

Ensuring Welfare and Rights of Migrant Workers and Communities

Analysis of National Budget for Institutional Development

Khondaker Golam Moazzem
ASM Shamim Alam Shibly
Sadab Rahman Chowdhury



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Executive Summary

The Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment (MoEWOE) of Bangladesh plays an important role in managing labour migration and supporting migrant workers. However, institutional inefficiencies, budgetary constraints, and outdated operational practices significantly challenge its effectiveness. Despite an increase in the national budget allocation to the MoEWOE for FY2025, its share remains a mere 0.15 per cent of the total budget, which severely limits its capacity to address critical issues. Development budgets are often underutilised due to weak institutional capacity, with only two-thirds of the FY2024 budget being spent. This shortfall in resources has resulted in outdated training equipment, staff shortages, and suboptimal service delivery across affiliated institutions, such as Technical Training Centres (TTCs) and District Employment and Manpower Offices (DEMOS).

The findings reveal that most TTCs operate with decades-old machinery, inadequate facilities, and insufficient raw materials for conducting training classes, preventing the implementation of modern training standards. Trainer shortages are acute, with over 70 per cent of teaching positions vacant in many centres. These staffing issues extend to DEMOS, which struggle with significant manpower gaps, leaving key roles unfilled and critical activities underperformed. Training curricula remain outdated and disconnected from the demands of international labour markets, limiting the employability of TTC graduates. Moreover, while trades like housekeeping, driving, and heavy equipment operation are in high demand, domestic job placement mechanisms for graduates remain informal and unstructured. Gender disparities further exacerbate the problem, with women underrepresented in most training programmes and confined to low-value roles.

Infrastructure deficiencies also undermine service delivery. Many TTC classrooms and facilities are overcrowded, poorly maintained, and unequipped to meet the needs of high-demand trades. For example, Narsingdi TTC lacks a proper driving track and sufficient space for technical training. Stakeholder coordination is another major issue, with weak linkages between MOEWOE institutions, recruitment agencies, and employers. This lack of collaboration results in limited alignment between training programmes and market demands. Furthermore, there are no robust feedback mechanisms to guide programme improvements or address the concerns of trainees and stakeholders.

Despite strong demand for housekeeping, driving, and heavy equipment operation training, and an emphasis on language training, especially Japanese and Korean, enrollment in these training is low. Job placement mechanisms are almost non-existent, with limited data on graduate employment. High-demand trades like housekeeping and driving face the problem of inadequate training quality, as graduates, despite passing assessments, remain unprepared for international roles.

To address these issues, targeted reforms are important. Increasing budget allocation as a share of the national budget, modernising TTC equipment, and addressing trainer shortages are immediate priorities. Updating training curricula to meet global standards, expanding structured job placement services, and improving gender inclusion are equally important. Infrastructure upgrades, particularly for high-demand trades, and better stakeholder coordination are critical for improving overall service delivery. By implementing these measures, the MoEWOE can significantly increase its capacity to support migrant workers and ensure their successful integration into global labour markets.

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Acronyms

AFY	Actual Fiscal Year
BDT	Bangladeshi Taka
BFY	Budget Fiscal Year
BGMEA	Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association
BIMT	Bangladesh Institute of Marine Technology
BKTTC	Bangladesh Korea Technical Training Centre
BMET	Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training
BOESL	Bangladesh Overseas Employment and Services Limited
B-SEP	Bangladesh Skills for Employment and Productivity
BTEB	Bangladesh Technical Education Board
DEMO	District Employment and Manpower Office
EU	European Union
GPA	Grade Point Average
HSC	Higher Secondary Certificate
IMT	Institute of Marine Technology
IOM	International Organization for Migration
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
KOICA	Korea International Cooperation Agency
MoEWOE	Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NSDA	National Skills Development Authority
NTVQF	National Technical and Vocational Qualifications Framework
PDO	Pre-Departure Orientation
PKB	Probashi Kallyan Bank
PPP	Public-Private Partnership
RAISE	Recovery and Advancement of Informal Sector Employment

RFY	Revised Fiscal Year
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
SDP	Skills Development Programme
SEIP	Skills for Employment Investment Programme
SSC	Secondary School Certificate
STEP	Skills and Training Enhancement Project
TTC	Technical Training Centre
WEWB	Wage Earners' Welfare Board

1. INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES

The cross-border labour migration from Bangladesh has long been a phenomenon driven more by the migrants' individual aspirations and efforts than by institutional support (Siddiqui & Nusrat, 2021). This reliance on personal initiative rather than organised assistance is primarily due to the limited legal support, effective institutional mechanisms, and operational guidelines across the different phases of migration, including pre-departure, staying abroad, and post-return phases (Dowlah, 2020; Anderson et al., 2021). These phases are critical, yet the support systems in place either do not exist or are troubled by inefficiencies, leaving aspirant migrants, migrants, and returnee migrants to handle the complexities largely on their own.

The responsibility for assisting migrant workers in these crucial stages falls to several organisations tasked with facilitating and streamlining the migration process to reduce hardships. The Ministry of Expatriate Welfare and Overseas Employment (MoEWOE) is the primary body overseeing these efforts particularly through undertaking decisions on policies and legal issues. Under its purview are several affiliated public agencies, including the Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET), Probashi Kallyan Bank (PKB), the Wage Earner's Welfare Board (WEWB), and the state-owned recruiting agency, BOESL. A number of organisations work under the overall directions of BMET including Technical Training Centre (TTC), the District Employment and Manpower Office (DEMO), and the Institute of Marine Technology (IMT). All the above-mentioned public agencies and related organisations are responsible for undertaking operational issues as per the policies, laws, and acts. Moreover, another twelve ministries and departments are also responsible for handling migrant-related issues, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism, the Ministry of Labour and Employment, the Ministry of Information, the Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, etc. (Moazzem, Shibly & Mallick, 2023).

Despite the specific responsibilities of different public agencies, aspirant migrants and migrant workers took very limited support from the public agencies during their pre-departure, abroad and reintegration phases. For example, out of 1.14 million workers who immigrated in 2023, a mere 15,294—just 1.3 per cent of the total—used the services of BOESL, the public recruiting agency. Additionally, organisations like TTC and DEMO suffer from severe manpower shortages, lack of skilled professionals, budgetary shortages, and poor performance in terms of addressing sudden adversaries related to migration. The lack of legal enforcement capabilities further exacerbates these issues, curtailing their ability to provide adequate services to migrant workers. Upon returning to their homeland, reintegration becomes the next hurdle - this phase is critical yet often overlooked in policy planning, making the readjustment process strenuous and disheartening.

To address institutional and operational challenges of the public agencies concerning cross-border migration, the national budget allocates necessary financial resources for meeting their operating expenditures as well as investment in development projects. However, the allocation for the MoEWOE and related agencies is very low—only 0.09 per cent of the total budget in the Revised Fiscal Year 2024. Given the limited allocation for different public agencies, necessary development activities cannot be undertaken. Hence, the MoEWOE and concerned public agencies need proper allocation and effective and timely implementation of different development projects in order to improve the services for migrant workers and their communities.

In this backdrop, the study is conducted to do an institutional assessment of the MoEWOE's related public agencies and identify the budgetary support required for those agencies for their effective functions. The study highlights the current state of public agencies in terms of their level and quality of delivering services related to cross-border migration, identifying the budgetary requirements and thereby examining the allocation of the national budget in addressing the budgetary requirements. The specific objectives are as follows:

- a) To identify service delivery related issues and concerns of selected public institutions under the MoEWOE especially BMET, TTC, and DEMO for migrant workers and their communities;
- b) To estimate the budget requirements for concerned public institutions related to the MoEWOE;
- c) To analyse the national budget for FY2025 with a view to understand the allocative priorities, possible areas of work and the areas which are out of budgetary support;
- d) To put forward a set of recommendations related to fiscal and budgetary issues which could be reflected in the national budget for the upcoming years including FY2025-26 and FY2026-27.

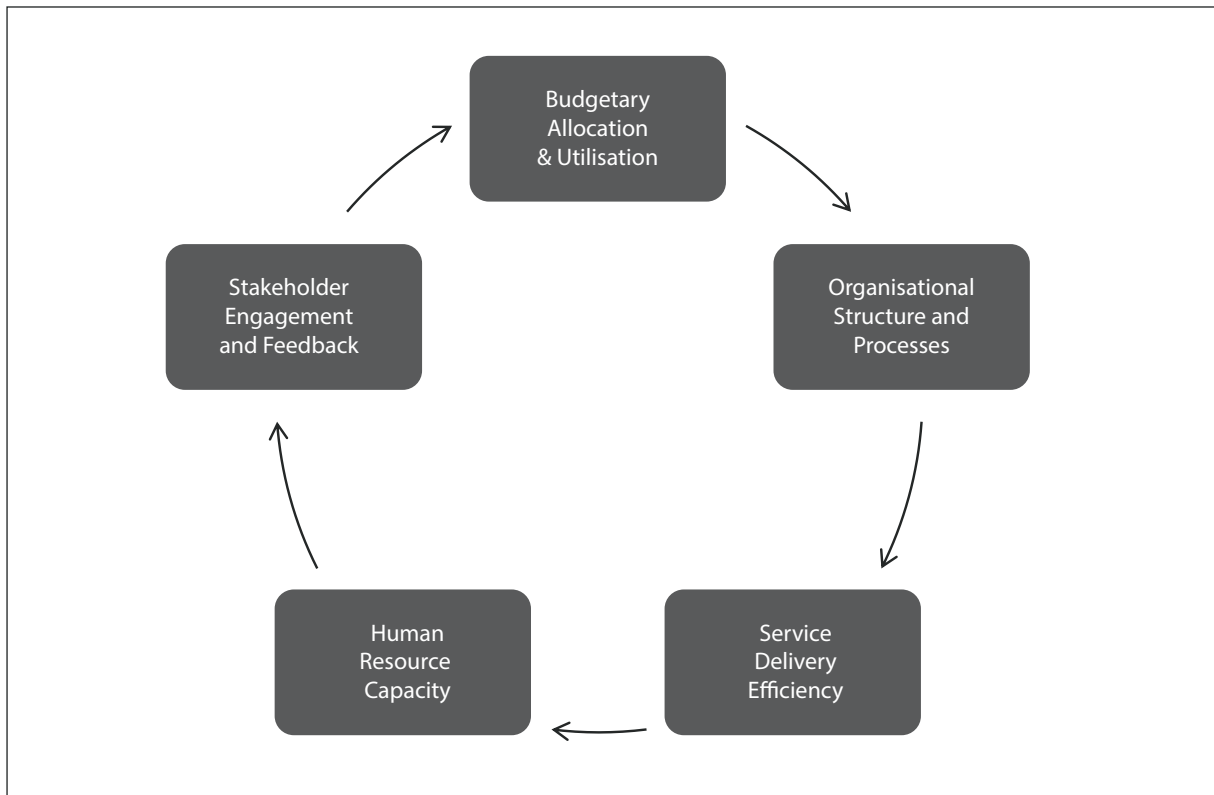
2. ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

The institutional efficiency of a public sector organisation can be measured through five different components. These include - (a) budgetary allocation and utilisation, (b) service delivery efficiency, (c) human resource capacity, (d) organisational structure and processes, and (e) stakeholder engagement and feedback. Figure 1 presents the analytical frame for assessing the institutional efficiency. Since the policies, laws and oversight of the overseas migration and migrant community are primarily the responsibility of the Ministry of Expatriate Welfare and Overseas Employment (MoEWOE) along with other 11 ministries and departments, the institutional efficiency concerning the overseas employment needs to be assessed for these public organisations. Since the MoEWOE is the lead ministry taking major responsibilities, this study focuses on the performance of the MoEWOE and its organisations.

The first and foremost component of organisational efficiency is budgetary allocation. In case of the MoEWOE, this budgetary allocation is related to its main implementing agencies, including the Technical Training Centres (TTC) and the District Employment and Manpower Office (DEMO). Given the deficit budget prepared successively, the government prioritises higher budgetary allocation for the top 10 ministries. The MoEWOE is not on the priority list; hence, the ministry struggles to make a balance between the demand for overseas migrants, potential immigrants, returnee migrants and migrant communities and the allocation approved for the ministry. The inadequacy of the budget is likely to affect the targeted and expected activities to be implemented by TTC and DEMO.

The second important component is delivering effective services by public agencies such as TTC and DEMO. Quality-of-service delivery is related to the number and quality of training, the quality and capacity of training centres including trainers, training instruments, logistic support, and the level of trainee satisfaction. The level of efficiency is influenced by both internal reasons, such as public agencies' performance, and external reasons, such as the level of allocation of funds for these agencies.

Figure 1: Framework for Assessing Institutional Efficiency



Source: Author’s illustration based on literature of Curristine, et.al. (2007) and Diamond, J. (1990).

The third important component is the human resource capacity of public agencies. This is related to the adequacy of human resources at TTC and DEMO, proper allocation of human resources to agencies located in different regions, scopes for skill upgradation of the trainees and job satisfaction of the trainees. Adequately trained personnel help organisations to provide proper training support to prospective migrant workers.

Stakeholder engagement is an important area that organisations such as TTC and DEMO need to examine. The influence of community feedback on programme design and implementation is important to improve the programme according to the specific needs of migrant workers. Moreover, assessing the effectiveness of awareness campaigns conducted by the MoEWOE and its affiliates is essential to understanding their reach, engagement levels, and overall impact in informing potential migrant workers about available services.

This study will assess five components of institutional efficiency in case of the MoEWOE and its concerned public agencies, including TTC and DEMO.

3. METHODOLOGY

The study follows a mixed method comprising quantitative and qualitative techniques to address the objectives. The quantitative method includes analysing secondary data on the budgetary allocation of the MoEWOE, BMET, TTC, DEMO, Labour Wing in different countries. The qualitative methods include key informant interviews (KIIs) with TTC and DEMO officials located in different areas. The areas include Bangladesh Korea Technical Training Centre (BKTTTC), Dhaka; DEMO, Dhaka; TTC, Cumilla and DEMO, Cumilla; and TTC, Narsingdi and DEMO, Narsingdi. These areas are selected considering a number of factors including centralised operational mechanisms (in case of Dhaka), local-level operational activities outside of Dhaka (in case of Narsingdi and Cumilla), and areas which are highly migrant-prone (in case of Cumilla). Interviewees share information on different issues, including the institutional capacity of TTC and DEMO, budgetary allocations for human resources, training and machinery, and state of implementation of mandated activities, etc.

Each field visit aimed to assess these institutions' operational efficiency, resource allocation, and overall effectiveness in fulfilling their mandates. The observations gathered from these visits provide a comprehensive understanding of the strengths and weaknesses within the existing system, highlighting areas that require immediate attention and policy intervention.

These field observations incorporate various aspects, including budgetary constraints, staffing issues, infrastructure adequacy, and the quality-of-service delivery. These insights are summarised and put in Annex (Annex 1 to 11) section with recommendations and rationale for each affiliated organisations including BMET.

4. BUDGET ALLOCATION FOR THE MOEWOE

The MoEWOE is one of the poorly allocated ministries of the national budget. During the FY2023, the ministry received an allocation of only BDT 488 crore. The allocation has improved in the following years – the revised budget for FY2024 was BDT 707 crore, and the budget for FY2025 was BDT 1217 crore. Despite the rise in allocation, the MoEWOE's share in the total budget was only 0.15 per cent in FY2025 – in other words, out of BDT 100 worth of the national budget, its share is only 15 paisa. Hence, lack of allocation is a major challenge to ensuring efficient operations of the ministry and its associate institutions - TTC and DEMO.

In FY2025, the development budget has seen a substantial rise of 122 per cent, rising from BDT 342 crore to BDT 761 crore. Nearly 80 per cent of the newly increased development budget is dedicated to two major projects: the 40 TTC Establishment project and the RAISE Project. Even though there is a massive increase, there is still a lack of allocation in the development budget for the MoEWOE (Table 1). Curiously, the MoEWOE suffers from utilising the proposed budget due to a lack of institutional capacity. During FY2024, only 2/3rd of the proposed budget had been implemented. This indicates that the ministry would be unable to utilise more funds even though there is a requirement for additional resources.

Table 1: Budget Allocation from FY23 to FY25*(In Crore BDT)*

Budget Allocation	AFY23	BFY24	RFY24	BFY25
Operating	291	392	365	456
Development	197	626	342	761
Total	488	1,018	707	1,217
Total GoB Budget	573858	761,785	714418	797,000
MoEWOE budget as a share of total budget	0.09%	0.13%	0.10%	0.15%

Source: MoF. (2024); **Note:** AFY = Actual Fiscal Year, BFY= Budget FY (proposed); RFY= Revised FY.

The Government of Bangladesh (GoB) has given financial incentives for remittances with an assumption of a significant increase in the flow. Even though the amount of financial incentives to remitters has increased over the years, the proportion of financial incentives allocated for remittance has decreased - from 22 per cent in FY2021 to 15 per cent in FY2024. The government should continue this financial support to the remitters (Table 2). Considering the importance of overseas employment, the MoEWOE has planned to establish 50 more TTCs in FY2024-25, in addition to the existing 104 TTCs, to ensure trade-based training. However, no allocation is made for projects for quality improvement or training for the trainers.

The government has allocated BDT 500 crore to the Probashi Kallyan Bank (PKB) to provide loans to returning migrant workers on easy terms. According to the PKB, until March 2024, BDT 293.65 crore in loans had been provided to 12,890 borrowers. Although this loan had to be provided by 2022, a large share of it has remained unspent, mainly due to a lack of manpower to regulate and supervise these loans. Moreover, the PKB does not have any major awareness campaign targeting migrant workers about this special loan facility.

It is also important to note that a substantial portion of PKB's funding originates from the Wage Earners' Welfare Board (WEWB), which consists of contributions from migrant workers themselves. Despite this, there appears to be a lack of visible activities or awareness initiatives to inform migrant workers about the availability of these loans (Moazzem, Habib & Shibly, 2021). The low uptake of reintegration loans raises critical questions about PKB's efforts to address this issue and whether any measures have been undertaken to improve the disbursement rate.

Table 2: Fiscal Incentive to Remittance from FY20 to FY24*(In Crore BDT)*

Items	AFY20	AFY21	AFY22	AFY23	RFY24
Fiscal Incentive to Remitters	3060	3980	4400	5300	6200
Total Fiscal Incentives	21350	18260	28370	40100	40230
Proportion to Remitters	14%	22%	16%	13%	15%

Source: MoF. (2024); **Note:** AFY = Actual Fiscal Year, RFY= Revised Fiscal Year.

The field observations at Dhaka DEMO and BKTTC highlighted several critical gaps, including insufficient budget allocations. Although efforts have been made to procure new equipment, this is often insufficient to meet the modern technological demands of the job market.

4.1 Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET)

BMET faces significant challenges due to inadequate financial resources, affecting its ability to function effectively. The organisation's weak performance is partly a result of insufficient budgetary allocations, particularly in areas such as training, monitoring, and post-migration support. Although BMET is mandated to ensure ethical recruitment and safeguard the rights of migrant workers, the lack of sufficient funding hinders its capacity to oversee and regulate recruitment agencies effectively. Financial constraints also result in inefficiencies in the remittance facilitation process, causing further challenges for migrant workers. Additionally, the high migration costs borne by workers, coupled with inadequate financial support mechanisms, place a significant economic burden on them. Increased and better-targeted budgetary allocations, along with their timely utilisation, could help address some of these gaps and improve BMET's overall functionality and effectiveness.

4.2 Technical Training Centre (TTC)

One of the key challenges TTCs face is the lack of adequate financial resources to ensure effective vocational and technical training. Despite an increase in the budget allocation for equipment purchases, rising from BDT 2.5 crore to 4 crore, the funding remains insufficient to cover the procurement of modern technological equipment necessary for training programmes aligned with the Fourth Industrial Revolution. Financial constraints hinder the TTCs' ability to conduct comprehensive training programmes, and the lack of budgetary allocation specifically for equipment purchase exacerbates the problem. This financial gap hampers the TTCs' capacity to provide up-to-date training that meets the current and future needs of the labour market, particularly in terms of job-specific skills and technological proficiency.

The TTCs usually receive a budget for meeting different types of administrative and operational expenses, which include wages and salaries, administrative expenses, training, transport-related costs, travel and transfers, printing and stationery, general supplies and materials, repairs and maintenance and professional services. The major share of the expenses is related to wages and salaries. Hence, the TTCs have little provision to allocate resources outside the above-mentioned expendable areas. This study has analysed the budget allocations for TTCs for the three fiscal years – FY2021, FY2022 and FY2023. Based on the analysis, a set of proposals for budgetary allocations have been made for the TTCs.

The analysis found that the allocation of BDT 2.5 crore for capital expenditures for the TTCs is very low, considering the growing need for training with new and latest machinery which are used in the destination countries. Hence, all TTCs need new equipment, as their current inventory has been outdated since their establishment. During FY 2023-24, TTC received BDT 2.5 crore for the first time. However, the allocation needs to be increased – for example, BDT 15 crore.

Immediate equipment updates are necessary for 11 TTCs established in 2000 and 26 TTCs established in 2006, based on current job market demands in domestic and international labour markets. To address the pressing need for modernisation in 11 TTCs established in 2000 and 26 TTCs established in 2006, an allocation of BDT 10 crore is recommended for the former and BDT 5 crore for the latter. This targeted allocation is important as the current equipment has become outdated, rendering it obsolete

in meeting current job market demands. Upgrading the equipment will ensure that these centres are equipped to train students in skills that are aligned with the modern job market requirements.

The ongoing challenges in migrant training across Bangladesh, worsened by the absence of dedicated budgets in TTCs across 25 districts, have delayed the task of capacity building among the migrant workforces. In high-migration areas, this poor allocation of the training budget has adversely impacted over 30 per cent of migrant workers. The key to tackling this issue lies in addressing the funding gap. A proposal has been put forward, recommending an average training budget of BDT 1.25 crore to be allocated to TTCs identified as having special needs. This proposal was derived from an analysis of the total training allocation of BDT 48.8 crore across 39 districts and could ensure equitable fund distribution. In doing so, MoEWOE can address the resource disparities, paving the way to improve technical education and skill development for the country's aspiring migrant workforce.

One glaring gap in the current landscape is Chandpur's lack of TTC funding, despite being the fourth-highest migrant-prone district, with a migrant population of 32,078. An immediate budgetary allocation is necessary to ensure the immediate completion of the Chandpur TTC. Once operational, this TTC will not only improve training quality but also provide essential support to migrants, thereby ensuring they are adequately prepared for the demands of overseas employment. Additionally, equipping Chandpur's DEMO officials with specialised training will empower them to deliver better services to the district's substantial migrant population.

On the other hand, Cumilla, which hosts the largest migrant population at 76,836, suffers from a conspicuous mismatch between its training expenses and its migration scale, with only BDT 65 spent per capita on migrant training. To address this imbalance, a significant increase of BDT 5.76 crore is needed, bringing the per capita training expenditure to BDT 750 per migrant. Such an increase will partially ensure that Cumilla's migrants are better equipped with the necessary skills to succeed abroad. Simultaneously, efforts must be made to raise awareness of these training programmes to increase the coverage of skill-based education for potential migrant workers.

Meanwhile, Bandarban and Rangamati, despite their smaller migrant populations, have exceptionally high per capita training expenses—BDT 38,909 and 18,799, respectively. Yet, there remains a significant portion of the budget unused, with BDT 3,583 and 1,967 per capita lying idle, raising concerns about inefficient budget utilisation. This stands in bare contrast to Cumilla and Tangail, which account for 14 per cent of the country's total migrants but have disproportionately low training expenses of just BDT 65 and 124 per migrant worker. In light of this, it is proposed that the unused budgets of BDT 2.88 crore from Bandarban and Rangamati be reallocated to districts like Cumilla and Tangail, where the funds can be better utilised. Such reallocation would allow the MoEWOE to address both the underutilisation in some districts and the significant underfunding in others.

In addition to these inefficiencies, several high-migration districts, including Bagerhat, Cox's Bazar, Habiganj, and Narayanganj, are operating without any allocated TTC funds, despite collectively accounting for 13 per cent of the country's migrants. Without immediate intervention, the potential migrant workers in these districts will remain low-skilled. Following that, BDT 40 crore has been recommended for the allocation to these new TTCs in these regions, ensuring that the migrant workforce is not left behind without the necessary training and resources.

Similarly, Lakshmipur and Sunamganj, with average migrant populations of 20,587 and 18,738, respectively, have also been left out of the current training budget allocation. This leads to the failure to prepare potential migrant workers for international employment. To bridge this gap, BDT 1.25 crore should be reallocated to increase the capabilities of TTCs in these districts, ensuring sufficient opportunities to access skill development programmes.

Even in districts where TTC budgets exist, the problem of underutilisation persists. Khagrachari and Bandarban, for instance, have retained significant portions of their allocated budgets unused, suggesting either an overestimation of needs or challenges in implementation. To address this, BDT 43 lakh of these unused funds should be redirected to districts with greater needs but fewer resources. Such redistribution would ensure streamlining budget usage and improving support for migrant-focused programmes.

Faridpur and Dhaka similarly demonstrate underutilisation of their training budgets. Here, a thorough review of expenditure is important to identify bottlenecks. BDT 1.66 crore of unused budget could be better utilised through technology-driven training or partnerships with the private sector, ensuring these funds do not go to waste. With prompt action, the MoEWOE can significantly improve migrant outcomes in these districts.

Finally, Lalmonirhat and Rangamati's TTC operational budgets have similarly been underutilised, indicating the need for a comprehensive review of expenditure. With BDT 4.65 crore lying dormant, reallocation of these funds to districts requiring additional support will not only improve training programmes but also align resources with actual needs.

4.2.1 Field Observations in Cumilla TTC

The Cumilla TTC has faced significant challenges due to limited financial resources. While the centre received a capital expenditure allocation of BDT 6,00,000 for the first time, this amount is considered insufficient given its needs. Notably, there has been no consistent allocation of machinery from the Ministry of Finance before FY2024, resulting in a reliance on project-based funding, such as equipment from the KOICA and SEIP projects. However, this fragmented approach has left the centre without the necessary resources to implement the NSDA's 'one man one machine' policy, which requires adequate machinery for effective training. To address these financial constraints, it is recommended that the TTC gradually increase its budget allocation as improvements in course offerings, equipment, and training quality are demonstrated.

4.2.2 Field Observations in Narsingdi TTC

The Narsingdi TTC has faced budgetary constraints, with only a modest allocation of BDT 5.5 lakh in the fiscal year 2023-24 for equipment purchases, marking the first time this type of funding has been allocated. However, this amount is insufficient to meet the growing needs for modern equipment and raw materials. Currently, there is also a lack of raw materials, hampering day-to-day training activities. TTCs should receive a daily allocation of at least BDT 1000 for raw materials to ensure smooth operations. Moreover, the institute's ability to improve machinery standards is contingent on increased budget allocations, highlighting the need for stronger financial planning and government or donor support.

4.3 District Employment and Manpower Office (DEMO)

4.3.1 Field Observations in Dhaka DEMO

The Dhaka DEMO plays a crucial role in managing migration processes but faces challenges, particularly concerning budget allocation. The insufficient budget significantly hampers the office's capacity to meet its mandate, especially as it also supports the Narayanganj and Gazipur DEMOs. Financial constraints are completely evident in advocacy and awareness programmes, which are vital for informing potential migrants about safe migration practices and their rights. Furthermore, discrepancies in budget allocation are apparent, with some regions, such as Khulna and Rajshahi, showing large unused funds despite low migration rates, whereas high-migration areas face acute shortages. Additionally, districts like Rangamati, Bandarban, and Panchagarh exhibit per capita expenses far exceeding migrant numbers, suggesting potential inefficiencies in budget use. To address these issues, it is recommended to analyse expenditure patterns and reallocate funds to areas of higher demand to optimise resource use.

4.3.2 Field Observations in Cumilla DEMO

A major issue observed during the field visit to Cumilla DEMO is the inadequate budget allocation, which limits the office's ability to carry out its functions effectively. The office struggles with outdated equipment and insufficient funds to procure necessary resources, which hampers the delivery of quality services. For instance, the lack of budget allocation for equipment in classes and training at the Pre-departure Orientation (PDOs) highlights resource gaps that affect service provision. Additionally, insufficient funds are allocated to awareness programmes, resulting in a significant information gap regarding available services for migrants. Despite the nominal cost of BDT 200 for online registration at the DEMO, many citizens prefer to register outside, exposing themselves to exploitation.

4.3.3 Field Observations in Narsingdi DEMO

The Narsingdi DEMO operates under significant financial constraints, receiving a budget of BDT 53 lakh from the BMET for FY2023-24. This allocation is insufficient to meet the office's operational needs, particularly in relation to awareness programmes that are critical for migrant support. While the WEWB provides financial aid to migrants through DEMO, the latter is merely an administrative body, with WEWB controlling the funds. The office struggles with inadequate resources for both digital infrastructure and communication systems, which hampers efficient data management and outreach efforts. To improve service delivery, it is important for DEMO to advocate for an increased budget, allowing for better operational capabilities and investments in digital infrastructure. Exploring cost-effective alternatives like digital marketing or community partnerships could also help expand the reach of awareness programmes, thus optimising the use of limited resources.

4.4 Welfare Centre (Cumilla)

The Cumilla Welfare Centre, along with other welfare centres, faces significant challenges due to insufficient budget allocation. This limitation affects the centre's ability to expand its services and provide support to the families of migrant workers. A shortage of funds impacts various aspects, including

outreach capabilities, quality of services, and availability of essential resources such as equipment and materials. Financial assistance is provided to migrants in several ways, such as compensation for the transportation of deceased migrant bodies and support to migrant families. However, the scope of these services is restricted by financial constraints. The welfare centres receive funding from multiple sources, including registration fees and passport renewal charges, but the allocation is still inadequate to meet the rising demand. To improve the services and extend support to more families, a considerable increase in the budget is necessary, which would also facilitate the expansion of awareness campaigns and infrastructure improvements.

5. ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE AND PROCESSES

The BMET, TTC, and DEMO collectively form the backbone of the institutional support system for migrant workers. A total of 165 offices of different types are located across the country. The highest number of offices are related to TTC, which is located across the country (110), followed by DEMO, which is located in 42 districts as well as in four divisions.

Table 3: Related Organisations of BMET

SL No	Name of Institute	Number
1	IMT	6
2	TTC	110
3	DEMO (Division)	4
4	DEMO (District)	42
5	Apprenticeship training office	3

Source: BMET (2023).

Each of these entities plays a distinct yet interconnected role in ensuring the welfare and rights of migrants at different phases of migration. Table 7 and 8 highlights their mandate and scope of work in brief. Despite the crucial roles played by the BMET, TTCs, and DEMO, significant gaps persist that impede the effectiveness of their activities.

5.1 BMET

BMET's institutional structure presents several challenges, including inefficiencies in administration and logistics. The organisation struggles with limited capacity in government bodies responsible for overseeing the migration process, which affects its ability to facilitate smooth remittance processes for migrant workers. Furthermore, BMET lacks a systematic, permanent mechanism to conduct labour market research, which is essential for matching workers' skills with the demands of receiving countries. In addition, there is a shortage of specific data on human trafficking and irregular migration, particularly in the EU, where many migrants face severe risks. These structural inefficiencies limit BMET's ability to adapt to the evolving needs of migrant workers and the international labour market.

There is a significant gap in the capacity of vocational training centres, polytechnic institutes, and other educational bodies in meeting the growing demand for skilled workers. This limited organisational

structure also contributes to the lack of a systematic mechanism for conducting market research, which is essential for adapting training content to the needs of destination countries. Further structural inefficiencies include outdated training modules that fail to equip workers with the job-specific skills required for overseas employment, particularly for domestic workers.

5.2 TTC

The organisational structure of TTCs reveals inefficiencies in both manpower and logistics. Many TTCs struggle with outdated training content that does not adequately address the specific skills required for domestic workers or the evolving demands of the global labour market. Furthermore, while there is a large number of TTCs, many are not fully functional. The institutions face significant barriers in upgrading their existing facilities, resulting in a limited capacity to meet the growing demand for skilled workers. These organisational gaps highlight the need for structural reforms that focus on modernising training content and expanding the logistical capabilities of TTCs to effectively serve both local and international labour markets.

Table 4: Comparison of Existing Human Resources and Enrollment of the Trainees in TTCs

Year	Filled post	Enrollment of trainees in the TTCs & IMT (without PDO)
2015-16	na	127811
2016-17	na	120072
2017-18	na	106105
2018-19	na	99378
2019-20	na	37513
2020-21	2692	53617
2021-22	2567	108591

Source: Author's analysis based on BMET (2022); **Note:** PDO means pre-departure orientation.

Table 4 presents the year-wise data on the existing human resources and trainee enrollment in TTCs. It is important to note that the 'filled post' includes both trainer and non-trainer roles. Due to the impact of COVID-19, enrollment figures were lower during the pandemic. However, under normal circumstances, more than 100,000 students enrol in TTCs, where the teacher-student ratio is significantly higher, and the availability of trainers is limited.

5.2.1 Field Observations in BKTTC

BKTTC is overwhelmed by a severe shortage of qualified instructors. The existing teaching staff is less than 30 per cent of what is required, leading to overburdened instructors and compromised training quality. The establishment of new TTCs has exacerbated the trainer shortage, as instructors are frequently transferred to these new centres, leaving existing ones understaffed. Organisational process is the key reason for this mismanagement, as the MoEWOE has not ensured the recruitment of sufficient trainers for the new TTCs mentioned in the project DPP.

5.2.2 Field Observations in Cumilla TTC

The Cumilla TTC's organisational structure is affected by several operational inefficiencies, particularly in terms of procurement and resource management. Due to the 'delegation of financial power,' the centre is unable to procure large-scale machinery, limiting its ability to modernise. Additionally, instructors from Cumilla TTC are often transferred to newly established training centres, exacerbating the shortage of skilled personnel. The centre requires higher-level officers who are knowledgeable in procurement to address these gaps, and it is vital that the TTC streamlines its processes to ensure a more efficient and timely acquisition of necessary resources.

5.2.3 Field Observations in Narsingdi TTC

The TTC's organisational structure reveals a series of legal and process-related challenges. For example, the positions of Chief Instructor, Senior Instructor, and Instructor all fall under the same salary grade, offering no opportunities for promotion. This situation, unchanged for nearly 29 years in some cases, has resulted in dissatisfaction among staff and a lack of career growth. The recruitment rules also need to be revised to make the positions more attractive, with clear promotion pathways to retain talent. The lack of a clear hierarchy and promotion opportunities in the TTCs has led to an overall inefficiency in operations. In addition, institutional recruitment rules must be updated to address both the shortage of staff and to provide space for professional growth.

5.3 DEMO

5.3.1 Field Observations in Dhaka DEMO

The organisational structure of the DEMO reveals significant inefficiencies in their overseas employment facilitation efforts. A key issue is the lack of coordination between key institutions like the PKB, Welfare Centres, and DEMOs, whose disparate locations make it easier for intermediaries or 'dalals' to exploit migrants. This structural fragmentation severely limits the effectiveness of DEMOs in securing reliable foreign employment for Bangladeshi workers. A proposal to co-locate the PKB, Welfare Centres, and DEMO offices within the same building could improve coordination, reducing travel time and costs for migrants while minimising the influence of intermediaries. Streamlining processes through policy reforms and improved Training and Technical Centres (TTC) training is also recommended to bolster DEMO efficiency and increase the rate of skilled migrants securing employment overseas.

5.3.2 Field Observations in Cumilla DEMO

The activities of the Cumilla DEMO, such as fingerprint registration and online processes, have been outsourced and are funded by the Wage Earner's Welfare Board (WEWB), with DEMO only monitoring the processes. While this division of responsibilities may reduce the office's workload, it leads to inefficiencies. The overlap in service provision, particularly with Pre-departure Orientations being offered by both Technical Training Centres (TTCs) and DEMOs in the same location, further complicates the effective allocation of resources. Additionally, the absence of recruiting agency offices within the DEMO adds logistical challenges for migrants, as they are forced to travel to Dhaka for various procedures, complicating their migration journey.

5.3.3 Field Observations in Narsingdi DEMO

The DEMO's organisational structure is riddled with inefficiencies stemming from severe manpower shortages. Currently, the office operates with only five permanent staff positions, one of which is exclusively assigned to the airport desk. This staffing deficit limits DEMO's ability to carry out essential administrative functions, including financial management and the organisation of Pre-Departure Orientation (PDO) sessions. The absence of designated roles for key tasks, such as accounting, further exacerbates these challenges. Currently, non-experts such as survey officers are burdened with accounting responsibilities, leading to inefficiencies and errors. A critical step in improving this structure would be to appoint a dedicated accountant and reinstate a representative from the PKB to manage financial services for migrants, a role that has been vacant since 2018.

5.4 Welfare Centre (Cumilla)

The organisational structure of the Cumilla Welfare Centre and other centres across Bangladesh reflects a collaborative approach involving different institutions such as the Wage Earner's Welfare Board (WEWB), local NGOs, and international organisations like the IOM. The coordination between these institutions is critical to ensuring effective service delivery. For example, the Cumilla Welfare Centre operates under the RAISE project, registering returned migrants and offering them financial support after completing training. Despite these efforts, the centres encounter procedural challenges, particularly in the processing of deceased migrant workers who become undocumented due to expired visas or contracts. There is a pressing need to improve coordination among the authorities involved in this process to streamline operations, especially in embassies where WEWB officers are deployed to assist in migrant welfare. Clearer protocols between stakeholders would also improve efficiency and reduce delays in service provision.

6. SERVICE DELIVERY EFFICIENCY

The table 5 presents a detailed breakdown of the training programmes offered by various organisations in Bangladesh for the years 2021 and 2022. The organisations include the Institute of Marine Technology (IMT), Technical Training Centres (TTC), and the Bangladesh Technical Education Board (BTEB), each of which provides different levels and types of training.

The IMT offers a four-year diploma in Engineering with a focus on Marine and Shipbuilding Technology, where enrolment increased from 512 trainees in 2021 to 570 trainees in 2022. TTC provides a variety of courses, ranging from two-year SSC vocational programmes to short-term courses and specialised training. The enrolment in SSC vocational courses rose from 13,973 in 2021 to 14,720 in 2022. Short-term courses of 3 to 6 months saw a significant increase in enrolment, from 21,007 in 2021 to 50,912 in 2022. Similarly, enrolment in four-month SEIP-funded courses, such as driving with basic maintenance, increased from 7,187 in 2021 to 18,815 in 2022.

Specialised short-term courses also showed substantial growth and are mostly popular among the trainees. For instance, the housekeeping course for women workers going abroad, which expanded from 30 days in 2021 to 60 days in 2022, saw enrolment rise from 9,744 to 22,627. These courses are provided to those who have received their visas from the respective countries. Finally, BTEB's initiative

Table 5: Participants in the Notable Courses Conducted by Different Organisations in 2021 and 2022

Organisation	Degree Level and Course Period	Subject/Courses	2021	2022
TTC	2 years SSC	Vocational Course	13973	14720
	Short-term courses of 3-6 months duration		21007	50912
	4 months SEIP funded courses	Driving with a basic maintenance course & other	7187	18815
	30-day (2021)/60 days (2022)	Housekeeping course for women workers going abroad	9744	22627
	6 Months Language	Japanese Language	1194	1517
	3 Months Language	Chinese (Cantonese/Mandarin)		
	2 Months Language	English Language		
	4 Months Language	Korean Language		
Total (excluding PDO)			53105	108591

Source: Authors Illustration based on BMET (2023).

for the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) under the National Technical and Vocational Qualification Framework (NTVQF) is also noted, though specific enrolment numbers are not found for these programmes.

Overall, table 5 highlights a significant increase in the number of participants across various training programmes from 2021 to 2022, highlighting the role of TTCs in providing technical education and vocational training to support Bangladesh's workforce.

The increasing numbers may seem to indicate positive progress in TTCs. However, the Ministry's data reflects a much higher rise in training enrolment (747144 in 2022) that include Pre-Departure Orientation (PDO). Since PDO is mandatory for all workers migrating abroad, both TTCs and DEMOs conduct these sessions. It is important to understand that PDO training does not increase the workers' technical skills; instead, it offers general information on the culture, working conditions, laws, and regulations of the destination countries—guidance that is often not followed closely by the workers themselves. Furthermore, BMET and TTCs emphasise PDO training more than technical training, and this focus on PDO often inflates the reported number of training activities, which does not accurately represent their overall training efforts.

It is important to highlight that in 2021, only 1,194 out of a total of 285,702 trainees participated in language training courses. This low enrolment in language training underscores a significant issue: the apparent reluctance or lack of emphasis on learning a new language before migrating to a foreign country. This reluctance can have serious implications for migrant workers. Without sufficient language skills, they may struggle to communicate effectively in their destination countries, leading to a range of challenges, including difficulties in accessing services, integrating into the local community, and navigating workplace environments. The language barrier can also limit their ability to advocate for their rights, understand employment contracts, and engage fully in their new surroundings. Therefore, the low uptake of language training among trainees' points to a critical area that needs more attention to better prepare migrant workers for the realities they will face abroad.

6.1 BMET

Service delivery within BMET is hampered by several operational challenges. Migrant workers often leave the country without receiving adequate training or information, which hinders their ability to navigate their new work environments. In particular, the pre-departure training content, especially for domestic workers, is outdated and not tailored to job-specific needs, resulting in work-related challenges abroad. BMET also faces difficulties in monitoring the activities of recruiting agents, which compromises transparency and fairness in recruitment. Technological issues, such as difficulties with the 'Ami Probashi' app, further complicate the process, as workers face challenges in accessing necessary documents. These inefficiencies in service delivery leave migrant workers vulnerable to exploitation.

6.1.1 Organisational Services and Gaps

The BMET's service delivery is compromised by several operational inefficiencies, leading to suboptimal outcomes for migrant workers. Pre-departure training, a critical component of migration, suffers from low attendance, reflecting the need for improved training methodologies and better outreach to potential migrants. There is also inadequate information provided to workers before departure, contributing to their vulnerability to exploitation by unscrupulous agents. BMET's regulatory role is undermined by the inability to effectively monitor and regulate recruiting agents, which often results in transparency issues during the recruitment process. Furthermore, technical issues with the 'Ami Probashi' app, such as difficulties in downloading certificates, burden migrants with additional costs, as intermediaries charge fees for assistance.

6.1.2 Total Number of Participants in Different Training Provided

Table 6 illustrates the number of trainees who received training from 2015-16, highlighting trends in participation over time. From 2015-16, there was a significant decline in the number of trainees without PDO training, reaching its lowest point during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, following the pandemic, from 2020-21 onwards, there has been a steady increase in trainee numbers, with a notable jump in 2021-22. This rise is accompanied by a pronounced gender disparity. The data not only underscores the overall decline in participation rates over the years but also highlights the persistent gender imbalance in training opportunities, especially for jobs abroad that are often limited to low-value work, such as housekeeping and garment-related employment.

Table 6: Training Provided per Year

Year	Number of Trainees with PDO	Number of Trainees without PDO
2015-16	412585	127811
2016-17	714250	120072
2017-18	757278	106105
2018-19	621062	99378
2019-20	397822	37513
2020-21	284702	53617
2021-22	855735	108591

Source: Author's Compilation Based on BMET (2023).

The trainees with PDO indicate that the core training programmes of TTCs are often underperformed in order to enroll the trainees; however, their major focus is on the PDO training to inflate their training activities, which should not be. It was also identified that most of the PDO trainees do not heed the sessions (gossiping and using mobile) and avail of the PDO certificate in exchange for money.

6.2 TTC

The BKTTC, like any other TTC, provides essential vocational training to prospective migrant workers. However, from field observations, it, too, faces several operational and logistical challenges. A significant issue is the outdated training equipment and machinery, some of which have been in use since 1997. This lack of up-to-date training resources hinders the centre's ability to provide relevant and high-quality training, limiting the employability of its graduates in both domestic and international markets.

6.2.1 Organisational Services and Gaps

The TTCs are the cornerstone of vocational and technical training, crucial for equipping workers with the skills required in both domestic and international labour markets. According to their mandate, these centres offer a range of training courses tailored to various trades, ensuring that workers have the competencies needed to meet the demands of modern industries. The TTCs are supposed to coordinate apprenticeship training, allowing trainees to gain practical experience alongside their formal education. They provide skill development training that aligns with the evolving requirements of the global workforce. Job placement facilitation is another key function, helping trainees transition from training to employment seamlessly. The TTCs also focus on language proficiency training, particularly for countries with high demand for migrant workers, enhancing their employability. Additionally, they offer online training courses to broaden access to education and accommodate different learning needs and schedules.

The TTCs encounter several operational inefficiencies that negatively impact their service delivery. There is a mismatch between the skills acquired by workers during training and the skills required by the destination countries' labour markets. This discrepancy limits the effectiveness of the TTCs in preparing workers for overseas employment. Additionally, there are insufficient initiatives from government bodies, recruitment agencies, and training centres to address the demand for skilled workers abroad. Many TTCs are burdened by an enormous shortage of skilled manpower, and while numerous projects aim to develop new TTCs, few focus on improving and improvising existing training projects. This shortfall in service delivery reduces the overall effectiveness of TTC programmes.

6.2.2 Different Trades Taught

The table 7 presents an overview of various training programmes during the FY2022, as organised by different institutions in Bangladesh. The data indicates the scope and scale of training provided across a range of trades, languages, and skill development areas. This data illustrates the varied focus of training initiatives across different trades and languages, as well as the significant role of TTCs and other organisations in delivering these programmes to support skill development among migrant workers.

A total of 16,678 individuals received driving training, with 7,358 trained under the SEIP programme and 9,320 under the GoB initiatives. The largest number of trainees, 22,704, were trained in housekeeping, with 22,627 of them trained at Technical Training Centres (TTCs) and 77 under the Hong Kong Agency.

Table 7: Notable Courses Conducted by Different Organisations in 2022

Trade	Total recipient in FY2022	Organisation
Driving	7358	SEIP
	9320	GoB
Housekeeping	22627	TTC
	77	Hong Kong Agency
RPL	715	Returnee workers
	400	JOKKH
	4659	Self-financed
Heavy equipment operation training	240	TTC (Chattogram, Bogura, and Nilphamari)
Inverter Technology	65	
VILO Skills-21 project	455	Gaibandha TTC
	247	Bagherhat IMT
Skill development training	480	GFA and BMET
Japanese language	684	TTC
Korean language	396	TTC
English language	387	TTC
Chinese (Cantonese) language	38	TTC
Chinese (Mandarin) language	12	TTC

Source: Author’s Analysis Based on BMET (2023).

6.2.3 Training through PPP

Table 8 outlines the different training initiatives conducted through Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) to offer targeted skill development courses, primarily to increase employment opportunities for workers, particularly those seeking employment abroad.

Table 8: Public-Private Partnerships for Training

Public organisation	Private organisation	Objective	Course
BMET	SDP	To provide training, strengthen training capacity, and to provide stipends to the trainees	Organises free long/short (mentioned in MoU) skill training courses
	STEP		
	SEIP		
	B-SEP		
	A recruiting agency in Saudi Arabia & Bangladesh	To provide housekeeping training	
	A recruiting agency in Hong Kong & Bangladesh	To provide housekeeping and Cantonese language training	
	BGMEA	For joint training in the garment trade	

Source: Author’s Compilation based on BMET (2023).

Despite the presence of training institutions across all districts and the availability of courses, the number of professional migrant workers remains low. The majority of workers are unskilled and lack both relevant skills and prior exposure to the positions in which they are employed. However, skilled migrant workers make up the second-largest group, and their numbers have more than tripled from 2021 to 2022.

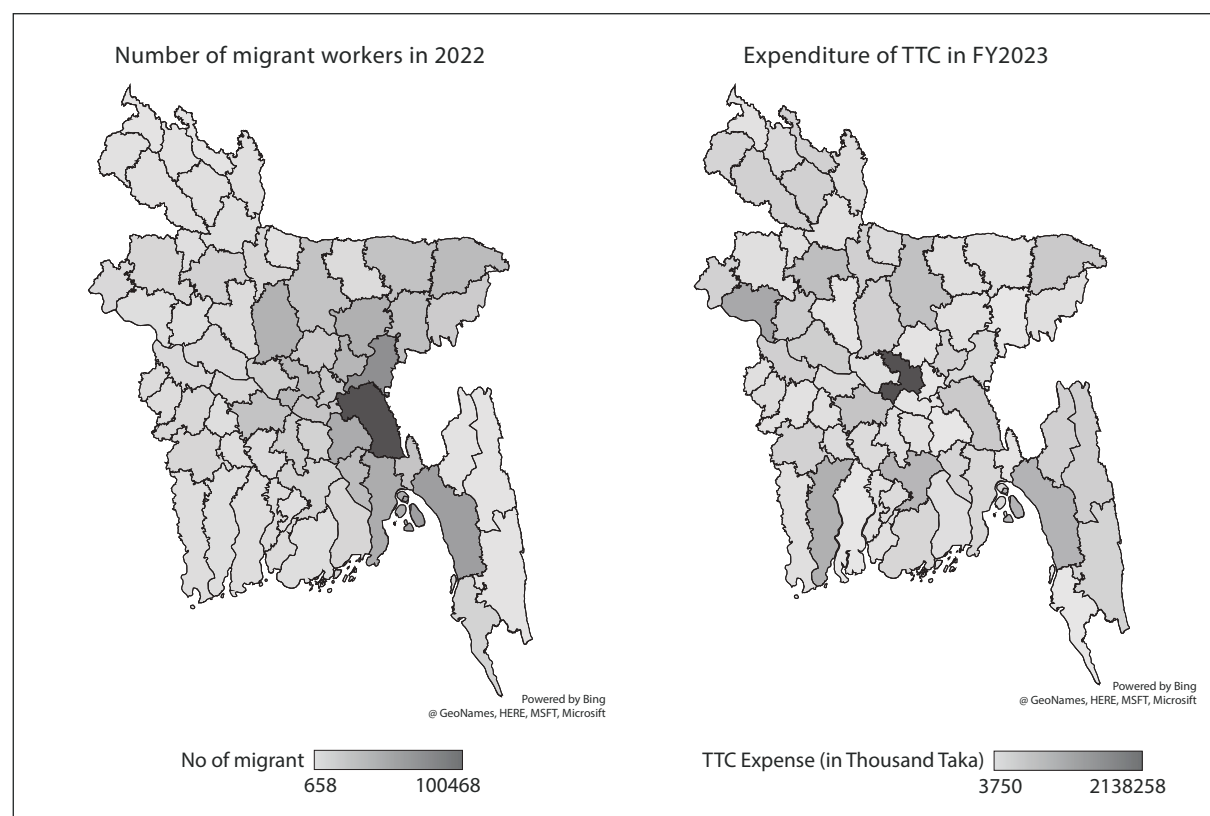
Table 9: Types of Trained Workers Migrate

Types	2020-21	2021-22
Professional	239	3082
Skilled	61690	197190
Less skilled	10195	24342
Unskilled	-	741888

Source: Author’s Compilation Based on BMET (2023).

To develop a larger pool of professional and skilled migrant workers, funding for TTCs should be prioritised in districts with higher migration rates. Figure 2 highlights that areas surrounding Dhaka, particularly in the Chattogram and Sylhet divisions, have higher migration rates. However, despite sending a significant number of migrant workers abroad, districts such as Habiganj, Cox’s Bazar,

Figure 2: Number of Workers Migrated from Different Districts in 2022 and Expenditure of TTC in FY2023



Source: BMET (n.d.).

Bagerhat, Narayanganj, and Chandpur have received no allocation. In contrast, substantial allocations have been directed to divisional areas with district status, including Khulna, Rajshahi, Bogura, Mymensingh, and Sylhet.

6.2.2 Field Observations in Cumilla TTC

The quality and relevance of the courses offered at Cumilla TTC are critical concerns. While the centre provides training in technical, electrical, plumbing, and RSC, many of its courses are outdated and no longer meet current industry demands. Despite enrolling an average of 2,500 students annually and having 2,200 pass the NSDA assessments, the outdated curriculum hinders service delivery. Moreover, approximately 15-20 per cent of graduates migrate within a year of completing their training, highlighting the importance of aligning the training programmes with global job markets. Upgrading equipment and modernising the curriculum are essential steps to improve the centre's overall efficiency and service delivery.

6.2.3 Field Observations in Narsingdi TTC

The effectiveness of service delivery is hampered by inadequate infrastructure. Since the TTC's physical space was designed without provision for vertical expansion, the classrooms and laboratories, built in 2007, are outdated, too small, and inadequately maintained. For instance, these rooms can only accommodate 10 students at a time, and there are issues like malodorous washrooms due to the lack of cleaning staff. Such limitations hinder the training activities and create an unsuitable learning environment. Furthermore, the absence of a driving track, despite the high demand for driving courses, impedes the provision of practical lessons and raises the cost of the training budget as the TTC authority manages an open field nearby at its own cost to continue this training. Addressing these issues would require expanding the facility to include new academic buildings, an auditorium, and specialised facilities such as a driving track and modern digital labs with updated technological setups. Additionally, upgrading the equipment, including voltage stabilisers, smartboards, computers, and digital welding machinery, is essential to align the TTC's training programmes with industry standards.

6.3 DEMO

6.3.1 Field Observations in Dhaka DEMO

Service delivery by DEMO remains suboptimal due to both financial and structural limitations. DEMO facilities are absent in 22 districts, leaving large migrant populations in areas like Brahmanbaria and Lakshmipur without institutional support. Establishing fully equipped DEMOs in these regions is essential, not only to support the migrant population but also to provide training in legal procedures, rights, and counselling techniques. Addressing the inefficiencies in areas like Rangamati, Bandarban, and Panchagarh, where high per capita expenses contrast with low migrant numbers, will ensure that resources are better aligned with migrant needs. Enhancing the service delivery of these offices will contribute to increased remittance income and improve the global reputation of Bangladesh as a source of skilled labour.

6.3.2 Field Observations in Cumilla DEMO

The fingerprint registration process is a key activity for the DEMO, essential for building a comprehensive database of migrant workers to track and support them during their employment abroad. However, service delivery is hampered by logistical challenges, such as limited transportation facilities, which restrict the office's ability to conduct field visits and outreach programmes. The Cumilla DEMO faces issues in service efficiency due to outdated equipment and the absence of mass awareness campaigns to disseminate information on migration processes across upazilas.

6.3.3 Field Observations in Narsingdi DEMO

The delivery of services at the Narsingdi DEMO is significantly hampered by both manpower and budgetary limitations. On average, around 40,000 migrants register through the DEMO each year, yet the office lacks the resources and staff to facilitate comprehensive PDO sessions. Moreover, while DEMO's primary responsibility shifted to migrant registration in 2000, the absence of adequate staffing levels continues to impede its capacity to deliver services effectively. This includes the provision of security, as demonstrated by incidents like the theft of air conditioners during a field visit. Addressing these issues would require filling vacant positions and hiring additional staff to improve service delivery, with a particular focus on roles necessary for security and administrative tasks.

6.4 Welfare Centre (Cumilla)

Service delivery at the Cumilla Welfare Centre is comprehensive but faces significant hurdles. The centre provides legal and financial aid, reintegration training, employment linkage assistance, and supports communication between migrant workers and their families. Additionally, the centre conducts awareness programmes on safe migration practices and migrant rights. However, the limited budget and logistical difficulties affect the efficiency of these services. For instance, the centre struggles to conduct widespread awareness campaigns due to insufficient funds, limiting its ability to reach a broader audience of migrants and their families. Moreover, the provision of financial support and legal aid to migrants is complicated by a shortage of trained staff and resources, particularly in areas like embassy-based assistance. To improve service delivery, better funding is required to bolster the centre's outreach, infrastructure, and legal support mechanisms, especially in foreign missions where safe houses are financed by WEWB.

7. HUMAN RESOURCE CAPACITY

7.1 BMET

The BMET's ability to manage its responsibilities is further constrained by human resource limitations. The organisation suffers from insufficient staffing and a lack of trained personnel capable of delivering high-quality services. Educational gaps among migrant workers, particularly those who are unskilled or semi-skilled, exacerbate this issue, as many workers leave the country without completing primary or secondary education. Furthermore, vocational training centres and educational institutions, such as polytechnic institutes and universities, are unable to meet the demand for skilled workers, further

limiting BMET’s capacity to prepare workers for international jobs. This shortfall in human resource capacity significantly undermines BMET’s ability to improve its training programmes and ensure that migrant workers possess the skills required for overseas employment.

The institution struggles with a shortage of skilled manpower to meet the increasing demand for overseas employment services. This manpower deficiency extends to key areas, such as staffing for overseas employment services and training programmes, which weakens BMET’s ability to oversee and manage the migration process effectively. Additionally, the lack of adequate education among many unskilled and semi-skilled workers highlights a deeper challenge in BMET’s capacity to provide job-specific training that meets international standards.

7.2 TTC

The most frequent challenge highlighted in all organisations relayed to BMET is shortage of manpower and skilled professionals to support migrant workers. Table 10 presents the gaps in the number of vacant positions across different grades in different institutes. With over 70 per cent of key teaching roles unfilled, the challenges and deficiencies in the technical training status of TTCs are starkly evident.

Table 10: Statistics on Vacant Job Posts Related to the Trainer Position of BMET’s Organisations

Job Position	Approved Posts 2022	Filled Posts 2022	Vacant Posts 2022	Per cent of positions vacant
Senior Instructor (Diploma + Non-Diploma)	546	198	348	63.7
Instructor (Diploma + Non-Diploma)	885	555	330	37.3
Instructor (Subject oriented)	227	31	196	86.3
Chief Instructor (TTC)	306	135	171	55.9
Chief Assistant	101	50	51	50.5
Principal (TTC)	81	30	51	63.0
Instructor (BIMT)	85	44	41	48.2
Senior Instructor (IMT)	43	13	30	69.8
Craft Instructor (BIMT)	30	2	28	93.3
Lab Attendant (TTC)	48	29	19	39.6
Senior Instructor (Subject oriented)	46	27	19	41.3
Senior Teacher	35	22	13	37.1
Assistant Director (Training)	12	2	10	83.3
General Teacher	25	15	10	40.0
Draftsman Instructor	14	6	8	57.1
Instructor (Physics, Computer Science, Math, Chemistry) IMT	15	9	6	40.0
Physical Instructor	1	0	1	100
Total	2500	1168	1332	

Source: BMET (2023).

A critical gap in TTCs' human resource capacity is the shortage of qualified instructors, which severely impacts the quality of education and training provided to aspiring migrant workers. This shortage is compounded by the lack of manpower to provide demand-driven, job-specific training that equips workers with the skills needed to keep pace with technological advances. Additionally, many migrant workers face challenges due to incomplete primary or secondary education, making it difficult for TTCs to deliver effective training. The lack of modern equipment and technological tools further hinders the instructors' ability to provide high-quality, relevant training. In some newly constructed TTCs, only 190 positions have been generated, despite the need for 3,400 positions, underscoring the staffing inadequacies within the system.

These high numbers of vacant and approved posts indicate the need for the TTC to conduct its training activities. However, apart from the number, experience and qualification of the trainers are highly important. Different field visits identified that the education and qualification requirements for existing trainers are not always met. The TTC suffers from a shortage of instructors who possess the necessary qualifications to teach the required technical courses.

Trainers often lack sufficient industry experience, which limits their ability to provide practical insights during training sessions. The TTC is particularly affected by this issue, where the experience gap among trainers hampers the quality of instruction.

The TTCs face challenges with the professional credentials of their instructors. The positions of Senior Instructor and Chief Instructor in many centres are filled with staff who do not meet the required professional standards. A significant gap exists between the skills needed for these roles and the qualifications of the personnel in place.

The lack of continuous professional development for trainers in TTCs is a pressing concern. Many instructors have outdated skills and are not regularly exposed to new teaching methodologies or technologies. As a result, they are unable to effectively train workers for modern job markets. The Narsingdi TTC and Cumilla TTC are particularly affected by this gap in staff professional training.

7.2.1 Field Observations in BKTTC

The BKTTC is overwhelmed by a severe shortage of qualified instructors. The existing teaching staff is less than 30 per cent of what is required, leading to overburdened instructors and compromised training quality.

7.2.2 Field Observations in Cumilla TTC

One of the most pressing challenges faced by Cumilla TTC is the shortage of instructors, particularly in 5 out of the 8 courses offered. The frequent transfer of instructors to other TTCs further exacerbates this issue, impacting the quality of training and the centre's capacity to provide adequate learning opportunities. There is a clear need for ongoing professional development for instructors to equip them with the skills to teach new courses and utilise updated machinery. Providing regular training for instructors will improve their ability to deliver high-quality education and improve the overall human resource capacity of the TTC.

7.2.3 Field Observations in Narsingdi TTC

A critical challenge at Narsingdi TTC is the shortage of qualified trainers. Presently, there are only 1-2 trainers available per trade, where at least six are required. Trainers are also burdened with additional duties such as institutional accounting, which diverts their attention from teaching. Additionally, no dedicated staff members are assigned to conduct pre-departure orientation (PDO) sessions, forcing the existing trainers to take on this responsibility as well, further affecting their time and effort to deliver effective training. To address these issues, there must be a comprehensive revision of recruitment rules, with adequate staffing in both teaching and non-teaching roles, including cleaners, electricians, and administrative staff. Moreover, hiring specialised professionals for roles such as accounting and electrical maintenance would relieve trainers from non-teaching duties. Dedicated staff for PDO tasks would also enable trainers to focus more on their core responsibilities.

7.3 DEMO

A critical challenge for DEMO is the lack of manpower for conducting its mandated activities. Despite the substantial workload, Dhaka DEMO operates with a semi-skilled staff, significantly affecting its service delivery capacity. This shortage is compounded by the absence of foundational training for newly joined officials, who rely solely on a learning-by-doing approach. This gap in formal training leads to inefficiencies and errors, undermining the office's overall effectiveness.

7.3.1 Field Observations in Dhaka DEMO

The capacity of DEMOs to effectively deliver services is hindered by significant human resource gaps. Many DEMO staff are undertrained, particularly in areas such as legal counselling and migrant rights advocacy. In districts where DEMOs are underperforming, staff training is often insufficient to meet the growing demands of the migrant population. Addressing these capacity-building gaps is essential, as inadequate training diminishes migrant readiness and, consequently, migration rates. Furthermore, improving the quality of TTC training, particularly by aligning it with international standards, would enable Bangladeshi workers to secure better employment abroad. This, in turn, would increase remittances, benefiting both individual households and the national economy.

7.3.2 Field Observations in Cumilla DEMO

The human resource capacity within Cumilla DEMO is notably inadequate. The office operates with only six officers, leaving eight positions unfilled, which strains its ability to deliver services effectively. Moreover, the shortage of trained staff affects the overall efficiency of operations, with existing personnel often overburdened. There is also a lack of formal training programmes for new recruits, further diminishing the operational effectiveness of the office. The absence of guard positions within the office allows intermediaries or 'dalals' to exploit migrants, highlighting the need for stricter security measures.

7.3.3 Field Observations in Narsingdi DEMO

A critical issue facing the Narsingdi DEMO is its limited human resource capacity. With only five permanent staff members, and two positions currently vacant, the DEMO struggles to fulfil its administrative responsibilities and provide adequate services to both prospective and returning migrants. The absence of a designated accountant forces other staff to take on financial management tasks without the required expertise. Additionally, the lack of a dedicated security guard has resulted in vulnerabilities, such as thefts. To address these issues, DEMO must increase staffing levels to at least six, appointing individuals to essential roles like security and accounting. Furthermore, the reinstatement of a PKB representative would provide specialised financial services to migrants, alleviating some of the operational pressures on the current staff.

7.4 Welfare Centre (Cumilla)

Human resource capacity is one of the most pressing challenges for the Cumilla Welfare Centre. The centre operates with a small team of nine staff members and 18 volunteers, which is inadequate to meet the needs of the large number of migrant families they serve. The lack of trained personnel affects the quality-of-service delivery, and the existing staff often face heavy workloads. Out of the 9 staff, only two are from WEWB, while the rest are drawn from NGOs and IOM. Furthermore, there is a need for continuous training to ensure staff are equipped with up-to-date knowledge on policies and practices in migrant welfare. The shortage of human resources not only impacts service delivery but also limits the centre's capacity to manage the registration and support of returnee migrants under projects like RAISE. Increasing staff numbers and investing in professional development through regular training programmes are essential steps to improve the overall service capacity.

8. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND FEEDBACK

During the field visits, it was noted that there is a significant need for improved linkages between the industry and training centres. Establishing a mechanism for connecting TTC graduates with relevant industries can increase job placements and ensure that the training provided aligns with market demands. This alignment is critical for maximising the employment potential of graduates and addressing global labour shortages. Addressing these issues is essential for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of these institutions, ultimately ensuring better support and opportunities for migrant workers. These insights will aim to create a robust framework that addresses these challenges comprehensively.

8.1 BMET

The BMET's engagement with stakeholders, particularly migrant workers and recruiting agencies, reveals several gaps. The lack of feedback mechanisms and limited interaction with migrants prior to their departure creates significant information gaps, leaving potential migrants vulnerable to exploitation by unscrupulous agents. The absence of a robust monitoring system for recruiting agencies leads to issues with transparency and ethical recruitment standards. Additionally, the failure to involve returnee migrants in the reintegration process highlights a disconnect between BMET and its key stakeholders.

The inability to address concerns raised by these stakeholders not only hampers BMET's service delivery but also limits its effectiveness in addressing the challenges faced by Bangladeshi migrant workers. Improved stakeholder engagement, coupled with systematic feedback mechanisms, could greatly improve BMET's ability to deliver on its mandate and protect the rights of migrant workers.

The institution lacks a systematic feedback mechanism that could help tailor its services to the needs of migrants and the demands of international labour markets. BMET's regulatory efforts are also hindered by the presence of syndicates that dominate recruitment processes, particularly for countries like Malaysia, leading to inefficiencies and illegal migration. Furthermore, the lack of resources to audit and ensure compliance among recruiting agencies affects the quality of recruitment practices. Agencies tend to focus on unskilled and low-skilled workers due to the high profit margins in these sectors, which perpetuates the absence of high-skill job opportunities for Bangladeshi workers abroad.

8.2 TTC

Stakeholder engagement within TTCs has also been fraught with challenges. There is limited feedback from key stakeholders, including government agencies, recruitment firms, and training centres, which hampers the ability to adapt programmes to meet the needs of overseas employment markets. Ineffectiveness among agencies responsible for sending workers abroad, particularly to countries like Malaysia, has been exacerbated by syndicate issues, leading to inefficiencies in the migration process. Moreover, the lack of attendance in pre-migration training programmes suggests a disconnect between the training methods employed and the needs or expectations of the migrant workforce. This highlights a pressing need for better collaboration and feedback mechanisms among stakeholders to ensure that TTCs can deliver effective and relevant training.

8.2.1 Field Observations in Cumilla TTC

Stakeholder engagement is important in ensuring that Cumilla TTC's training programmes are aligned with both domestic and global job markets. The centre's stakeholders, including ministries and industry partners, provide valuable feedback on equipment needs, such as the requirement for BDT 4-5 crore for machinery and tools across 12 trades. Furthermore, the centre faces financial pressures due to the NSDA's evaluation fee of BDT 1100 per trainee, a burden previously shared by BMET. To ensure better stakeholder engagement, it is recommended that Cumilla TTC conducts market research to tailor its courses to meet emerging job opportunities, both domestically and internationally. This would ensure that graduates are equipped with relevant skills, making them more attractive to employers globally.

8.2.2 Field Observations in Narsingdi TTC

Stakeholder feedback has highlighted several additional challenges, such as the TTC's lack of proximity to the city centre, which increases the cost and difficulty for students to commute. One potential solution is to partner with local transportation services to offer discounted or subsidised travel options. Another critical area is the absence of modern facilities for certain courses, such as housekeeping. Improving these facilities, along with providing modern amenities and better accommodation, would significantly increase the learning experience.

Stakeholders have also noted the absence of financial incentives, which has negatively impacted student and staff motivation. For example, the discontinuation of a student stipend in 2012-13 has led to a decline in interest in vocational training. Reintroducing this stipend and advocating for development partners like JICA to restart training support for the trainers would be beneficial in addressing both student and trainer development. This would not only improve participation but also improve the quality of teaching through modern, relevant skill sets.

8.3 DEMO

8.3.1 Field Observations in Dhaka DEMO

Stakeholder engagement remains fragmented, with limited coordination between key players such as the PKB, Welfare Centres, and DEMOs. This disjointed structure creates opportunities for intermediaries to take advantage of migrants, exacerbating the challenges faced by both DEMOs and migrants alike. Establishing partnerships with foreign entities to secure employment channels for Bangladeshi workers could improve DEMO effectiveness. Additionally, creating a robust feedback mechanism, where the experiences of migrants are regularly reviewed, would ensure continuous improvement in service delivery. A comprehensive monitoring system for DEMO performance could also track the effectiveness of proposed reforms, aligning operations with migrant needs while reducing the influence of third-party intermediaries.

8.3.2 Field Observations in Cumilla DEMO

Coordination between Cumilla DEMO and other institutions, such as the PKB and Welfare centres, is weak due to their disparate locations. This lack of coordination enables intermediaries to take advantage of migrants, often leading to exploitation. The office also lacks effective mechanisms for gathering and integrating stakeholder feedback, which could otherwise help improve service delivery and address gaps in the migration process. Strengthening inter-institutional coordination is crucial for improving the overall support system for migrant workers.

Considering these challenges, several recommendations have been proposed to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of Cumilla DEMO. Increasing the budget allocation is essential for modernising equipment and enhancing service delivery. Professional development and regular training for staff will also address human resource capacity issues. Establishing a comprehensive inter-institutional coordination framework, improving infrastructure, and expanding awareness programmes are necessary steps to create a robust support system for migrant workers, safeguarding their welfare and rights.

8.3.3 Field Observations in Narsingdi DEMO

Engagement with stakeholders, particularly in terms of awareness programmes and financial services, has been inconsistent due to both budgetary and manpower issues. Although leaflets and banners are present at the DEMO office, there are no formal arrangements for comprehensive awareness campaigns, which are crucial for educating prospective migrants and their families. The lack of a robust digital infrastructure also limits DEMO's ability to communicate effectively with its constituents and

stakeholders. To overcome these challenges, the DEMO should invest in digital solutions and explore partnerships with local communities and organisations to improve its outreach efforts. Additionally, obtaining regular feedback from returning migrants could help tailor services to better meet the needs of the migrant community.

8.4 Welfare Centre (Cumilla)

Engagement with stakeholders, both domestic and international, plays a critical role in the functioning of the Cumilla Welfare Centre. The centre collaborates with various institutions, including WEWB, foreign embassies, local NGOs, and international bodies, to extend its services and provide comprehensive support to migrant workers. For instance, in countries like Saudi Arabia, WEWB officers and translators assist in resolving legal and employment-related issues for migrants. Despite these efforts, the centre faces challenges in maintaining effective communication and coordination among stakeholders. This affects the processing of critical cases such as the repatriation of deceased migrants who have transitioned into illegal status. Stakeholder feedback highlights the need for better coordination protocols and increased recruitment of WEWB officers in foreign embassies to improve service delivery. Improving these partnerships and feedback mechanisms will ensure that migrant workers and their families receive more integrated and efficient support.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 Budgetary Allocation and Utilisation

9.1.1 MOEWOE & BMET

- a. Increase budget allocation to address financial constraints, particularly in development budgets. Despite a 122 per cent rise in the FY2025 budget, the Ministry needs more resources to meet operational and institutional needs.
- b. Improve budget utilisation, as only 2/3rd of the FY2024 proposed budget was implemented, highlighting the ministry's struggle to effective utilisation of the fund.
- c. Continue financial support for remitters, despite a decrease in the proportion of incentives from 22 per cent (FY2021) to 15 per cent (FY2024).
- d. Allocate funds to improve training quality and equipment, especially with the establishment of new Technical Training Centres (TTCs).
- e. Increase manpower and awareness campaigns about loan facilities of PKB for migrant workers, as a significant portion of funds remains unused due to strict loan policy and lack of publicity.
- f. Allocate more funds to BMET for better training, recruitment monitoring, and migrant support.

9.1.2 Technical Training Centres (TTC)

- a. **Budget for Modernisation:** Increase capital expenditure to modernise equipment for vocational training, especially for TTCs established in 2000 and 2006. These TTCs require immediate upgrades for their training equipment worth at least BSt 10 crore and BDT 5 crore, respectively.

- b. **Equitable Training Budget:** Ensure equitable fund distribution for TTCs in high-migration areas. Allocate BDT 1.25 crore to TTCs with special needs, derived from the analysis of existing allocations.
- c. **Reallocation of Unused Budgets:** Redirect unused funds from districts like Bandarban and Rangamati to high-migration areas such as Cumilla and Tangail for quality training.
- d. **Training Budget for Underfunded Districts:** Allocate BDT 40 crore to new TTCs in districts like Bagerhat, Cox's Bazar, Habiganj, and Narayanganj, which have no current training budget but account for a significant portion of the migrant population.

9.1.3 District Employment and Manpower Offices (DEMO)

- a. **Fund Reallocation:** Reallocate unused funds from districts with low migrant populations, such as Khulna, to high-migration areas like Cumilla.
- b. **Budget for Equipment:** Allocate more funds to conduct all the activities as per the mandate of DEMO, especially for conducting job placement and awareness-raising activities.
- c. **Digital Infrastructure:** Increase funding for digital infrastructure and outreach in DEMOs like Narsingdi to improve data management and communication with migrant workers.
- d. **Awareness Programmes:** Improve awareness programmes in all DEMOs, especially in high-migration districts, to promote safe migration practices and inform migrants about available services.

9.1.4 Welfare Centres

- a. **Increased Budget:** Substantially increase the budget to expand services and outreach for migrant families, especially for providing financial assistance in cases of deceased migrant workers and infrastructure improvements.

9.2 Organisational Structure and Processes

9.2.1 BMET

- a. BMET should enable TTC officials to be promoted to principal positions, rather than appointing principals from BMET. If TTC trainers lack incentives and know they cannot advance to higher positions, their dedication to developing skilled workers will be zero. Therefore, BMET should revise the recruitment process to allow TTC officials to attain top positions, encouraging a more motivated and incentivised trainer pool.

9.2.2 TTC

- a. Streamline procurement processes and empower higher-level officers with financial expertise to address logistical challenges.
- b. Revise recruitment rules to include promotion pathways for instructors to improve staff retention and morale.
- c. Ensure sufficient recruitment of trainers to prevent staff shortages and overburdened instructors.
- d. Improve procurement processes to enable the acquisition of large-scale machinery for modernised training.

- e. Revise recruitment rules to introduce career growth opportunities for staff and address the shortage of qualified personnel.

9.2.3 DEMO

- a. Co-locate PKB, Welfare Centres, and DEMO offices in a single place or a large building to improve coordination, save time taking services, and reduce travel costs for migrants.
- b. Streamline service provision and policy reforms to increase DEMO efficiency and support skilled migrant employment.
- c. Improve coordination between DEMO, PKB, and Welfare Centres to eliminate the influence of intermediaries and expedite migration processes.
- d. Address the overlap in PDO services between TTCs and DEMOs to improve resource allocation.
- e. Simplify logistical procedures by establishing recruiting agency offices within DEMO locations to minimise travel for migrants.
- f. Appoint a dedicated accountant and reinstate a PKB representative to manage financial services for migrants and reduce administrative inefficiencies.

9.2.4 Welfare Centre

- a. Improve coordination between WEWB, NGOs, and international organisations like IOM to increase service delivery.
- b. Establish clearer protocols between stakeholders, particularly in embassies, to streamline the processing of deceased migrant workers.

9.3 Service Delivery Efficiency

9.3.1 MOEWOE & BMET

- a. **Improve Pre-Departure Training:** BMET should update the pre-departure training content, particularly for domestic house workers, to ensure it aligns with job-specific needs and improves workers' ability to cope in their new work environments.
- b. **Strengthen Monitoring of Recruiting Agents:** There is a need for improved oversight and regulation of recruiting agents to ensure fairness and transparency during recruitment, reducing exploitation risks for workers.
- c. **Improve Technological Platforms:** Address the technological challenges of the 'Ami Probashi' app to streamline document access and reduce costs for migrants who rely on intermediaries.
- d. **Increase Participation in Language Training:** Greater emphasis should be placed on language training to better prepare migrant workers for the challenges of working abroad, as language skills are critical for understanding services, contracts, and rights in foreign countries.

9.3.2 TTC

- a. **Update Training Equipment and Curriculum:** To improve the employability of trainees, TTCs need to modernise outdated equipment and update the curriculum to align with current industry demands, both domestically and internationally.

- b. **Increase Government Investment in High Migration Areas:** Funding for TTCs should be prioritised in districts with higher migration rates to build a larger pool of skilled and professional migrant workers.
- c. **Expand Facilities and Training Infrastructure:** Upgrading TTC infrastructure, including expanding classrooms and building specialised facilities like driving tracks, will improve the quality and scope of training programmes.
- d. **Improve Apprenticeship and Skill Development Initiatives:** Strengthening practical apprenticeship programmes and aligning skill development with the needs of international labour markets will better prepare workers for overseas employment.
- e. **Focus on Language Proficiency:** The TTCs should provide targeted language training to improve migrant employability and ensure better integration in foreign job markets.

9.3.3 DEMO

- a. **Establish DEMO Facilities in Underserved Districts:** New DEMO facilities should be established in districts like Brahmanbaria and Lakshmipur, where large migrant populations lack institutional support.
- b. **Improve Service Efficiency in Low-Migrant Areas:** Resources should be better aligned to areas low migrant numbers, like Rangamati and Bandarban, to ensure cost-effective service delivery.
- c. **Improve Logistical Support for Outreach Programmes:** DEMOs require better transportation facilities to conduct outreach and field visits, ensuring broader awareness of migration processes across districts.

9.3.4 Welfare Centres

- a. **Increase Funding for Legal and Financial Aid:** Increased financial resources are necessary for welfare centres to provide comprehensive legal and financial aid, particularly in foreign missions where embassy-based assistance is important.
- b. **Improve Awareness Campaigns on Migrant Rights:** Additional funds should be allocated to support widespread awareness campaigns about safe migration practices, which are currently limited due to budget constraints.

9.4 Human Resource Development

9.4.1 MOEWOE & BMET

To address BMET's human resource limitations, there is a need to increase staffing and provide targeted training to improve the skills of current employees. This would upgrade BMET's capacity to manage migration processes effectively and ensure workers possess the necessary skills for overseas employment. Additionally, investing in vocational training and educational institutions would bridge educational gaps among unskilled and semi-skilled workers, aligning training programmes with international job market standards.

9.4.2 TTC

The most important issue for TTCs is recruiting qualified instructors to fill key teaching roles. A focus on demand-driven, job-specific training that incorporates technological advancements is important. Additionally, modern equipment and tools should be introduced to improve training quality. Professional development for instructors should be prioritised to equip them with the skills necessary for new courses and updated machinery.

At TTCs, regular professional development programmes are needed to enable instructors to teach updated courses effectively. TTC requires revising recruitment rules to ensure adequate staffing in teaching and non-teaching roles. Hiring specialised professionals for non-teaching tasks like accounting and maintenance would free trainers to focus on teaching, and dedicating staff to PDO sessions would further improve training efficiency.

9.4.3 DEMO

DEMO's operational efficiency would improve with increased staffing and formal training for newly joined officials. A structured training programme focusing on legal counselling and migrant rights advocacy is necessary to address the growing demands of migrant populations. Improving the quality of training at TTCs by aligning it with international standards would also increase the employment prospects of Bangladeshi workers abroad.

In DEMO, staffing levels should be increased, particularly in key roles such as guards and trained personnel, to improve operational effectiveness. The DEMO should increase its staff to at least six, particularly in accounting and security roles. Reinstating a PKB representative would also provide critical financial services to migrants.

9.4.4 Welfare Centres

The Welfare Centre needs to increase its human resource capacity to effectively manage the registration and support of returnee migrants. Continuous staff training is important to ensure that personnel remain updated on policies and practices related to migrant welfare. Increasing the staff size and investing in professional development will improve the overall quality of service delivery.

9.5 Stakeholder Engagements and Feedback

9.5.1 MOEWOE & BMET

- a. Implement a robust feedback mechanism to engage with migrant workers and their families, recruiting agencies and implementing organisations that are working with migrant workers more effectively.
- b. Establish a monitoring system for recruiting agencies to ensure transparency and ethical recruitment standards.
- c. Address the presence of syndicates in the recruitment process and ensure more resources for auditing compliance among recruiting agencies.

9.5.2 TTC

- a. Improve stakeholder collaboration and feedback mechanisms to align training programmes with the needs of overseas employment markets.
- b. Conduct market research to tailor courses at TTCs to emerging job opportunities.
- c. At TTC, conduct market research to better align courses with domestic and international job opportunities and allocate funding for machinery and tools.
- d. Improve facilities and accommodation and reintroduce financial incentives, such as student stipends, to increase participation and motivation.
- e. Advocate for development partners like JICA to restart training support for trainers in Bangladesh rather than sending them abroad to receive training.

9.5.3 DEMO

- a. Establish partnerships with foreign entities to expand employment channels for Bangladeshi workers.
- b. Create a feedback mechanism to review migrant experiences and improve DEMO service delivery regularly.
- c. Set up a comprehensive monitoring system to track DEMO performance.
- d. Improve coordination between DEMO, PKB, and Welfare Centres, and develop mechanisms for integrating stakeholder feedback.
- e. Increase budget allocation for modernising equipment and improve inter-institutional coordination and awareness programmes.
- f. Invest in digital infrastructure at Narsingdi DEMO and engage local communities to increase outreach efforts.

9.5.4 Welfare Centre

- a. Strengthen coordination protocols among stakeholders to improve service delivery, particularly in processing critical cases like reintegration.
- b. Recruit more WEWB officers in foreign embassies to improve support for migrant workers abroad.
- c. Increase partnerships and feedback mechanisms to provide integrated services to migrant workers and their families.

In conclusion, the initiatives outlined are important for addressing the existing disparities in Bangladesh's migrant workforce training and support systems. By prioritising the allocation of training budgets to high-migrant districts and establishing new TTCs and migrant welfare centres, these efforts aim to improve the preparedness of Bangladeshi workers for international employment. The visibility of training programmes is being increased to attract more participants, while ongoing reviews of training expenditures are critical to identifying inefficiencies and closing gaps in nationwide training provision. These measures are designed to create a more equitable and effective training infrastructure that serves the diverse needs of Bangladesh's migrant population.

Moreover, a strong emphasis needs to be placed on aligning TTCs with global job markets to optimise labour utilisation and ensure that training is relevant to the demands of international employers. Key

priorities include the efficient disbursement of stipends to encourage programme completion, securing international recognition for NSDA-certified qualifications to improve employability, and addressing barriers to migration that limit job opportunities for TTC graduates. The plan also advocates for the integration of technical education into mainstream curricula, equipping the future workforce with the necessary skills for emerging industries, particularly in the context of the AI era. Collaboration with national universities to align curricula with global demands and the engagement of foreign teachers to enrich educational programmes are crucial for preparing students to compete in modern job markets.

Furthermore, the importance of optimising resource utilisation through public-private partnerships, ensuring transparency and accountability in worker deployment, and enhancing migrant reintegration programmes. By implementing a centralised digital platform for recruitment and negotiating bilateral agreements with migrant-hosting countries, these initiatives aim to improve working conditions and streamline recruitment processes. The action plan also recognises the need to modernise skill development through advanced training methods, develop specialised TTCs to cater to niche industries, and fully utilise development budgets for migrant welfare. Collectively, these will not only strengthen Bangladesh's training and support systems but also improve the overall employability and welfare of its migrant workers, contributing to sustainable economic growth and social stability.

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Annexes

Annex 1: Activities of the BMET, TTC, and DEMO as per Their Mandates

Institution	Activities
BMET	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Processing of foreign demands for recruitment of Bangladeshi workers. 2. Controlling and regulating emigration clearance for recruited workers in overseas employment. 3. Regulating and monitoring private recruiting agents who recruit Bangladeshi workers for foreign employers. 4. Implementing self-employment programmes. 5. Collecting and disseminating labour market information through a computerised database. 6. Conducting welfare activities for Bangladeshi workers abroad. 7. Registering unemployed persons and referral to the vacancy positions. 8. Providing institution based vocational and technical training in different employable trades. 9. Planning and implementing development programmes to conduct training activities. 10. Conducting informal, formal, and special training courses. 11. Coordinating apprenticeship training.
TTC	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Providing skill development training concurrently with the demand of the domestic and international labour markets. 2. Utilising modern technology in comprehensive training arrangements. 3. Encouraging legitimate means of remittance from foreign workers to the country. 4. Promoting vocational and career-oriented training through paper, leaflet, handbill, and print media. 5. Arranging job placements for trainees. 6. Issuing certificates prior to skill verification through RPL examination. 7. Providing online training courses for Japanese and Korean language proficiency. 8. Facilitating job placements by enhancing industry linkages.
DEMO	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Registration and fingerprinting of prospective migrant workers in the database. 2. Public awareness campaigns aimed at eliminating middlemen/brokers in residency management. 3. Provision of advice and awareness-raising campaigns on vocational training opportunities. 4. Online visa verification. 5. Provision of information services to prospective migrant workers. 6. Legal assistance for the economic and necessary compensation collection of injured/disabled migrant workers. 7. Repatriation of deceased workers' bodies to their home country, burial, and distribution of financial aid among deceased workers' family members. 8. Management of resolution through reception and investigation of various complaints by migrant workers and their families. 9. Provision of comprehensive support for the repatriation of deported migrant workers. 10. Ensuring the welfare and protection of migrant workers and safeguarding their rights. 11. Awareness-raising campaigns to combat human trafficking.

Source: Author's compilation from BMET, TTC and DEMO.

Annex 2: Institutional Assessment of BMET: Gaps Identified

Institution	Gaps
Institutional Gaps (Manpower and Logistics)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inefficiency of government administrative authorities in facilitating remittance processes for migrant workers. • Limited capacity of science, technology, polytechnic institutes, colleges, universities, and vocational training centres to meet the demand for skilled workers. • Lack of attendance in pre-migration trainings, suggesting a need for improved training programmes and methodologies. • Lack of a systematic, permanent mechanism for conducting market research for key receiving countries. • Lack of specific data on trafficking; significant illegal migration to the EU with risks and deaths during transit.
Operational Gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequacy of measures adopted by the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment and its department, the Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training (BMET), to regulate the migration process. • Insufficient measures taken leading to enormous shortage of skilled manpower in Bangladesh. • Lack of completion of primary or secondary education among unskilled and semi-skilled migrant workers. • Inadequate information and training provided to migrant workers before their departure. • Presence of significant challenges in monitoring and regulating the activities of recruiting agents, leading to issues with transparency and fairness in the recruitment process. • Technical Issues with 'Ami Probashi' App. Migrants face difficulties in downloading certificates from the app, and intermediaries charge fees for assistance.
Financial Gap and Legal Gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ineffectiveness of agencies responsible for sending workers to specific countries due to syndicate issues. • Increasing trend of illegal migration, leading to complications for the government and foreign missions in dealing with undocumented Bangladeshi workers abroad. • Due to insufficient staffing and resources, unable to effectively manage and oversee overseas employment services and training programmes.
Other Gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ineffectiveness of agencies responsible for sending workers to specific countries, such as Malaysia, due to syndicate issues among them. • Lack of the necessary resources and framework to effectively audit and ensure compliance among recruiting agencies, impacting the overall quality of recruitment practices. • Agencies tend to provide jobs for unskilled and low skilled labours since high profit margin in low skilled jobs. This is the major reason for lack of high skill jobs.

Source: Author's analysis based on field observations.

Annex 3: Current Status, Recommendations, and Rationale for Increasing Budgetary Allocation for TTC

Context	Proposal	Rationale
1. TTCs received BDT 2.5 crore for the first time in FY2023-24 for capital expenditure, allocated specifically for new equipment purchases.	The current allocation of BDT 2.5 crore for capital expenditure should be increased to BDT 15 crore , collectively for all TTCs.	All TTCs need new equipment, as their current inventory is old since their establishment.
2. Immediate equipment updates based on current job market demands are required for 11 TTCs established in 2000 and 26 TTCs established in 2006.	Allocation of BDT 10 Crore is required for equipment purchases in 11 TTCs , and BDT 5 Crore for 26 TTCs .	Due to their establishment in 2000 and 2006, the current equipment in use is outdated and obsolete.

(Annex 3 contd.)

(Annex 3 contd.)

Context	Proposal	Rationale
<p>3. The absence of training budgets in TTCs across 25 districts hinders migrant capacity building, affecting over 30 per cent of the migrant workforce in high migration areas.</p>	<p>Allocate an average training budget of BDT 1.25 crore to identify TTCs with special needs to ensure effective operation. The average training allocation of BDT 1.25 crore is calculated by dividing the total average training allocation of BDT 48.8 crore among the 39 districts with budget allocation for TTC training.</p>	<p>Allocating an average training budget of BDT 1.25 crore to identify TTCs with special needs ensures effective operation. This proposal stems from analysing the total average training allocation of BDT 48.8 crore among 39 districts with TTC training budgets. By targeting support to TTCs with specific requirements, we address resource disparities and optimise fund utilisation. This approach improves TTC operations, advancing technical education and skill development for Bangladesh's workforce.</p>
<p>4. Chandpur lacks TTC funding despite hosting the fourth-highest migrant population of 32,078. Immediate action is required to complete the establishment of Chandpur TTC.</p>	<p>Allocate resources to ensure well-equipped TTCs provide quality training and support to migrants; improve Chandpur's DEMO office capacity with specialised training programmes and allocate BDT 5 lakh to leverage its migration significance for better migrant preparation.</p>	<p>The proposal seeks to allocate resources to improve Training and Testing Centres (TTCs) and bolster Chandpur's DEMO office with specialised training programmes, utilising BDT 5 lakh to leverage its migration significance. This ensures migrants receive quality preparation, fostering successful migration experiences and socioeconomic development.</p>
<p>5. Despite Cumilla hosting the highest migrant population of 76,836, its low Per Capita Training expense of only BDT 65 indicates a disparity between migration scale and investment in migrant training programmes.</p>	<p>Increase Cumilla TTC's training budget by BDT 5.76 crore to better prepare migrants for overseas employment; improve awareness of training programmes among potential migrants for improved access to skill development opportunities. Each TTC budgets BDT 815 per migrant, revealing a BDT 750 shortfall in Cumilla; an extra BDT 5.76 crore is needed for its 76,836 migrants, while seminars across all TTCs receive an average budget of BDT 2.5 lakh funded by the respective sector.</p>	<p>Increasing Cumilla TTC's training budget by BDT 5.76 crore fills the BDT 750 shortfall per migrant, aiding its 76,836 migrants for overseas employment; promoting awareness amplifies skill development opportunities, aligning with comprehensive migrant support goals.</p>
<p>6. Bandarban and Rangamati report exceptionally high per capita training expenses—BDT 38,909 and 18,799 per migrant, respectively—yet with significant per capita unused budgets of BDT 3,583 and 1,967, highlighting budget allocation versus utilisation discrepancies, while Cumilla and Tangail, contributing approximately 14 per cent of total migrants, have notably low per capita training expenses of BDT 65 and 124, respectively,</p>	<p>Reallocate the total unused budget of BDT 2.88 Crore from Bandarban and Rangamati to Cumilla and Tangail for optimised resource distribution, while conducting detailed audits in Bandarban and Rangamati to identify overspending or misallocation and redirect the unused funds towards migrant-focused programmes. Bandarban and Rangamati, with unused budgets of BDT 1.09 Crore and BDT 1.78 crore respectively, could be reallocated to Cumilla and Tangail, given their excess training budgets of BDT 38,094 and BDT 17,984 per migrant respectively, compared to the average</p>	<p>The proposal suggests reallocating BDT 2.88 Crore from Bandarban and Rangamati to Cumilla and Tangail for better resource distribution, addressing the surplus budgets in the former areas. Conducting audits in Bandarban and Rangamati is crucial to identify overspending or misallocation, ensuring efficient fund utilisation. By redirecting unused funds towards migrant-focused programmes, the initiative improves support for migrant communities. This reallocation is justified by the significant disparities in training budgets per migrant, underscoring the necessity for</p>

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Context	Proposal	Rationale
suggesting a need for revaluation of training budget allocations.	allocation of BDT 815 per migrant, highlighting the need for a thorough audit.	a thorough audit to optimise resource allocation and promote equitable distribution.
7. Bagerhat, Chandpur, Cox's Bazar, Habiganj, and Narayanganj, districts accounting for 13 per cent of migrants , lack allocated funds for Technical Training Centres (TTC). Immediate action is required to complete the establishment of Bagerhat and Chandpur TTC.	Allocate BDT 40 crore to establish new TTCs in Bagerhat, Chandpur, Cox's Bazar, Habiganj, and Narayanganj, to provide comprehensive training programmes and improve migrant readiness for overseas employment.	Allocate BDT 40 crore to establish new TTCs in Bagerhat, Chandpur, Cox's Bazar, Habiganj, and Narayanganj, enhancing migrant readiness for overseas employment through comprehensive training programmes. By providing comprehensive training programmes in these key regions, the initiative addresses the growing demand for skilled labour and ensures migrants are adequately prepared for the challenges and opportunities abroad.
8. No training budget allocated to Lakshmipur and Sunamganj misses the opportunity to prepare migrants in these districts, with average migrant populations of 20,587 and 18,738 respectively, signalling a need for increased support.	Reallocate BDT 1.25 crore of the training budget to improve TTC capabilities, ensuring sufficient funds to improve training programme quality and reach. The average training allocation of BDT 1.25 crore is determined by dividing the total training allocation of BDT 48.8 crore among the 39 districts that receive budget allocation for training in TTCs.	The proposal reallocates BDT 1.25 crore of the training budget to boost TTC capabilities, ensuring improved training programme quality and reach. Derived from dividing the total training allocation of BDT 48.8 crore among 39 districts, the average allocation of BDT 1.25 crore underscores the necessity for resource reallocation to optimise training effectiveness, aligning to improve migrant readiness for overseas employment.
9. Underutilised training budgets in Khagrachari and Bandarban indicate potential overestimation of needs or implementation challenges.	Reallocate BDT 43 lakh of unused training budget to districts with low training distribution and overall budget to improve migrant support, maximising impact.	Despite having a low migrant count of 1,129 and 588 in Khagrachari and Bandarban respectively, there's an unused budget of BDT 22 lakh and BDT 21 lakh in each district.
10. Faridpur and Dhaka demonstrate minimal utilisation of their training budgets, suggesting underutilisation of available funds and potentially diminishing outcomes for migrants.	Thoroughly review training expenditure to identify bottlenecks and ensure efficient fund utilisation; in Faridpur and Dhaka, implement to utilise or reallocate BDT 1.66 crore of unused budget , including technology-based training or private sector partnerships for skill development.	Faridpur and Dhaka hold the highest amounts of unused training budget, totalling BDT 1.24 crore and BDT 41 lakh respectively , necessitating reallocation based on training budget and TTC establishment needs.
11. Lalmonirhat and Rangamati TTC operational budgets are underutilised, indicating that these districts are not fully maximising their allocated funds to support migrant initiatives.	Thoroughly review training expenditure to address bottlenecks and ensure efficient fund utilisation; reallocate the unused budget of BDT 4.65 crore to TTCs requiring additional resources for establishments and training.	Despite hosting only 625 and 774 migrants respectively , Rangamati and Lalmonirhat have substantial unused TTC budget amounts of BDT 2.11 crore and BDT 2.54 crore , necessitating reallocation based on training budget and TTC establishment needs.

Source: Author's Compilation Based on KIIs from Field Visits.

Annex 4: Observations from Cumilla TTC

Category	Details
Information/ Activities/ Services	<p>For All TTCs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a growing demand for migrants from Bandarban seeking housekeeping jobs in Hong Kong due to the cultural similarities. • The NSDA imposes an evaluation fee of BDT 1100 per trainee at the TTC. Previously, BMET contributed BDT 550 towards this fee, but it no longer provides this support. Consequently, the TTC is now responsible for covering the full amount for the trainees. <p>For Cumilla TTC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certain Technical Training Centres (TTCs) benefited from modern technology and equipment through the KOICA project, while Cumilla did not receive any such support. • Additionally, some equipment was procured under the SEIP project. Current available machinery was procured on a project basis funded by different countries of government initiatives. However, no allocation for machinery was available from MoF before FY2024. • On average, 2500 students enrol in this TTC every year, with 2200 passing the assessment exams of NSDA for each programme. • Approximately 15-20 per cent of individuals migrate within one year of receiving training from Cumilla TTC. • TTC provide estimation to the ministries. Cumilla TTC informed that they require BDT 4-5 crore for 12 trades for machinery and equipment.
Challenges	<p>For All TTCs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of machinery is hindering 'one man one machine' policy of NSDA. Therefore, NSDA do not assess those TTCs that do not have sufficient machinery in each trade. • Despite some improvements, there is still a lack of equipment at the TTC, and the allocated budget remains insufficient. • The scale of equipment purchase is notably low, necessitating projects to acquire necessary equipment. • There are obsolete courses offered at the TTC that have lost their demand, highlighting the need for steps to improvise and restructure the courses and curriculum. • Due to the 'delegation of financial power', TTCs cannot procure large machinery of that are highly expensive. In terms of procurement, TTC require higher position of officers who has knowledge and power for large scale procurement. <p>For Cumilla TTC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a shortage of instructors for 5 out of the 18 courses offered at the Technical Training Centre (TTC). • Due to the establishment of new TTCs, there is a need for fresh employment opportunities as employees from older TTCs are being transferred including the Cumilla TTC. • Cumilla TTC received BDT 600,000 for capital expenditure for the first time, which is considered quite low. • Established in 1971, Cumilla TTC urgently requires infrastructure and equipment upgrades. • In Cumilla TTC, there are obsolete courses offered that have lost their demand, highlighting the need for steps to improvise and restructure the courses and curriculum. • Currently, Cumilla TTC has four courses which are popular among the students: Technical, Electrical, Plumbing, and RSC • In Cumilla TTC, carpentry is an emerging subject. <p>Approximately materials worth BDT 2000 for electrodes and wires are necessary for electronics courses, but Cumilla TTC has not allocated funds for these resources.</p>
Recommendation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course and Curriculum Update: Identify outdated or obsolete content and areas where skills need improvement to meet current industry demands. Introduce new courses and update existing ones to align with emerging trends and job requirements. • Equipment Upgrade: Concurrently, evaluate the adequacy and functionality of the equipment available at the TTC. Invest in modern, state-of-the-art tools and machinery that reflect current industry standards and technological advancements.

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Category	Details
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trainer Development: Provide ongoing training and professional development opportunities for instructors to keep them abreast of the latest advancements in their respective fields. Equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively teach new courses and utilise updated equipment. • Alignment with Global Job Demand: Conduct market research to identify emerging job opportunities and skill requirements both domestically and internationally. Tailor the courses and curriculum to meet these demands, ensuring that graduates are equipped with the skills and knowledge sought after by employers globally. • Gradual Budget Increase: As the TTC undergoes these transformative changes and demonstrates tangible improvements in course offerings, equipment quality, and trainer competence, advocate for a gradual increase in budget allocation.

Source: Author’s analysis based on field observations.

Annex 5: Observations from Narsingdi TTC

Training demand in Narsingdi	Lack of infrastructure
<p>a. The popular courses in Narsingdi include welding, RSE, and computer. Besides, electrical driving is also popular.</p> <p>b. Being a major RMG cluster, RMG training and block-boutique trade courses are not that popular in that region due to the lack of a trainer. Earlier the TTCs could hire a trainer from the nearest factories. However, current developments in recruitment lead to legal disputes that discourage the TTCs from recruiting trainers.</p> <p>c. There is a high demand for driving courses, yet no driving track is available.</p> <p>Suggestions</p> <p>a. Civil construction; pipe fitting; plumbing; garments; and hotel management courses are needed considering the current demand in foreign markets.</p> <p>b. Establish a designated driving track for practical training sessions, meeting the demand for driving courses and enhancing the curriculum of training provided.</p>	<p>Challenges</p> <p>a. Narsingdi TTC lacks academic classrooms. Besides, there is no scope for vertical extension of the building.</p> <p>b. The lab rooms are very small and were established in 2007 and have no digital equipment. The lab room cannot accommodate more than 10 students.</p> <p>c. The infrastructure is poorly maintained (for example, the washrooms spread odours that can smell from the stairs), leading to inadequate hygiene standards.</p> <p>d. The location is considerably distant from the city centre, posing challenges for students to commute and substantially increasing costs for any activities.</p> <p>e. The lack of modern facilities for the housekeeping course forces students to stay in classrooms due to insufficient infrastructure.</p> <p>Suggestion</p> <p>a. Further expansion of academic buildings is needed for new classrooms, an auditorium/ hall room to conduct PDO training, a driving track, etc.</p> <p>b. Need digital lab rooms for each trade with all technological setups.</p> <p>c. Recruitment of support staff like cleaners, electricians and office peon is needed. Currently, no cleaner is available in this TTC.</p> <p>d. Partner with local transportation services to provide discounted or subsidised transportation options.</p> <p>e. Invest in upgrading facilities for the housekeeping course to ensure a conducive learning environment, including providing modern amenities and adequate accommodation for students.</p>
Machinery demand	Lack of Manpower
<p>a. Voltage stabilisers; Smartboard for electrical; Motor; Updated computers; Digital Welding equipment</p>	<p>Challenges</p> <p>a. There is a shortage of trainers for existing trades, with only 1-2 trainers available for each trade where they need at least 6 trainers per trade.</p> <p>b. There is a shortage of accountants, electricians, and guards. Trainers are handling institutional accounting tasks.</p> <p>c. There is no staff or trainer dedicated to PDO. TTC trainers are instead tasked with conducting PDO, which affects their ability to conduct actual training classes.</p>

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	<p>Suggestions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Recruit sufficient trainers after revising the recruitment rules and keep space for promotion to the top position for TTCs own trainers. b. Recruit specialised professionals to fill vacant roles in accounting, electrical maintenance, and security, relieving trainers from additional duties. c. Allocate dedicated staff or trainers specifically for PDO tasks within TTC to improve training efficiency and effectiveness.
Expansion of TTCs	Lack of incentives
<p>Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The number of TTCs has increased from 39 to 106, but new trainers have not been recruited. Trainers have been transferred from old TTCs to new ones, resulting in a shortage of trainers in the old TTCs. <p>Suggestions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Hire new trainers to meet the increased demand, ensuring adequate staffing levels in both new and old TTCs. b. Prioritise training and development programmes for existing trainers to improve their skills and capabilities, addressing the shortage of trainers in old TTCs while optimising resources. 	<p>Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. There are no financial incentives available for TTC officers, making it difficult for them to live and creating a sense of insecurity. b. Earlier in 2007, students used to receive BDT 1500 as a stipend which stopped in 2012 or 2013. Students are not eager to learn skills training without any financial incentives. <p>Suggestions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Advocate for the reinstatement of training support from JICA or other development partners to improve the skills and expertise of trainers, ensuring availability of high-quality trainer in TTCs. b. Implement financial incentives for TTC officers to improve their livelihoods and job satisfaction, addressing the sense of insecurity and retaining skilled personnel. c. Reinstate the stipend for students to incentivise participation in skills training programmes, motivating them to acquire valuable vocational skills.
Budget allocation	Institutional organogram leading to the legal dispute
<p>Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. In the fiscal year 2023-24, TTC received an amount of BDT 5.5 lakh for the purchase of equipment, marking the first such allocation. b. Lack of raw materials is also a concern for conducting daily training. c. Awareness programmes are conducted by distributing leaflets to PDO attendees. <p>Suggestions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Increase budget allocations for equipment purchases to improve equipment and machinery standards. b. Provide daily BDT 1000 for raw material purchases for each trade 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The positions of Chief Instructor, Senior Instructor, and Instructor all hold the same grade and receive the same salary. b. Instructors have not received promotions, and the salary scale for one of the instructors has remained the same for 29 years. c. There is a need to revise the recruitment rules for TTCs, as there are no opportunities for promotion within TTCs.
Training Improvements of Trainers	Change in TTC Curriculum
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. In 1996, JICA provided training support to the trainer by sending them to Japan for capacity development. This support has since ceased. It is imperative to restart this support to develop the capacity of the trainers. b. There is no training provided for trainers, resulting in outdated skills for teaching modern technology. 	<p>Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The absence of long courses results in inadequate learning opportunities compared to short courses. b. There is a need for improvement in setup across all trades. <p>Suggestion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The duration of training programmes should be increased from 3 months to a minimum of 6 months to ensure students have sufficient time for comprehensive learning.

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Training Improvements of Trainers	Change in TTC Curriculum
<p>c. There is a bias in training provision for trainers, with only a few receiving ongoing trainings while others do not receive any.</p> <p>Suggestions</p> <p>a. Advocate for the reinstatement of training support from JICA or other development partners to improve the skills and expertise of trainers, ensuring availability of high-quality trainer in TTCs.</p>	

Source: Author's analysis based on field observations.

Annex 6: Institutional Assessment of TTC: Gaps Identified

Institution	Gaps
Institutional Gaps (Manpower and Logistics)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of upgradation in TTC training content for job-specific skills, particularly for domestic workers. • Limited capacity of science, technology, polytechnic institutes, colleges, universities, and vocational training centres to meet the demand for skilled workers. • Limited capacity of vocational training centres to meet the demand for skilled workers. • Lack of modern technological equipment for effective training in suitable training programmes for the Fourth Industrial Revolution. • Lack of language proficiency alongside profession-based skills in foreign employment. • Large number of TTCs, but lack of Functional TTC.
Operational Gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mismatch of acquired skills from destination and required skills for home country labour market. • Insufficiency of initiatives taken by the government, recruitment agencies, language, and training centres to meet the demand for overseas employment. • Enormous shortage of skilled manpower in Bangladesh. • Lack of completion of primary or secondary education among unskilled and semi-skilled migrant workers. • Many projects for the development of TTCs, but lack of projects to improve and improvise the existing training projects of TTCs. • Lack of manpower to provide demand/job-based training to workers to cope up with the technological advances.
Financial Gap and Legal Gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of financial support to purchase equipment based on modern technology. Increase from 2.5 crore to 4 crore for equipment, but still too low. • Lack of Budgetary Allocation for equipment purchase
Other Gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Out of 40 newly constructed TTCs, only 190 positions have been generated from 10 TTCs, opposite to the desired 3400 positions. • Lack of attendance in pre-migration trainings, suggesting a need for improved training programmes and methodologies. • Ineffectiveness of agencies responsible for sending workers to specific countries, such as Malaysia, due to syndicate issues among them.

Source: Author's analysis based on field observations.

Annex 7: Current Status, Recommendations, and Rationale for Increasing Budgetary Allocation for DEMO

Context	Proposals	Rationale
<p>1. District Employment & Manpower Offices' failure to fulfil their mandate of expanding the foreign labour market and fostering overseas employment opportunities has led to suboptimal migration rates and reduced remittance income for Bangladesh. Lack of coordination between the Probashi Kallyan Bank (PKB), Welfare centre, and DEMO due to their disparate locations allows intermediaries or 'dalals' to exploit migrants, leading to unfortunate consequences.</p>	<p>Streamline overseas employment processes by reforming DEMO policies and enhancing TTC training to meet international standards, while implementing a comprehensive monitoring system for performance assessment and establishing partnerships with foreign entities to secure reliable employment channels for Bangladeshi workers. It is recommended that PKB, Welfare Centre, and DEMO should co-locate within the same building to improve coordination and ensure the welfare of migrants, reducing travel time and costs while minimising the influence of intermediaries such as dalals.</p>	<p>Achieve increased efficiency in DEMOs, leading to significant growth in skilled migrants securing overseas employment, improved remittance income, and bolstered global reputation of Bangladesh as a source of skilled labour.</p>
<p>2. There are 22 districts lacking District Employment & Manpower Office (DEMO) facilities, highlighting a notable deficiency in institutional assistance for migrants in those areas.</p>	<p>Establish fully equipped DEMO facilities in the 22 districts, including Brahmanbaria and Lakshmipur, and provide comprehensive training for staff to effectively support migrant populations with a focus on rights, legal procedures, and counselling techniques.</p>	<p>Brahmanbaria and Lakshmipur, with migrant populations of 46,724 and 20,587 respectively, highlight the critical need for DEMO establishment in these districts, with specialists emphasising the importance of allocating budget for this purpose.</p>
<p>3. Rangamati, Bandarban, and Panchagarh, with migrant populations of 625, 528, and 768 respectively, exhibit the highest per capita expenses at BDT 67,960, BDT 46,853, and BDT 28,324 respectively, indicating potential budget allocation inefficiencies.</p>	<p>Analyse expenditure patterns in Rangamati, Bandarban, and Panchagarh to align per capita expenses with migrant needs, develop specialised training programmes and support services tailored to address their challenges, and implement a robust monitoring system to track DEMO programme effectiveness, ensuring continuous improvement for migrants in these districts.</p>	<p>Aligning expenses with migrant needs optimises resource allocation for DEMOs, specialised training programmes improve migrants' employability abroad, boosting remittance income and community prosperity, while strengthened monitoring enables DEMOs to understand preferences.</p>
<p>4. Khulna and Rajshahi, with low migrant numbers of 3,679 and 3,815 respectively, possess significant unused budgets of BDT 18,734 and BDT 11,785, suggesting opportunities for reallocating funds or budget utilisation to better support migration efforts.</p>	<p>Review expenditure patterns to reallocate unused budgets from Khulna and Rajshahi DEMOs for targeted training or support in high-migration districts, improve outreach to boost service utilisation in Khulna and Rajshahi, and prioritise impactful initiatives like skills training to improve migrants' employability and welfare abroad.</p>	<p>Reallocation of unused budgets maximises DEMO impact and migrant support, enhancing outreach in Khulna and Rajshahi to increase service utilisation and migration opportunities, while budget utilisation enables tailored training and support, enhancing migrants' skills, employability, and well-being abroad.</p>

Source: Author's findings based on the MoF (2024).

Annex 8: Observations from Cumilla DEMO

Category	Details
Information/ Activities/ Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established in 1976, the activities of the organization were decentralised to different district in 2017 to facilitate online registration and fingerprinting processes. • DEMO's activities include monitoring the processes of online registration, fingerprinting, and conducting pre-departure training for migrants. • Additionally, DEMO conducts awareness programmes to disseminate information to migrants and is responsible for investigating, monitoring, and processing financial services provided by welfare centres to migrants. • DEMO also addresses issues faced by unemployed and harassed migrants abroad, aiming to resolve their concerns. • Fingerprinting and online registration processes are outsourced by DEMO and funded by the Wage Earner's Welfare Board (WEWB), with DEMO solely tasked with monitoring the processes without direct involvement. • There is an overlap of activities and inefficiency in resource allocation due to the Pre-departure orientation (PDOs) being provided by both Technical Training Centres (TTCs) and DEMOs in the same location.
Challenges	<p>For All DEMO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a shortage of manpower to effectively operate and carry out activities within the DEMO. • Lack of coordination between the Probashi Kallyan Bank (PKB), Welfare centre, and DEMO due to their disparate locations allows intermediaries or 'dalals' to exploit migrants, leading to unfortunate consequences. • Insufficient budget allocation for awareness programmes within the DEMO results in a significant information gap regarding available services for migrants. • No mass awareness programme to disseminate information on migration process across upazila. • There is a lack of budget allocated for equipment in classes and training at the Pre-departure orientation (PDOs). • The absence of recruiting agency offices within all DEMO complicates migrant travel arrangements to Dhaka, adding further challenges to the migration process. <p>For Cumilla DEMO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Cumilla District Employment and Manpower Office (DEMO) currently operates with a staff of only 6 officers, highlighting a notable deficiency in manpower resources. • Lack of coordination between the Probashi Kallyan Bank (PKB), Welfare centre, and DEMO due to their disparate locations allows intermediaries or 'dalals' to exploit migrants, leading to unfortunate consequences. • In Cumilla DEMO, the absence of guard positions within the DEMO enables dalals to operate freely and mislead migrants without any hindrance. • Despite the nominal cost of BDT 200 for online registration at the DEMO, citizens still prefer to register outside, exposing themselves to exploitation. • Cumilla DEMO has only filled 8 out of 16 available positions, indicating a staffing deficit. • The absence of recruiting agency offices within Cumilla DEMO complicates migrant travel arrangements to Dhaka, adding further challenges to the migration process.
Recommendation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established in 1976, the activities of the organisation were decentralised to different district in 2017 to facilitate online registration and fingerprinting processes. • DEMO's activities include monitoring the processes of online registration, fingerprinting, and conducting pre-departure training for migrants. • Additionally, DEMO conducts awareness programmes to disseminate information to migrants and is responsible for investigating, monitoring, and processing financial services provided by welfare centres to migrants.

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(Annex 8 contd.)

Category	Details
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DEMO also addresses issues faced by unemployed and harassed migrants abroad, aiming to resolve their concerns. • Fingerprinting and online registration processes are outsourced by DEMO and funded by the Wage Earner’s Welfare Board (WEWB), with DEMO solely tasked with monitoring the processes without direct involvement. • There is an overlap of activities and inefficiency in resource allocation due to the Pre-departure orientation (PDOs) being provided by both Technical Training Centres (TTCs) and DEMOs in the same location.

Source: Author’s analysis based on field observations.

Annex 9: Observations from Narsingdi DEMO

Budgetary Information	Lack of Manpower
<p>a. DEMO receives funding from two sources, BMET and WEWB.</p> <p>b. In the fiscal year 2023-24, DEMO received a budget of 53 lacs from BMET.</p> <p>c. The financial aid provided to migrants by WEWB is administered through DEMO; WEWB solely provides the funds.</p>	<p>Challenges</p> <p>a. DEMO faces a manpower shortage, with only 5 permanent positions, one dedicated to the Airport desk, leaving 2 positions currently vacant.</p> <p>b. A dedicated position for a guard is absent, resulting in vulnerabilities such as the theft of air conditioners during a field visit.</p> <p>c. Before 2018, a representative from PKB was stationed at DEMO; however, this representation ceased due to the lack of available manpower, posing challenges for migrants.</p> <p>d. Within DEMO, the role of an accountant is not designated, leading to the surveyor officer assuming accountant tasks.</p> <p>e. In the Narsingdi branch of DEMO, insufficient manpower hinders the organisation from conducting PDO sessions.</p> <p>Suggestion</p> <p>a. Increase staffing levels to at least 6 to address the shortage and fill vacant positions, particularly for roles crucial to security and administrative tasks.</p> <p>b. Reinstate representation from PKB at DEMO to ensure continued support for migrants and address manpower constraints.</p> <p>c. Appoint a designated accountant to manage financial tasks efficiently and alleviate burden on other staff members.</p> <p>Allocate additional manpower to the Narsingdi branch to facilitate the organisation of PDO sessions and ensure comprehensive service delivery.</p>
Information on DEMO Activity	Issues with Budgetary Allocation
<p>a. Every year, an average of 40 thousand migrants register through Narsingdi DEMO.</p> <p>b. Before 2000, DEMO was tasked with facilitating local employment for citizens, with a target of 500 employees in each upazila/union. Between 2000 and 2017, its primary function was registration, with the introduction of fingerprint work in 2017.</p>	<p>Challenges</p> <p>a. Despite the necessity for awareness programmes, DEMO struggles with minimal budget allocation for such initiatives. Although leaflets and banners adorn the DEMO office, formal arrangements for awareness programmes are lacking.</p> <p>b. There are issues with the digital database and server infrastructure, contributing to operational challenges.</p> <p>Suggestions</p> <p>a. Explore cost-effective alternatives such as digital marketing or community partnerships to improve awareness programmes despite budget constraints, ensuring effective dissemination of information.</p>

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Information on DEMO Activity	Issues with Budgetary Allocation
	a. Prioritise investment in upgrading digital infrastructure to improve efficiency and reliability, address operational challenges, and ensure the smooth functioning of DEMO's systems.

Source: Author's analysis based on field observations.

Annex 10: Institutional Assessment of DEMO: Gaps Identified

Institution	Gaps
Institutional Gaps (Manpower and Logistics)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presence on dalals (middlemen) for migration processing due to low literacy levels of migrants and lack of awareness. • Absence of formal/ethical recruitment processes • Lack of comprehensive database of migrants for effective programme planning and monitoring. • Lack of institutional support in acquiring work and living permits for Bangladeshi workers in European countries, resulting in reduced opportunities for employment.
Operational Gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of legal protection for female migrants employed under individualised work contracts. • Ineffectiveness of agencies responsible for sending workers to specific countries due to syndicate issues • Lack of staff with technical expertise and community engagement skills to efficiently match potential workers with suitable overseas employment opportunities

Source: Author's Analysis based on Field Observations.

Annex 11: Observations from Cumilla Welfare Centres

Category	Details
Information/ Activities/ Services	<p>For All Welfare Centres</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are 30 centres established across 30 districts, serving as intermediaries to facilitate the reintegration of migrants through training and employment opportunities. • The Airport welfare desk provides support, including accommodation and transportation, for BDT 200 in the event of flight delays. • Financial assistance is provided to migrants in various forms: • A sum of BDT 35,000 is given for transporting the deceased migrant's body, and BDT 1,000,000 is provided to registered migrant worker's family since 2023. • Scholarships are offered to the migrant's children, with BDT 27,000 for SSC and BDT 34,000 for HSC students having GPA5. • Migrants receive BDT 50,000 if they return home within 6 months of migration. • The funding sources for WEWB include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. BDT 3,500 for registration and BDT 1,000 for insurance paid by an expectant migrant worker during the pre-departure stage of migration. b. WEWB receives 10 per cent of passport renewal and visa fees that took place at foreign consulates for migrant welfare. c. A BDT 200 fingerprint registration fee collected by DEMO is received by WEWB. Insurance dividend is divided in two areas (a) for insurance company; (b) for WEWB. • Reintegration training and employment linkage assistance are provided to migrants, with BDT 13,500 allocated for this purpose, funded by the World Bank. • Legal and financial aid is extended to migrants in embassies of 30 countries. Those foreign labour wings consist of officers from the WEWB. At Saudi Arabia, there are 6 staff from WEWB and 7-8 translators for assisting in different legal and worker issues. • Each mission has a safe house for migrant workers which is financed by WEWB.

(Annex 11 contd.)

(Annex 11 contd.)

Category	Details
	<p>For Cumilla Welfare Centre:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Since August 2023, 9,159 returned migrants have been registered under the welfare centre of Cumilla. This registration is ongoing under the RAISE project which aims to provide BDT 13500 to each returnee migrant worker after their successful training at the welfare centres.
Challenges	<p>For All Welfare Centres</p> <p>One of the challenges encountered relates to the processing of deceased bodies of migrants who initially migrate legally but later transition into illegal status due to various reasons like expiring visas, job contracts, job transfers, etc.</p> <p>For Cumilla Welfare Centre</p> <p>At the welfare centres, there is a shortage of manpower with only 9 office staff members and 18 volunteers available for both service provision and raising awareness. Of the total 9 staff, 2 are from WEWB and 7 are from local NGOs and IOM.</p>
Recommendation	<p>For All Welfare Centres</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a need for an increase in manpower and allocation from the government budget to improve and broaden the services offered to returned migrants. It is recommended to recruit WEWB (Wage Earner’s Welfare Board) officers in embassies to provide services in lieu of officers from ministries to increase efficiency and effectiveness. Increase recruitment efforts for additional staff and volunteers in welfare centres to alleviate the manpower shortage. <p>Improve coordination and establish clear protocols among relevant authorities to streamline the processing of deceased bodies of migrants who transition into illegal status due to job transfers.</p>

Source: Author’s analysis based on field observations.

The Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment (MoEWOE) and its affiliated agencies suffer from inefficient institutional capacity, leading to the underutilisation of budgetary funds and leaving important initiatives, such as skills training for workers and support for migrants both abroad and upon their return, in disarray. This study investigates structural inefficiencies within key agencies like TTCs and DEMOs, revealing operational, institutional and resource challenges that thwart efficient migration facilitation and skills development. The study calls for increased financial support, improved coordination, and service delivery to ensure that migrant workers' rights and welfare are protected throughout all stages of migration.



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