



Event Report

Gender Responsive Budget *to* **Empower Women Migrants**

Conference Hall, Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare & Overseas Employment
30th June, 2019

The government is keen to listen to the voice of the CSOs to strengthen the gender responsiveness of the budget, said Rownaq Jahan, Secretary of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Ministry at a seminar. Speaking as a special guest, she also stated that the government is focused on empowering the women migrants and mainstreaming gender equality.

Ahmed Munirus Saleheen, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment, assured that scarcity of money would not be a problem if the relevant stakeholders can come up with appropriate programs to address the issues that women migrant workers face.

Speakers at the event also argued that instead of arbitrarily reporting a section of the budget as gender budget, ministries need to ensure that every step in

the budgeting process takes into account the special and differential needs of women.

To address these issues and discuss how gender-responsive budgeting can play an effective role to empower women migrant workers, a policy discussion on 'Gender Responsive Budget to Empower Women Migrants' was organized on 30th June 2019.

The event was jointly organized by IID (Institute of Informatics and Development) and Bangladesh Nari Sramik Kendra (BNSK) in partnership with WARBE Development Foundation and British Council's PROKAS, at the conference hall of Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare & Overseas Employment in Dhaka. Syed Saiful Haque, Chairman of WARBE Development Foundation, inaugurated the event, while Sheepa Hafiza, Executive Director of Ain O Shalish Kendra chaired the event.



Syed Ahamed, CEO of IID, presented the keynote, where he put forward eight specific recommendations for creating a gender-responsive budget to empower woman migrant workers. He emphasized that in addition to improving the quality of training for the aspirant migrants, initiatives should be taken to increase the participation of women in training. He mentioned that the embassy officials should also be rigorously sensitized on gender issues. While determining new labour markets, special and differential needs of women should be taken into account, he recommended.



Emphasizing on the importance of gender mainstreaming, Rahnuma Salam Khan, National Program Officer of ILO, said that simply increasing the budget or making the budget gender-sensitive is not the solution. The government institutions must also focus on establishing a gender-sensitive approach both at their workplaces and within their program activities.



Shariful Islam Hasan, Head of BRAC Migration Program, stressed on creating mass-awareness for the aspirants, so they can make informed decisions about economic migration at the pre-decision stage. A weekly





'pre-decision orientation' organized at the local Technical Training Centers can greatly facilitate awareness among the aspirants, he suggested.

Sumaiya Islam, Executive Director of BNSK, mentioned that proper training is required to increase workers' efficiency in crisis management, especially for the women migrants.



Stressing on the necessity of public-private partnership, Syed Saiful Haque, Chairman of WARBE Development Foundation, recommended consultation with the relevant private sector before budgeting. He



claimed, this will help assist the government to create a more effective financing plan.

Among others, Gazi Mohammad Julhash, Director General of Wage Earners' Welfare Board, Nurul Islam, Director, Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training, Ariful Haque, Deputy General Manager, Bangladesh Overseas Employment and Services Limited, Shameem Ahmed Chowdhury Noman, Secretary General, BAIRA; Gerry Fox, Team Leader, PROKAS, Shirin Lira, Gender and Social Inclusion Adviser, PROKAS, also participated at the migration policy seminar.





8 recommendations

for creating a gender-responsive budget



While undertaking new initiatives, differential needs and conditions of both men and women should be identified and taken into careful consideration.



To facilitate the enhancement of the migration budget, new projects should be adopted.



Taking initiatives to increase women's participation in training.



Investing in training quality and gender-sensitive infrastructures and facilities.



While exploring and determining new labour markets, special and differential needs and skills of women should be taken into account.



The embassy officials should be rigorously sensitized on gender issues.



Accumulating and adjusting the budget for foreign missions proportionately to the number of migrants and grievances in the destination countries.



Integrating public-private partnerships into next year's budgeting plan.

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