

Remittance flow to Bangladesh to exceed \$ 13 billion this year

Remittance inflow to Bangladesh is expected to exceed US \$13 billion during the current financial year. The prediction came from the Bangladesh Bank Governor, Dr Atiur Rahman while speaking at a luncheon organised by Foreign Investment Chamber of Commerce and Industry at a local hotel in Dhaka, capital of Bangladesh recently. His optimism is primarily based on the encouraging figure for the first eight months and 23 days of the current fiscal starting on July 1, 2011. During this period, Bangladeshi expatriates remitted US \$ 9.26 billion, he said.

"We hope the inflow will continue and exceed US \$13-billion mark," Atiur said as he attended. "The remittance inflow is very good. The rate of growth is above 12 percent," he added. According to him, the remittance was US \$ 11.65 billion in the last fiscal year, marking a 6 percent growth over the previous year. Dr. Atiur urged the entrepreneurs to go for investment considering the situation of the whole country. "Investment considerations should not be based only on the picture of the capital. Investors have to take into account the whole country and see how stable our economic foundation is at the rural level," he said. "All obstacles to investment must be removed if we want to see increased economic growth. Our younger generation has to be utilised. They must be involved in building the country by developing their capacity through training," he added.

Inspiring migrants' initiatives on RfCD:

BASUG-Network University Project, RfCD reaches crucial milestone

The project 'Remittances for Community Development' (RfCD) has reached some crucial milestones. In cooperation with Triple L bv of the Network University and Oxfam Novib, BASUG has continued its work to investigate inspiring migrant initiatives that aim to support development efforts in their countries of origin. After the successful completion of the first project year, BASUG and its partners are glad to announce that we were given approval by Oxfam Novib to continue its efforts for a second year. The partnership is committed to build further upon the feedback and results received during the first year.

Throughout the first period, the partners were able to investigate both globally and in Bangladesh the opportunities for Remittances for Community Development initiatives. Our mid-term conclusions were shared during three stakeholders meetings that were conducted in Chittagong, Sylhet and Dhaka in May 2011. Building further on the feedback received during these sessions and throughout our research activities, the second year is geared towards bringing theory to practice. We want to translate our findings into practical outputs in the second year in such a way that it can assist migrants and other stakeholders in their efforts to stimulate development in countries of origin.

Documentary Film on RfCD made

We made it our objective to transform our lessons learned after the first year of project implementation to functional outputs that can directly benefit migrants and others interested in the field of Migration & Development. As a result, we are glad to announce that a documentary film on Remittances for Community Development in Bangladesh and an online platform on RfCD will be launched within the coming month. The Bengali title of the documentary film is, “Din Bodoler Pala”.



(Photo: BASUG & TNU delegates visiting a project of Bangladeshi migrants in Hobiganj. BASUG local partner ENDEAVOUR Coordinator, Ms. Dipika Roy explaining the project to the delegates)

The documentary has been directed by celebrated film maker of Bangladesh, Arun Chowdhuri. Our objective is to launch the documentary in Europe and Bangladesh to enable us to share our lessons learned with a wide audience. We firmly believe that raising awareness on the possibilities of Remittances for Community Development can aid those who are willing yet struggling to support similar efforts. With the help of the documentary, we are able to show the viewers how others have contributed to development through their remittances, and how recipients were able to develop businesses and social development projects in Bangladesh that benefits not only their family, but the wider community as well. Such initiatives should be applauded, and BASUG aims to support such efforts through our awareness raising campaigns.

BASUG-Triple L to launch RfCD Platform, www.rfcd.net

Besides the documentary film, BASUG and its partner organisation, Triple L of the Network University we are also glad to announce the launch of the RfCD platform in the coming month (www.rfcd.net). The platform will function as a broker between different stakeholders, such as migrants and development organization that are interested to learn more of the inspiring RfCD initiatives of others. This unique website will offer the visitor the opportunity to view other projects in their region of interest and especially to learn of the challenges that others have encountered. From these challenges, they are able to take on board lessons learned for their future projects that will hopefully assist them to setting up their own projects more smoothly. Besides that, the website will also offer the opportunity for visitors to share their knowledge with others and contribute their projects on the website.

VAW still remains alarming

There has been no sign of decline in violence against women although 100 years of the Declaration of International Women's Day have passed. Domestic violence, violence related to dowry, rape, acid throwing, fatwa and sexual abuse are the key forms of violence in Bangladesh. Poor women are subjected to violence relatively more because of their social discrimination.



BASUG has renewed its pledge to work on this area in order to improve the situation of the women, especially the Bangladeshi women in Bangladesh and Europe. According to Bangladeshi NGO, Odhikar, from 2338 women have already been killed, 1025 women physically abused and 172 women committed suicide because of dowry violence from January 2001 to February 2012. During the same period 8478 women have been raped.

DO YOU KNOW?

- * One in every four women will experience domestic violence in her lifetime.
- * 1.3 million women are victims of physical assault by an intimate partner each year.
- * 85% of domestic violence victims are women.
- * Females OF 20-24 years of age are at the greatest risk of nonfatal intimate partner violence.
- * Witnessing violence between one's parents or caretakers is the strongest risk factor of transmitting violent behavior from one generation to the next.
- * Boys who witness domestic violence are *twice as likely* to abuse their own partners and children when they become adults.
- * 30% to 60% of perpetrators of intimate partner violence also abuse children in the household. (Photo-www.hrcbm.org)

BASUG holds National Conference on Remittances on 29 April: Stakeholders meetings 28 April & 2 May in Bangladesh

BASUG will hold a national conference on “*Beyond Remittances: Potentialities and Impacting Communities*” on Sunday 29 April 2012 at BRAC Centre Inn, Dhaka, Bangladesh from 10.00 am to 2.00 pm. Minister for Labor & Employment and Expatriates' Welfare & Overseas Employment of Bangladesh Engineer Mosharraf Hossain is expected to attend the Conference as chief guest.

This national conference will also be addressed among others by Dr Atiur Rahman, Governor of Bangladesh Bank, Dr. Zafor Ahmed Khan, Secretary for Manpower, Expatriate, welfare and Overseas, Her Majesty's Ambassador of the Kingdom of The Netherlands Embassy, Mr. Alphons Henekens, Mr. Nurun Nabi Talukdar, Director General of NGO Affairs Bureau, Prime Minister office of the government of Bangladesh and Mrs. Dr. Tasneem Siddiqui, Executive Director of RAMM as guest of Honour.

On the Day, BASUG will also launch a short Documentary film on Remittances for Community Development (RfCD) titled, “DIN BODOLER GOLPO”. The main objectives of the conference are to share information gathered during the last one year of project period on the inspiring examples of local and international practices of the migrants in community development practices and engage the participants in additional partnership with migrant communities.

These are parts of the project BASUG has currently been implementing a in partnership with Triple L (The Network University) of Amsterdam University, the Netherlands. The project is being financed by Oxfam-Novib.



The lessons learned from the past year and our future activities will be shared during the second round of conference and stakeholders meetings in Bangladesh that will take place in between 28 April and 2 May 2012. Based on the successes of last year, we are positive that the coming conference and stakeholders meeting will be received with great enthusiasm once more. We deem the feedback from our local stakeholders particularly essential for the development of our coming activities. A 7-members delegation- 2 from Oxfam Novib, 3 from BASUG the Netherlands, 1 from BASUG UK chapter and 1 from Triple L/the Network University will fly to Bangladesh to take part in the conference and stakeholders meetings. The delegates are: Jean Pouit and Ismail Awil from Oxfam Novib, Dr. Ahmed Ziauddin, Mr. Sudhier Nannan, Mr. Bikash Chowdhury Barua, Mr. Ansar Ahmed Ullah and Ms. Danielle de Winder.

BASUG-DFD-PSO Project- TLP: Integration of the Role of Migrants in Development

BASUG is now working on a Thematic Learning Program (TLP) of PSO, a project which includes a number of learning activities undertaken by member organizations of DFD (*Diaspora Forum for Development*) to respond to a central learning question. This learning question is related to different aspects of human capacity building through integrating the role of migrants (human mobility factors) in development in their country of origin. Migration, defined as moving within a state or across international borders and resulting in a change of residence, whether permanent or temporary, has in the past decade been acknowledged as having important implications for development policy and practice. Yet the potential of migrants to contribute to development in both their country of origin and of residence has not been analysed in depth for policy making purposes.

The overall aim of this project is to provide migrant organisations in the Netherlands with research-based information regarding the integration of the concept of human mobility in development planning and the measuring the extent to which this strategy leads to sustainable development at the local level in the South. More importantly, the project aims to provide an opportunity for comparative analysis on the integration of mobility in development and to develop tools for measurement, monitoring and evaluating the impact of migrant organisations' engagement in development. Dr. Unnati Saha, a Board member of BASUG and a professional researcher has been doing the research work.

Louise, new Treasurer of BASUG

Ms. Marie Louise van der Kruk has joined BASUG as the new Treasurer of the organization. Born in s'Gravenzande in a family of 11 children Louise is the youngest of all. Mother of an 11 year old child, David, Louise lived for many years in Tanzania where she was involved in conducting workshop for the handicapped children. She also started her own centre for English-speaking Children in Das es Salaam, Tanzania.

After working for certain Tanzanian teachers if they autistshe children. So, a started functioning for the opportunity to receive extra in Tanzania, Louise moved totally different than with extreme poverty, see that there is country and the rich is huge big. I



Louise moved to Suriname, detailed people in the jail. prisoners there caught with drugs. She gave them counselling to lead a good life, avoid path which might bring them to wrong destination.

period there, proposal came from the could start with a school for the land was arranged soon and the school unfortunate children who had little attention from the society. After living to India, New Delhi. "This city was Africa. We know Africa as continent draught and famine. But soon I came to where the difference between the poor found it terrible", said Louise.

where she started working with the She met with a number of Dutch

Now back to the Netherlands, already 7 years, Louise has now been working for the handicapped people where the inmates are guided 24 hours a day. Passion for work for the needy and the third world countries prompted Louise to join BASUG and she hopes that she would do her best for the welfare of the people.

“Overseas aid is declining & Climate funding is no charity”, says Bangladesh Prime Minister

Bangladesh Prime minister Sheikh Hasina recently commented that financial assistance to face extreme weather was being confused with development assistance and alleged the development partners had not lived up to their promises. She asked donor countries to make good on their well-publicised commitments and come up quickly with promised funds to help Bangladesh limit the effects of climate change. "Overseas aid is declining for the past two decades. Now we are seeing that climate fund is being equated to development financing," she said at the inaugural session of the meeting of parliamentarians on "Climate Change: Beyond COP 17" in Dhaka. "Climate funding is no charity. It is compensation for the air pollution that industrialised nation did for decades. "It must be new, additional, and in the form of grants," she asserted.

A total of \$30 billion has been promised by the end of this year but, after three years of delays in channelling promised money, only \$2.4 billion has been made available. Referring to an Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report, the prime minister said, "A meter rise in sea level would submerge a fifth of Bangladesh's land mass displacing about 20 million people... the time is, therefore, ripe to discuss creation of an appropriate framework for addressing the needs of such displaced people." "Sadly, we are yet to see any meaningful flow of funds even for the fast start finance promised in COP 15 in Copenhagen." The GCF was agreed in Cancun last December by industrialised countries to mobilise USD 100 billion per year by 2020 for developing countries.

PICTORIAL



Left: Mr. Walter Oostelbos, Strategic Adviser of Dutch Ministry of Interior & Kingdom Relations (r) is seen with Ms. Tuky Santillan of LAWID & Bikash Chowdhury Barua of BASUG after pre-consultation meeting on GFMD at Netherlands Foreign Ministry on 15 March 2012. Photo right: BASUG member, Saptarshi Chowdhury Barua with the founder of Centre for Rehabilitation for Paralyzed (CRP) Ms. Valerie Taylor in Savar in March 2012.



Dutch parliamentarians Drs. Kathleen G. Ferrier (2nd fr right) & Mr. Hary Van Bommel (2nd fr left) are seen with a Bangladeshi delegation at Netherlands Parliament after the meeting on 1 Feb 2012. Picture shows: BASUG President Bikash Chowdhury Barua, BASUG Director and adviser Dr. Ahmed Ziauddin, ICDB Chairman Drs. Peter Custers & Advocate Zead Al Malum. (Photo-M.M.R.Monowar)



Bangladesh ambassador in Belgium (6th fr left) Ms. Ismat Jahan is seen with Bangladeshi delegation after the meeting at European Parliament in Brussels on 31 Jan 2012.

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