

New Landscape in Migration Research from CMS, NSU: Social Remittances of Returnee Migrants in Bangladesh

Porikroma Desk : Despite acquiring valuable skills and experiences, returnee migrants face challenges in applying these skills within the local labor market, suggesting a need for targeted interventions to bridge this gap, findings of a recent report says. Center for Migration Studies (CMS) of North South University (NSU) in collaboration with Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) hosted dissemination event today, unveiling significant findings from research project titled “Examining the Social Remittances of Returnee Migrant Workers in Bangladesh”. The event, held on Tuesday, brought together leading academicians, experts, stakeholders, and policymakers to discuss the implications of the research and chart a course for future action.

The research investigated social remittances – the flow of ideas, behaviors, identities, and social capital flow via migration of returnee Bangladeshi migrant workers from the Middle East and the Gulf region. Chief guest of the event Dr. Mallick Anwar Hossain, Managing Director, Bangladesh Overseas Employment and Services Limited (BOESL) expressed commitment to collaborate with academia and other stakeholders to ensure dignified reintegration of migrant workers. He also stressed on the need to focus on social costs and stated that migrant workers are also bringing negative culture like gambling, alcoholism which also need to be addressed.

“The study suggests that migration experiences have the

potential to enhance societal inclusivity and engagement, pointing towards the opportunity for leveraging returnee migrants as agents of social change,” said Dr. Samiksha Koirala, principal investigator of the research and Assistant Professor of North South University said.

The event featured a panel discussion where Dr. Harisur Rahman, Associate Professor, North South University shared recommendations stating the need to develop targeted interventions to help migrants effectively utilize their acquired skills upon their return. “This could include providing training programs and workshops aimed at enhancing skill utilization in the local labor market,” he said.

Similarly, Dr. Selim Reza, a discussant and Associate Professor of North South University pointed out that the study was unique as it attempted to look into migrant workers’ contribution beyond financial remittances. He further said our food habits and lifestyle has been greatly influenced by migrant workers and it is important to acknowledge that. The other discussant Mr. Md. Aminul Islam, Team Lead of Migration Social Enterprises, BRAC stressed on the need to transfer skill. Similarly, Marina Sultana, Director of Program Refugee and Migratory Movement Research Unit (RMMRU) said that it was crucial to address social stigma around women migrant workers.

Dean (IC) of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Professor Sk. Tawfique M. Haque, who is also Director of the Center for Migration Studies, urged students to cultivate empathy towards migrant workers. He additionally emphasized the significance of investigating whether the educational background of migrant workers correlates directly with their contribution in social remittance.

Nazia Haider, program manager of SDC along with representatives from different civil society organizations were present at the event. Prof. Abdur Rob Khan, Pro-VC (IC of North South University chaired the event.

CMS of the SIPG is a regional think tank on migration issues and brings together academics, scholars, researchers, and practitioners to produce, learn and share knowledge that is useful and informs policy, a source of knowledge on migration, and a means of achieving human rights and justice for those who are moving in need.

For more information about the research findings and future events, please visit <https://www.northsouth.edu/sipg/cms>