



VOICE OF THE CIVIL SOCIETY

GLOBAL FORUM ON MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT (GFMD) 2025

13 March 2025 | Dhaka, Bangladesh



Summary

On 13 March 2025, the Bangladesh Civil Society for Migrants (BCSM), in partnership with Refugee and Migratory Movements Research (RMMRU), WARBE Development Foundation, and BASUG, held a national stakeholder consultation in Dhaka, supported by IOM and the EU. The event was part of preparations for the 15th Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD), set for September 2025 in Colombia. The GFMD is the most significant global platform promoting open and transparent dialogue on international migration governance, emphasizing its strong link to development and the well-being of societies in countries of origin, transit, and destination.

The consultation gathered civil society groups, migrant representatives, academics, and other stakeholders to develop coordinated input reflecting the realities of Bangladeshi migrants.

Key themes included:

- Migration challenges and protection gaps.
- Labour mobility for development and inclusion.
- Migrant rights in origin and destination countries.
- Regular migration pathways and ethical recruitment.

Under the theme “Regular Migration, Labour Mobility, and Human Rights,” the National Stakeholder Consultation emphasized the importance of shared responsibility and South-South cooperation in migration governance. The event served as a platform to ensure grassroots voices from Bangladesh contribute meaningfully to shaping global migration policies.

Participants also emphasized the need to center migrant workers' voices in the formulation of just and effective migration policies. A call was made for institutional reforms, to strengthen coordination between government and civil society in the migration governance process.

The GFMD 2025 will be held under the **Chairmanship of Colombia**, marking a pivotal moment in the global discourse on migration and development. This forum continues to serve as a unique space for dialogue among governments, international organizations, civil society, and the private sector. The overarching theme for the 2025 Forum is: **"Regular Migration, Labour Mobility, and Human Rights: Pillars of Development and Well-Being of Societies."** This theme underscores the critical importance of international cooperation in recognizing migration as a fundamental driver of sustainable development. As migration patterns become increasingly complex driven by factors such as climate change, conflict, and global-inequality- the GFMD 2025 will provide a vital platform to advance innovative policy responses and multi-stakeholder partnerships aimed at maximizing the benefits of migration. while mitigating its challenges.



Summary of the Discussions:

Roundtable 1 - Strength in Movement: The Impact of Women on Global Migration and Development

Challenges to Ensuring Safe, Informed, and Empowered Migration for Women

- Reliance on sub agents: Migrants often depend on informal sub-agents, facing high fees, misinformation, and lack of transparency.
- Lack of Information: Many are unaware of required skills, regular processes, or the conditions in destination countries.
- Lack of effective training: Pre-departure training is often minimal, often leaving migrants unprepared for jobs, rights, or cultural norms.
- Vulnerability to Exploitation: Limited awareness of legal protection and rights expose migrants to abuse and wage theft.
- Insufficient Access to Support: Legal aid and emergency services are often hard to reach, especially during crises or contract disputes.

Recommendations for Empowering Women Migrants and Ensuring Safe, Fair Migration

- Enforce Fair Recruitment: Uphold labor rights through strong bilateral and multilateral agreements.
- Raise Awareness: Launch nationwide campaigns on regular migration processes and risks of irregular channels.
- Prevent Exploitation: Strengthen monitoring of recruitment and employment.
- Enhance Skills Recognition: Expand Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) to boost job prospects for informal workers.
- Close Gender Gaps: Review policies to ensure equal protection and support for all migrants, especially women.
- Improve Complaints Systems: Ensure safe, accessible, and effective grievance mechanisms.
- Implement Global Standards: Enforce relevant ILO Conventions to protect workers and combat harassment including adherence to global migration frameworks.

- Expand Women's Shelters: Increase safe spaces abroad for distressed women migrants, with legal and psychosocial support.

Roundtable 2 – Children and Youth on the Move: Innovators for Tomorrow's Development

Challenges Hindering the Safe and Empowered Migration of Children and Youth

- Unprepared Early Migration: Many youths migrate or work early without adequate education or skills, limiting opportunities and increasing risk of exploitation.
- Lack of Awareness: Limited knowledge of safe, regular migration channels leads youth to rely on brokers and face higher risks of fraud and abuse.

Recommendations for Empowering and Supporting Migrant Youth

- Support Community Networks: Promote migrant groups and community organizations to share information, offer peer support, and build resilience.
- Training on Soft Skills and Language: Provide youth with communication, digital, and financial skills, along with language training for better job readiness and integration.

Roundtable 3 - The Interplay of Media and Culture to Construct and Deconstruct the Reality of Migration

Core Challenges in Media Representation and Misinformation on Migration

- No System to Verify Misinformation: Migrants lack access to reliable fact-checking, leaving them vulnerable to false or harmful information.
- Negative Media Bias: Media often highlight exploitation over success stories, distorting public perception of migration.
- Limited Local Voices: Migration coverage is dominated by national or global narratives, sidelining local and grassroots perspectives.
- Weak Media Accountability: Inadequate oversight allows harmful stereotypes and misinformation to spread unchecked.

Recommendations to Improve Migration Communication and Counter Misinformation

- **Challenge Harmful Narratives:** Use government media to promote balanced, rights-based migration stories and counter misinformation.
- **Promote Local Communication:** Share accurate, accessible info via community media and engage local leaders and returnees.
- **Create Info Hubs:** Set up local migration centers to provide verified guidance and support.
- **Teach Media Literacy:** Include digital literacy in training to help migrants spot misinformation and rely on trusted sources.

Roundtable 4 - Climate Change: Safe Labour Routes as a Bridge to Prosperity

Climate-Driven Migration and Systemic Challenges

- **Climate-Driven Migration:** Disasters like floods and erosion push people to migrate for survival.
- **Lack of Info on Safe Migration:** Climate-affected individuals often lack knowledge of regular pathways and job requirements.
- **Certification Barriers:** Many are unaware of or cannot access the certifications needed for skilled jobs abroad.
- **Few Local Job Options:** Limited government job programs in affected areas make risky migration the default choice.
- **Stigma and Exclusion:** Migrants face social stigma, policy exclusion, and misrepresentation.
- **Disrupted Education:** Climate displacement often halts children's education, deepening long-term vulnerability.

Recommendations to Address Climate-Induced Migration and Promote Safer Labor Mobility

- **Expand Access to Information:** Launch nationwide awareness campaigns on safe migration, rights, and services, using local languages and accessible formats.
- **Support Climate-Resilient Livelihoods:** Map vulnerable areas and promote local jobs through skills training, small businesses, and resilient agriculture. Strengthen social protection to reduce forced migration.

- **Improve Policy Coordination:** Enhance collaboration across ministries and decentralize services for better local access.
- **Promote Women's Participation:** Increase women's access to training, certification, and job programs, with a focus on gender-responsive strategies.

Roundtable 5 - Regional Cooperation and Integration to Promote Safe and Regular Migration for Development

Challenges in Migration Management

- **Poor Knowledge Sharing:** Limited platforms and coordination keep safe migration models isolated, blocking wider adoption.
- **Fragmented Governance:** Disjointed policies across agencies reduce migrant protection and support.
- **Gender Gaps:** Women migrants face higher risks due to lack of gender-sensitive policies and oversight.

Key Recommendations to Strengthen Regional Migration Governance and Cooperation

- **Scale Proven Models:** Promote cross-country adoption of skill certification, RPL, and ethical recruitment, supported by knowledge-sharing platforms.
- **Strengthen Regional Cooperation:** Use platforms like ASEAN and SAARC to align policies, improve labor mobility, and address shared migration challenges.
- **Advance Rights-Based Approaches:** Enhance training, mutual skill recognition, and gender-responsive policies to ensure fair, inclusive migration for all workers.



Roundtable 6 - New Technologies and Digitalization: Improving Migration Management and Regular Migration Pathways

Challenges in Digital Inclusion and System Integration for Migration Management

- **Low Digital Access:** Many rural migrants lack the skills and infrastructure to use online services like job portals or grievance platforms.
- **Fragmented Systems:** Migration services are spread across uncoordinated platforms, causing confusion and inefficiency.
- **Cost and Security Issues:** Building secure, user-friendly digital systems is costly, and data privacy risks remain largely unaddressed.

Strategic Recommendations for Inclusive and Secure Digital Migration Systems

- **Use Digital Innovation:** Implement e-visas, biometric registration, and centralized databases to boost transparency, speed up processes, and reduce fraud.
- **Improve Digital Literacy and Access:** Provide tailored training for migrants, especially women and youth, and partner to enhance connectivity and device availability.
- **Design User-Friendly Platforms:** Create multilingual, mobile-compatible tools with migrant input to ensure accessibility and cultural relevance.

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