered with the Florida Department of State's Division of Corporations on Feb 4, 2014.
Bangladeshi-American Association of Georgia (Georgia)	Phone: 404-519-0109 Alt. Phone: 770-912-2769 Contact Person: Duke	Community Ass.	Bangladeshi American Association of Georgia, Inc. (BAAG) is an organization of Bangladeshi community living in Georgia USA. The association mostly interested in

Name of the association/Entities	Contact Details	Main Objectives	Comments (Total Members/their Activities)
	Khan Location: Georgia, USA		Bangladeshi cultural events like <i>Boishakhi Mela</i> (Bangla New Year). The main goal of the BAAG is to promote and spread Bangla culture among the new generation of Bangladesh American as well as introduce the culture to other ethnic communities. To achieve this, BAAG works with groups like Atlanta Cultural Society, GA Cultural Society and <i>Boishakhi Udjapon</i> Committee of Metro Atlanta Bangladeshi community.
Bangladesh Cultural Society of Georgia (Georgia)	Phone: 404-552-3241 Alt. Phone: 678-698-8105 Location: Georgia, USA Tags: Association	Cultural Ass.	Bangladesh Cultural Society of Georgia is a cultural organization of Bangladeshi community in Atlanta. The group's aim is to promote and practice Bangladeshi Culture among new generation of Bangladeshi diaspora. The society organizes Boishakhi Mela (Bangla New Year), Ekushey (Bangla Language Movement), Iftar night (Islamic festival for fasting, Ramadan), Bangladesh Independence, National Day, etc. Bangladesh Cultural Society of Georgia also does research and train Bangladeshi folk culture.
Network of Young Bangladeshi American Professionals (Georgia)	6240 Woodward, Suite 219, Amarillo, TX 79106	Professional Ass.	Bangladeshi-American Professional & Academic Network (BAPAN) is an online forum of Bangladeshi students, scholars, researchers and professionals in different universities and industries of the United States. BAPAN wants to create a network among Bangladeshis living and working in different states and cities in USA. The forum also helps its member to get education, work, life related information through workshop, seminars, video talks, interview, website etc.
Mid Continent Bangladesh Association of Kansas Inc. (Kansas)	2645 N Rushwood Ct, Wichita, KS 67226, USA	Community Ass.	Organization that normally receives no more than one third of its support from gross investment income and unrelated business income and at the same time more than one third of its support from contributions, fees, and gross receipts related to exempt purposes
Bangladesh Student Association of Purdue University (Indiana)	326 S Chauncey Apt 17 West Lafayette, IN 47906 USA Contact EmailE: bdsa@purdue.edu Phone NumberP: (765) 400-9040	Student Ass.	The Bangladesh Students Association (BDSA) is a fairly large organization with undergraduate, graduate, and post-doctoral members with the majority being graduates here at the Purdue University, West Lafayette campus. It is a close-knit community enthusiastic about nurturing and sharing the rich Bangladeshi culture and heritage with Purdue's diverse community.

Name of the association/Entities	Contact Details	Main Objectives	Comments (Total Members/their Activities)
Bangladesh Medical Association of North America (Louisiana)	4329 ARIZONA AVE, KENNER, LA 70065 United States	Professional Ass.	-----
Bangladesh Association of America, Inc. (Maryland)	13113 Brushwood Way, Potomac, MD 20854, USA	Community Ass.	-----
Bangladesh Society of Washington D C (Maryland)	Phone: 703-626-5814 Alt. Phone: 703-930-2490 Location: Washington D.C., USA	Community Ass.	Bangladesh Association of Greater Washington DC (BAGWDC) is an organization of Bangladeshi community living in Washington D.C., Virginia and Maryland. It was founded as a non-political, not-for-profit, secular, open to all organization to celebrate Bangladeshi cultural heritage through music, dance, song, poetry etc in the USA. It was founded in 2007.
American Society of Bangladeshi Microbiologists Incorporated (Maryland)	American Society Of Bangladeshi Microbiologists Incorporated 432 Firestone Dr Silver Spring, MD 20905-8008	Professional Ass.	Since 2005, Tax Exempt World has been providing information on millions of charities and nonprofit organizations.
American Association of Bangladeshi Engineers & Architects - Michigan Chapter (Michigan)	Nazmul.Ula@Imu.edu 310-367-6202	Professional Ass.	The American Association of Bangladeshi Engineers and Architects shall be a non-profit, non-political, and non-religious voluntary engineering and architectural professional organization organized exclusively for educational, scientific, cultural, and charitable programs.
Bangladesh Medical Association of North America Michigan Chapter (Michigan)	Address: 87-46 168th street, Jamaica, NY 11432. Fax: 718-526-6661.	Professional Ass.	-----
Bangladesh Association of Greater Kansas City (Missouri)	located at Kansas City, Missouri, USA. The phone numbers are (816)-413-8637 and (913) 642-5379.	Community Ass.	To provide a forum for communication, friendship, education and community development for Bangladeshis and Bangalees living in the Midwest. The association membership also strives to provide professional assistance in community development for Bangladeshis in the Midwest.
Bangladesh Association of Greater St. Louis (Missouri)		Community Ass.	Organization representatives - add corrected or new information about Bangladesh Association Of Greater St Louis Non-representatives - add comments about Bangladesh Association Of Greater St Louis
Bangladesh Medical Association of North	5013 Clyden Cove, Raleigh, NC 27612	Professional Ass.	<u>The Bangladesh Medical Association of North America Carolina Chapter (BMANA-</u>



Name of the association/Entities	Contact Details	Main Objectives	Comments (Total Members/their Activities)
America (North Carolina)			CC) is a non-profit organization run by physicians of Bangladeshi origin practicing in North Carolina and South Carolina. The mission of Bangladesh Medical Association of North America – Carolina Chapter is to promote health, education, culture, fraternity, and charitable work within Bangladeshi medical professionals and the wider community.
Bangladesh Association of New Jersey Inc. (New Jersey)		Community Ass.	-----
America Bangladesh Medical Inc. (New Jersey)	15 Warren St #25 15 Warren St #25, Hackensack, NJ 07601, USA	Development Ass.	<u>representatives-add corrected or new information about America Bangladesh Medical Inc</u> <u>Non-representatives - add comments about America Bangladesh Medical Inc»</u>
Bangladeshi American Democratic Society, Inc. (New York)	1445 Unionport Rd, Bronx, Ny10462	Civic Participation	The organization depicts itself as a non-profit political organization! Bangladeshi American National Democratic Society helps Bangladeshi community with immigration related information such as rights and responsibilities of immigrants in the USA, what to do about police encounter, what remedies are available, who can help, how to ask for help, where to get assistance, etc. BADS offers seminar, meeting, talk and creates opportunity for Bangladeshi community to meet law practitioners, local council members and politicians. The Society also celebrates and organizes Bangladeshi national, cultural, religious events for Bangladeshi community. The organization helps Bangladeshi kids to introduce Bangladeshi culture.
Bangladesh American Community Council (New York)	Address: 1222 White Plains Road, Bronx, NY 10472	Community Ass.	Bangladeshi-American Community Council (BACC) is a Bangladeshi community organization based in Bronx, New York. The organization, a not-for-profit organization, provides varieties of services to Bangladeshi immigrant community, such as, immigration, legal, tax filing, general counseling etc.
Bangladesh Community Welfare Organization Inc. (New York)	30-81 31ST STREET ASTORIA, New York 11102 United States	Community Ass.	Bangladesh Community Welfare Organization Inc. is a Human Service Organization in Astoria, New York. It received its exempt organization status from the IRS in 2012. On this page you can find information on its exempt organization registration with the IRS.

Name of the association/Entities	Contact Details	Main Objectives	Comments (Total Members/their Activities)
Bangladesh. I. Circle (New York)	Phone: 646-262-9296 Location: New York, USA	Community Ass.	New York Bangla is an online news portal, published and managed from New York. It does not have any print version. The language of the news portal is Bangla but it has some English reporting. The principal target of New York Bangla is Bangladeshi community living in New York State. Local journalists write about Bangladeshi community issues. Many news are collected from Bangladeshi online newspapers and other news sources. New York Bangla is has associate portal like <a href="#">Washington Bangla and Georgia Bangla</a> .
Bronx Bangladesh Women's Association (New York)	2112 Blackrock Ave., 1st Floor, Bronx, NY 10472	Community Ass.	Bronx Bangladesh Women's Association is based in Bronx. Founded in 2007, the organization aims to better integrate and unite Bangladeshi women community living in Bronx, New York through annual Bangladeshi cultural events. Bronx Bangladesh Women's Association organizes annual fundraising events, cultural events, street fairs in Bronx borough. The association has educational and cultural program for Bangladeshi second generation kids and young. The aim of the group is to better integrate and unite the Bangladeshi community with American mainstream society.
American Bangladesh Friendship Association Inc. (New York)	Email:Rahman355@yahoo.com	Community Ass.	FOBANA, is a non-profit, non-political and non-discriminatory, IRS 501c(3) tax-exempt (Tax ID 26-1747615) organization. Year of establishment 1987. This organization of Bangladeshi Associations has been recognized as an umbrella, where Bangladeshi Americans gather to celebrate their success and introduce their vibrant culture to this multicultural country. Since its inception in 1987, FOBANA has been working tirelessly in this land far away from our ancestral homeland to keep our indigenous culture and commence it to our next generation growing in the United States and Canada. This is the 31th time the organization will hold its coveted annual convention which is also popularly known as FOBANA
Bangladesh Association of New York (New York)		Community Ass.	American Association of Bangladeshi Engineers and Architects, Inc., (AABEA) ( <a href="http://www.aabea.org">www.aabea.org</a> ) is a non-profit professional organization established on April 30, 1984 and registered in the State of

Name of the association/Entities	Contact Details	Main Objectives	Comments (Total Members/their Activities)
			Pennsylvania. At that time the name of the organization was American Association of Bangladesh Engineers (AABE). In 1999 the organization name was changed to American Association of Bangladeshi Engineers and Architects (AABEA) and a new constitution was ratified.
Bangladesh Society Inc. New York (New York)	86-24 hitney Avenue Elmhurst, New York 11373	Community Ass.	The prime mission of Bangladesh Society Inc. is to lead our community to a parallel way alongside the mainstream of USA through mutual cooperation and amity. The other mission of the society is to assimilate our new generation with our own culture, tradition, social and religious values so that they themselves preserve and practice these in their daily life.
American Association of Bangladeshi Engineers & Architects NY NJ CT (New York)	1338 Fifth Avenue, New Hyde Park, NY 11040	Professional Ass.	American Association of Bangladeshi Engineers and Architects (AABEA) is a non profit, Tax Exempt 501 © (3), professional organization dedicated to share the ideas and experiences with fellow professionals, assist in career enhancement of members and affiliates, work for the enhancement of Engineering and Architectural professions.
Bangladesh Medical Association of North America (New York)	87-46 168 street Jamaica, NY 11432 Ph: 718 794 4414 919 749 0389	Professional Ass.	The BMANA Alliance committee encourages charitable, educational and cultural enrichment and assists in enhancing local and national programs. Membership is open to the spouses of members of BMANA.
Bangladeshi American Pharmacists' Association (BAPA) (New York)	Phone: 516-650-7937 Alt. Phone: 347-239-7512 Location: New York, USA	Professional Ass.	The purpose of Bangladeshi-American Pharmacists Association (BAPA) is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» To foster cooperation and collaboration among Bangladeshi pharmacists residing in North America.</li> <li>» To build and maintain relations with other pharmacists' associations in North America.</li> <li>» To support the profession of pharmacy in Bangladesh and in North America.</li> <li>» To support and encourage the development of Pharmaceutical Science in Bangladesh.</li> <li>» To develop and conduct programs for maintaining and improving the professional standards.</li> <li>To promote welfare of members' families in case of need.</li> <li>To protect the professional interests of members of the Association.</li> </ul>

Name of the association/Entities	Contact Details	Main Objectives	Comments (Total Members/their Activities)
Bangladesh Association of Central Ohio (Ohio)	Library Park 2845 Home Rd, Powell, OH 43065	Community Ass.	<p>Bangladesh Association of Central Ohio (BACO) was established on August 16, 1998 to represent and promote Bangladesh and Bangla (Bengali) culture in Central Ohio and to build mutual goodwill, understanding, and respect between the peoples of North America and Bangladesh and to contribute in social peace, harmony, and economic growth.</p> <p>Since her inception, Bangladesh Association of Central Ohio and its members have been working hard to achieve its goals by organizing and participating in different community, multicultural, and charitable events.</p> <p>Please discuss issues, post common interests, forward messages, and anything that concerns Bangladesh Association of Central Ohio.</p>
Bangladeshi Students Association of Ohio (Ohio)	Ohio, USA	Student Ass.	<p>Established in 1995, Bangladesh Students Association at <u>Ohio State University</u> (BSA-OSU) is a voluntary not-for-profit student organization. The goal of the association is to create and promote awareness on the Bangladeshi culture and heritage on campus as well as through the Columbus community. BSA-OSU also aims to provide a broad perspective of modern and traditional Bangladesh as a country to Bangalis and non-Bangalis alike. Every year, BSA-OSU organizes many events such as cultural shows, movie screenings, sports tournaments, community service and fundraising initiatives, to provide its members with a memorable college experience. Above all, Bangladesh Students Association at Ohio State University provides a foundation which unites the students of Bangladeshi origin and tradition at the Ohio State University.</p>
Bangladesh Association of Pennsylvania (Pennsylvania)	869 Andover Road, Lansdale, PA 19446	Community Ass.	<p>Activities of the association include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organize picnic</li> <li>• Observe Ekushey/International Mother Language Day</li> <li>• Celebrate Bangla New Year or Boishakhi</li> <li>• Observe various Bangladeshi religious festivals</li> <li>• Organize cultural programs for adults and children</li> <li>• Participate in Bangladesh parade</li> <li>• Organize street fair etc.</li> </ul>

Name of the association/Entities	Contact Details	Main Objectives	Comments (Total Members/their Activities)
Bangladesh Association of Nashville (Tennessee)	3500 John A. Merritt Boulevard Nashville, TN 37209 Tel: (615) 963-5000	Community Ass.	Association (BSA) at Tennessee State University. From June 2007 till now we are here for supporting the Bangladeshi Student Community. BSA also serves to bring together the Bangladeshi community at TSU and the surrounding areas. Its purpose is to support, nurture, and nourish the culture and heritage of Bangladesh through different programs and thereby familiarizes Bangladesh to the diverse Nashville community.
Bangladesh Association Houston (Texas)	281-748-9880 Alt. Phone: 713-922-5669 Location: Texas, USA	Community Ass.	Bangladesh Association, Houston. The aim of the project is to build a Bangladeshi community center with following facilities: 1. Free medical health clinic 2. Library 3. Passport, dual-citizenship, power of attorney, visa and consulate service 4. Computer training and professional job seeking 5. After school program for kids 6. Immigration related help 7. Tutoring 8. Bangladeshi art, music, and other cultural services 9. Driving classes – for elders and new drivers (young) 10. Spoken Bangla classes – for non-Bangla speaking individuals 11. Programs for senior citizen, etc
Bangladesh Association of Greater Austin (Texas)	512-407-8240 Alt. Phone: 915-355-5893 Location: Texas, USA	Community Ass.	The Mission of Bangladesh Association of Greater Austin (BAGA) are following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen and perpetuate the Bangladeshi culture, tradition, heritage and language</li> <li>• Promote social, cultural and recreational activities</li> <li>• Conduct charitable welfares as needed and deemed appropriate by the Board of Directors</li> <li>• Serve as a platform for exchange of information and views on matters of interest to its members and</li> <li>• Represent members to any local, state or federal authority.</li> </ul>
Bangladesh American Center (Texas)	Bangladesh American Center 13415 Renn Road, Houston, TX 77083	Community Ass.	The mission of BAC is to facilitate social, cultural, intellectual, and educational activities of the Bangladesh-American Community, involving the Bangladeshi Americans or any other groups generally interested in promoting BAC vision and core values.

Name of the association/Entities	Contact Details	Main Objectives	Comments (Total Members/their Activities)
Bangladesh American Society of Greater Houston (Texas)	<b>1029 Hwy 6 N, Suite 650-215 Houston, TX 77079, USA</b>	Community Ass.	The Bangladesh-American Society of Greater Houston is a non-profit and non-political organization that qualifies under Section 501 (c) of the internal revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code. The purpose or purposes for which it is organized shall be: to provide for the intellectual, cultural, physical, social, spiritual, and civic welfare to people of Bangladeshi origin; to promote understanding, goodwill, and appreciation of cultures of Bangladesh among all persons regardless of color, creed, race, religion, and national origin; to promote Bengali-American relations; to promote cultural exchange with other groups, organizations, or institutions interested in Bengali culture; to facilitate activities of other professional, student, or any other group of Bangladeshis, provided that said groups, organizations, or institutions are also non-profit and non-political organizations duly organized under the State laws.
Bangladesh Association of North Texas (Texas)	PHONE: 972 935 4750 EMAIL: info@bantdfw.org EMAIL: webmaster@bantdfw.org	Community Ass.	The vision of BANT is to enrich the lives of the people of Bangladesh-origin living in North Texas, by inspiring their mind and spirit to create a sense of pride in maintaining an unique Bangladeshi identity here in the US, by projecting the rich culture and heritage of Bangladesh to our young generation in particular and by fostering social and cultural awareness among the Bangladeshi community in general.
Bangladeshi Expatriate Society of Texas (Texas)	-----	Community Ass.	-----
Federation of Bangladeshi Associations in North America (FOBANA) (Texas)	23111 San Salvador Place, Katy, TX 77494	Networking	Federation of Bangladeshi Associations in North America (FOBANA) is an umbrella of Bangladeshi American living in USA and Canada. FOBANA celebrates the success of Bangladeshi American community in North America. Since its inception in 1987, it has been working tirelessly to introduce Bangladeshi culture to the next generation who are growing up in the United States and Canada. The organization is based in Washington D.C., USA. Federation of Bangladeshi Associations in North America (FOBANA) also celebrates and uphold the multicultural aspect of the American society by introducing Bangladeshi culture and tradition to other communities. Under

Name of the association/Entities	Contact Details	Main Objectives	Comments (Total Members/their Activities)
			the slogan of “FOBANA is an institution, not just an annual convention”, the organization set out to engage more with Bangladeshi community.
Bangladesh Development Initiative (Washington)	15160 SE 54th Place Bellevue, WA 98006 USA	Academic	The central focus of BDI is to see an all-encompassing development process get started in Bangladesh. All the activities of BDI are geared to this aim.
American Institute of Bangladesh Studies (Wisconsin)	Tel:608-265-1471 Email: aibs@southasia.wisc.edu	Academic	<p>The American Institute of Bangladesh Studies (AIBS) was established in 1989 as a result of an initiative undertaken by Professor Craig Baxter of Juniata College, and joined by faculty members from Columbia University, University of Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania State University, University of Chicago, Glassboro State College (now Rowan University), and the University of Wisconsin at Oshkosh. In 1989, AIBS signed an agreement with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), Government of Bangladesh (GOB), for a financial contribution to fund fellowships for U.S scholars to conduct research in Bangladesh. The first fellowship award was made in 1990.</p> <p>In 1991-92 AIBS connected with the United States Information Agency (USIA) to obtain additional funding for educational exchanges between the United States and Bangladesh. AIBS received funding from USIA to establish four additional programs. These included the Extension Bangladesh Lecture Series, the Research and Development Seminars, the Undergraduate Research Fellowship Grant, and the Faculty Support Funds.</p>

## Bangladeshi Diaspora Associations in UK

Association	Contact Details	Main Objectives	Comments (Total Members/their Activities)
Westminster Bangladeshi Association (WBA)	60-62 Page Street Westminster London SW1P 4DE e: wbasw1@aol.com 020 7828 6500 Support the Bangladeshi Community in South Westminster	Civic & Social Organization	The Bangladeshi community settled in the borough after the Second World War. Bangladeshi community of South Westminster is a hidden in a number of council estates, e.g. Milbank, Churchill Garden, Grosvenor etc. Due to the disadvantages faced by the Bangladeshi community, they have found it difficult to engage themselves in mainstream services and politically to improve socially and economically. In response to this ever-exacerbating exclusion, a minority of the Bangladeshi people campaigned for community awareness and wider participation, to relieve poverty and multifarious disadvantages from an organised platform.
BANGLADESH SOCIETY: Queen Marry University Student Union	E-Mail: qmulbsoc@gmail.com	Student Association	We are a friendly society that seeks to promote Bangladeshi culture on campus. This society is open to anyone and everyone with a passion for Bangladesh or just wants to meet and socialize with other students. Events include social meet ups within our University and other Universities across the UK.
Northampton Bangladeshi Association	Contact us. Tel: 01604 624930 Email: nba_bangla@hotmail.com  Post: Gateway Centre Mill Road Northampton NN2 6AX	Community Association	Bangladeshi's have been living in Northampton since the 1960's and in 1984 with hard work of lot of Bangladeshi people they established the Northampton Bangladeshi community centre from a small room in the local mosque at St. George's street. As the Bangladeshi population grew many were recognised as one of the most excluded in Northampton. It was identified as one most need and least likely to access key services. In 2001 Northampton Bangladeshi association was formed in conjunction with Northamptonshire County council and other key service provider and plan was drawn up to identify and address some of the challenges facing the community. In 2004 a strong management committee backed by a dedicated group of staff and volunteers had developed a set of services and partnerships that enabled the community to access and benefit and services from newly one stop shop in a purpose built venue at the Gateway centre in Mill road, Semilong.



Name of the association/Entities	Contact Details	Main Objectives	Comments (Total Members/their Activities)
Islington Bangladesh Association	<b>Office &amp; Registered Address:</b> 71. Caledonian Road, London N1 9BT <b>Tel (Office):</b> 0207 833 0591 <b>Tel (Projects):</b> 0207 713 8971 <b>Email:</b> asad@ibal.org.uk <b>Registered Charity No.</b> 1148834 <b>Company Registration No.</b> 07888326 <b>Contact us:</b> asad@ibal.org.uk	Community Association	<i>to improve social and economic well-being by tackling poverty and social exclusion, promoting education and encouraging participation in mainstream services; sympathetic to their cultural needs.</i> <i>To enhance the quality of life and health of all people of all ages and ethnicity in particular Bangladeshi, strengthening, bringing together and creating ownership and partnership amongst the Bangladeshi Community in Islington and Kings Cross area of London Borough of Camden.</i>
Isle of Dogs Bangladeshi Association and Cultural Centre	<b>Idea Store Information &amp; Website</b> 3rd Floor John Onslow House 1 Ewart Place London E3 5EQ <b>Telephone:</b> 020 7538 1650 <b>Email:</b> iodbangladeshi@aol.com <b>Website:</b> www.iodbangladeshi.org.uk	Cultural Association	To help & support the local Bangladeshi community to achieve a better and happier life. To relieve poverty by provision of advice, information and counselling. To advance education in language, history and culture of Bangladesh and to integrate with the multi-cultural society of this land. To advance education amongst the residents of Tower Hamlets in particular, the Bangladeshi residents of Docklands area by provision of training to obtain better employment. To provide various facilities for the recreation of the local Bangladeshi residents and their children in the interest of social welfare for the improvement of a better & quality of life. To assist the local students, research projects or any other organisation working or want to work for the development of the Bangladeshi community in the area.
UCL Bangla Society	<b>Students' Union UCL</b> 25 Gordon Street London WC1H 0AY	Student Association	How do we make more happen at UCL? We work with the smartest, most enthusiastic and driven people we know, our 38,000+ members. Students' Union UCL provides a range of services that helps you to make the most of university- and discover more about yourself. We offer over 250 clubs and societies, and run a selection of bars, cafes and shops on campus. We can help you get involved in campaigning, volunteering, and even changing the way the university works. Every student at UCL is automatically a member of the Union making us one of the largest and most diverse student communities in the world.

Name of the association/Entities	Contact Details	Main Objectives	Comments (Total Members/their Activities)
Culloden Bangladeshi Parents Association	49-51 Aberfeldy Street London, E14 0NU United Kingdom	Civic & Social Organization	Culloden Bangladeshi Parents Association was founded in 1988. Its initial aims was to serve the minority groups, namely the Bangladeshi community living in the Aberfeldy and Brownfield areas of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. Culloden Bangladeshi Parents Association aims to promote the Bangladeshi culture and language through education and social and cultural events. It also aims to monitor the educational achievement, employment levels within minority groups, health and crime and anti social behaviour of Bangladeshi community members. It also helps to promote education amongst Bangladeshi community, improve employment and reduce crime through education, training, skills and accreditation, conflict resolution and liaising with local councils, schools, police and other authorities. Culloden Bangladeshi also provides social activities to promote community cohesion.
The <b>Bangladeshi Islamic Centre</b> (BIC)	You can contact us at the centre anytime during our opening hours: <b>Monday to Friday from 9am to 5:30pm</b> <b>Bangladeshi Islamic Centre</b> <b>10-11 Lewisham Road</b> <b>Smethwick</b> <b>Warley</b> <b>West Midlands B66 2BP</b> If you wish to contact us by phone or fax: Tel: 0121 558 8204/8261 Fax: 0121 558 8204 Alternatively you can email: <a href="mailto:contact@bicentre.org.uk">contact@bicentre.org.uk</a>	Community and voluntary organization	The overriding vision of the <b>Bangladeshi Islamic Centre</b> is to be the most inclusive and successful community and voluntary sector organization in Sandwell. Underpinning this high level inspirational vision is our total commitment to improving the quality of life for all local residents and with a particular focus upon the Bangladeshi and other BME groups living and working in the Sandwell Borough. Our mission statement: <i>To promote the wellbeing of the local community and support the achievement of lifelong learning for excellence.</i>
Confederation of Bangladeshi Organizations (CBO)	ADDRESS <b>CBO - Confederation of Bangladeshi Organizations</b> <b>GGRC - Greets Green Resource Centre</b> Harwood Street West Bromwich West Midlands	community led Voluntary Sector Organization	CBO is an affiliated umbrella forum and registered charitable and one of the leading community led Voluntary Sector Organization in Sandwell; established in 1985 it aims to promote positive pathways into inclusion through innovative interventions in community development and regeneration.

Name of the association/Entities	Contact Details	Main Objectives	Comments (Total Members/their Activities)
	B70 9JF HOURS OF OPERATION Mon-Fri: 9am-5pm CONTACT INFO E: info@cbo786.co.uk T: 0121 500 5441		
Manchester Bangladeshi Women's Organization-Ananna	Tel: 0845 077 9300	COMMUNITY ORGANISATION AWARD FOR GENDER	Advice, information and support for Bangladeshi women. Subjects covered include welfare rights, housing, health, education and training, accessing employment. Well woman sessions, mental health and reducing isolation outreach workers. English, sewing and dressmaking classes (with a creche), child development classes, mother and toddler group and older people's coffee mornings.
The University of Nottingham Bengali Society	Students' Union Portland Building University Park Nottingham NG7 2RD Opening hours Tel : 0115 84 68800 9am - 5pm Monday to Friday	Student Association	The University of Nottingham Bengali Society projects the identity and culture of the people of Bangladesh broadly and the wider Bengali community in general and interact with other cultures within the diversified cultural environment within the University of Nottingham. The Society aims to create a sense of community amongst its members, through regular small socials and gatherings be it dinners in town, movie nights and also host major cultural events like Bengali Food Festivals, Pohela Boishakh (Bengali New Year), International Mother Language Day (Ekushe February) etc. We also hope to collaborate with other societies to bring our members few exciting events throughout the year.

## Bangladeshi Diaspora Associations in Australia

Association	Contact Details	Main Objectives
The South Australian Bangladeshi Community Association (SABCA)	Email: <a href="mailto:contact@sabca.org.au">contact@sabca.org.au</a>	Community Association
The Bangladesh Australia Association of Western Australia Inc. (BAAWA)		
Bengali Association of Western Australia	Bengali Association of WA Inc 25 Georgia Way, Success, WA 6164 Email: <a href="mailto:communications@bawa.com.au">communications@bawa.com.au</a> Web: <a href="http://www.bawa.com.au">www.bawa.com.au</a>	Socio-cultural Organization
Bangladesh Australia Puja Association – BAPA	Contact Number: +61 412 120 425 Email: <a href="mailto:bapa.act@gmail.com">bapa.act@gmail.com</a>	Community Organization
Bangladeshi Community School (BCS)	<b>Phone:</b> (61) 410 202 808 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:info@bcs.sabca.org.au">info@bcs.sabca.org.au</a> <b>Address:</b> 140 Goodwood Road, Goodwood, SA 5034	Academic Organization
Australia Bangladesh Business Council Inc.	<b>Contact us:</b> Secretary Australia Bangladesh Business Council Inc. Suite-19, 296 Marrickville Rd, Marrickville NSW 2204, AUSTRALIA <b>Phone:</b> 0451 452 545 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:info@abbc.org.au">info@abbc.org.au</a>	Business Community
Bangladesh Society of Sydney Inc. (BDSS)	Bangladesh Society of Sydney Unit 34 43 Watkin Street, Rockdale NSW 2216 Mobile: +61 426 832 510	Social Organization
SMEC Bangladesh	Level 6, 480 St Pauls Terrace Fortitude Valley QLD 4006 Australia (PO Box 2211, Fortitude Valley, QLD 4006) <a href="mailto:brisbane@smec.com">brisbane@smec.com</a> +61 7 3029 6600 +61 7 3029 6650	Engineering Bodies

## Bangladeshi Diaspora Associations in Canada

Name of the association/Entities	Contact Details	Main Objectives	Comments (Total Members/their Activities)
Association of Bangladeshi Engineers of Alberta, Canada (ABEAC)	Phone: 587-719-4905 Alt. Phone: 403-667-5430 Location: Canada	Professional Association	Association of Bangladeshi Engineers of Alberta, Canada (ABEAC) is a professional forum for engineers and architects of Bangladesh heritage living in Alberta, Canada. Based in Calgary and established in 2013, ABEAC is a non-profit, non-political, voluntary professional organization. The organization provides its members a non-partisan, non-religious environment to interact, network for mutual benefit and growth. ABEAC confers high value for its members and consistently helping them in pursuing professional, social and personal development. In a safe environment, with respect, dignity and compassion, ABEAC provides innovative, professional programs and services promoting positive life changes to its members in their sphere of influence. ABEAC strives hard to contributing in the overall growth of Alberta through the continuous induction of its best engineering professionals in the local job market.
Bangladeshi-Canadian Community Services (BCS)	<b>Headquarters</b> 2811 Danforth Ave Toronto, Ontario M4C1M2 Canada	Community Association	The Bangladeshi-Canadian Community Services (BCS) addresses the well-being of women, men, seniors, children, youths and minority and disadvantaged people living in the Crescent Town, Teesdale, Dawes, Gower and Danforth area of the City of East York. We are a central source of information serving as a link between available resources and the clients living in our catchments areas who need them. Ongoing programs include information and referral services, free legal clinics and a variety of support groups. Seasonal program brochures detail special events and educational workshops. The organization is a non-threatening, informal and supportive place, accessible to women, men, seniors, youths and children of all socio-economic and ethno-racial backgrounds living in BCS catchments areas (i.e. Crescent Town, Teesdale, Dawes, Gower and Danforth)
Bangladeshi-Canadian Community Services (BCS)	Contact Phone: 416-699-4484 Address: 2899 Danforth Avenue Toronto, ON M4C 1M3 Email:	Community Association Community Association Community Association	Located in one of the densely populated areas of Toronto (Victoria Park and Danforth), Bangladeshi-Canadian Community Services (BCS) is a nonprofit, charitable, multi-service organization that has been providing services to the local

Name of the association/Entities	Contact Details	Main Objectives	Comments (Total Members/their Activities)
	info@bangladeshi.ca Fax: 416-698-8127		community, particularly the minority groups, since 2000. Knowledge of the local area and people's values and norms has allowed BCS to maximize its potential by providing services targeted to newcomers, youth, women, and seniors. BCS has more than 3,000 beneficiaries that rely on the services provided by the Organization, with more being added every year.
National Bangladeshi-Canadian Council (NBCC)	Email: nbcc@primus.ca Phone: 438-922-9250		The National Bangladeshi-Canadian Council (NBCC) represents the Bangladeshi Canadian community before the people and Government of Canada, promotes linkages with Bangladesh and identifies and addresses the needs of the Bangladeshi community in Canada to ensure its continued existence and development for the enhancement of Canada's socio-cultural fabric.
Bangladeshi-Canadian Community Services	Mailing Address: Danforth Village BIA Shoppers World Postal Outlet 3003 Danforth Avenue P.O. Box 93617 Toronto, ON M4C 5R5 Our email: info@dvia.ca		The mission of the Bangladeshi Community Services is to "help people to help themselves" by delivering services through advocacy, referrals, skill development and partnerships. BCS supports South Asian new immigrants with a special focus on Bangladeshi immigrants. Referrals for career/employment counselling and newcomer needs, housing, education, and guidance counselling for schoolchildren.

## International Seminar on NRB Engagement in National Development

December 13, 2017



