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## A New Overseas Employment Policy for Bangladesh

### *Initial consultations towards revision of the Overseas Employment Policy 2006*

The Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment (MEWOE) has initiated a revision of the Overseas Employment Policy 2006, with the objective to elaborate a new instrument taking into account current challenges and opportunities for Bangladesh and its workers in the sector of labour migration. The policy to be developed with technical support from the ILO is to provide a comprehensive labour migration framework with a particular focus on the protection of migrant workers.

The revision process is conducted with technical support from the ILO and includes a number of consultations with academic experts, representatives from civil society, employers' and workers' organizations, in order to ensure an inclusive and pertinent policy formulation.

A first day-long stakeholder consultation was convened on 15 May at the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment (MEWOE) and was attended by about 65 representatives from civil society organizations, academic experts, workers' and employer's organizations. Addressed with a questionnaire prior to the consultation, all stakeholders were also requested to submit comments in written on the Overseas Employment Policy 2006 and provide recommendations for the revision.

On 16 May, a technical consultation was conducted with the Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET). The Director General, Mrs. Begum Shamsun Nahar, and her directors provided numerous inputs on the processing of outgoing migrant workers and mechanisms to provide appropriate skills training and pre-departure information. Needs for efficient social protection and support services to the migrant workers while abroad were also discussed to be addressed in the new policy.



A round table was organized on 14 May with the Human Development Research Institute (HDRC), where Professor Barakat and his team of researchers presented key findings from five research studies commissioned by the ILO to inform the policy revision process. The studies cover policy-relevant areas such as skills and certification, recruitment and migration costs, remittances, contribution from diaspora and gendered mainstreaming of migration into the national development. The five research studies and the policy recommendations formulated were discussed and will be finalized before wider publication.

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



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In addition to these initial consultations, the ILO Chief Technical Advisor, Ms. Nisha, and the ILO-mandated technical expert, Mr. Mohammed Muqtada, held two discussions with the Honorable Minister, H.E. Khandker Mosharraf Hossein, to get his valuable views on key policy issues ahead of the drafting process.

Based on inputs and recommendations from this initial round of consultations and discussions, a new Overseas Employment will be drafted and submitted for comments in further consultations with stakeholders and ministries in two separate day-long workshops planned in the first part of July. It is expected to finalize a draft Overseas Employment Policy 2013 by the end of the following month.

The policy revision process is carried on with technical support from the International Labour Organization (ILO) through the Project “Promoting Decent Work through Improved Migration Policy and its Application in Bangladesh”, funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). Within the framework of the ILO’s tripartite structure involving the Workers, Employers and Government, the project seeks to maximize the beneficial impact of labour migration on economic development and to improve protection standards for the migrant workers from Bangladesh.



Dhaka, 27 May 2013

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