

Social Cost of Migration

Left-behind Elderlies and
Siblings in Bangladesh

Tasneem Siddiqui



About the Book

Intergenerational impact analysis of migration is a recent phenomenon. This book attempts to disaggregate intergenerational social outcome of migration on a specific group of members of migrant households - the elderlies. It also looks into another distinct group of family members whose contribution in fulfilling the household migration dream is either overlooked or negatively portrayed; they are the siblings.

The research is based on a conceptual framework which shows that migration outcomes are not only different for different groups of household members, it is also dependent on the expectation generated from the contribution of the particular member in materialising the migration dream of the household as a whole.

The author begins with unpacking the level of the contribution of the elderlies and siblings. She systematically locates the extent of care deficit and feeling of emptiness experienced by the elderlies and the siblings. An important research question that the author explored in understanding social cost of migration is - what are the implications of migration of adult family members on the workload of the elderlies, both male and female? How does it impact upon the educational attainments of the siblings? The next set of enquiry includes, do the elderlies only face negative social costs of migration, or do they also experience different forms of social gains? More intriguing question again is, do the left in-charge/left-behind parents and siblings develop some form of agency while adjusting with the increased household responsibility in the absence of the migrant member?

The study is based on a land-mark survey of 6000 parents and siblings of migrant households drawn from a panel dataset of Switzerland/SDC and RMMRU. An earlier study has analysed social costs and gains experienced by other groups of household members: children, husbands and wives. By covering the elderlies and siblings this research completes the understanding of social costs of migration on all categories of family members. The findings of the study have major policy ramifications.

**Social Cost of Migration: Left-behind Elderlies
and Siblings in Bangladesh**

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Siblings in Bangladesh

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Acronyms

BBS	Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics
BDT	Bangladesh Taka
BMET	Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
DECCMA	DEltas Vulnerability and Climate Change: Migration and Adaptation
DEMO	Divisional Employment & Manpower Office
DG	Director General
F	Female
FP	Female Parent
FS	Female Sibling
HH	Household
HHs	Households
HSC	Higher Secondary School Certificate
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMO	Instant Online Messaging Platform
IMPD	Impact of Migration on Poverty and Local Development in Bangladesh
INSTRAW	International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women
IOM	International Organization for Migration
M	Male
MoEWOE	Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment
MP	Male Parent

MS	Male Sibling
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
RMMRU	Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Science
SSC	Secondary School Certificate
TV	Television
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
US	United States
USA	United States of America
WEWB	Wage Earners' Welfare Board

Glossary of non-English Terms

<i>Dalal</i>	Middleman/broker/sub agent
<i>Eid</i>	Muslim religious festival
<i>Hajj</i>	Muslim religious ritual
<i>Mistry</i>	A person skilled in the technique of a craft
<i>Mon</i>	Unit of weight
<i>Union</i>	Smallest unit of the administration in local government
<i>Upazila</i>	Sub-district

Exchange Rate

1 Dollar = BDT 92.00 (Average Dollar rate of 2022)

Foreword

I am pleased to commend the publication *Social Costs of Migration on the Left-behind Elderlies and Siblings in Bangladesh* prepared by RMMRU, under the leadership of Dr. Tasneem Siddiqui and supported by Switzerland.

Switzerland is a key interlocutor and development partner for migration issues in Bangladesh. In the last decade, Switzerland aimed at improving the protection and well-being of migrant workers, through better migration governance and safer migration practices. Switzerland is also at the forefront when it comes to integrating the topic of ‘migration’ into its development assistance programme and in the development narrative of Bangladesh.

Switzerland supports the policy framework on labour migration in Bangladesh and supports men and women at different stages of the migration cycle (including pre-departure and after their return). Switzerland’s commitment to migration is not only to support the realization of the financial benefits through remittances, but we remain deeply committed to yielding higher benefits for migrant workers themselves. When looking closely at the benefits for migrant workers, we not only consider the costs of recruitment that the migrant worker has to pay, but we have made an effort to understand the social costs faced by the migrants. Published in 2020, the first part of this series has examined the social costs borne by the left-behind children, wives, and husbands of the migrants. This

volume explores social costs borne by the left-behind elderlies and siblings. Both volumes underscore that the social cost of migration on left-behind family members varies based on their relationship with the migrant, their age and gender.

On behalf of the Embassy of Switzerland in Bangladesh, I thank RMMRU for conducting this research. I hope that all stakeholders benefit from using the research findings to continue their efforts in reducing the social costs of migration and enhancing the benefits of migration for the migrant household. I also hope that these two volumes will assist policymakers in Bangladesh to incorporate left-behind family members of migrant workers in their policies and programmes.



Corinne Henchoz pignani

Deputy Head of Mission, Head of Cooperation
Embassy of Switzerland in Bangladesh

Preface

International labour migration is an extremely complex phenomenon. It creates major economic outcomes for the origin and destination countries. Transit countries also benefit from the flow of migration. Recruiting agencies, health care and diagnostic centers, money transfer agencies, airlines, operational in origin, destination, and transit countries gain financially from migration. The flow of remittances is a major source of foreign exchange earning which back the business sector in paying international bills. However, the economic and social costs of migration is only borne by the migrants and their family members. Over the years, studies have been conducted that highlight the economic costs and benefits of migration. Migrants and their households also experience social costs. Studies on social cost are rare not only in the context of Bangladesh but also globally. In 2020, RMMRU with the Support of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) conducted research and subsequently published a book on social cost of migration on left behind children, husbands, and wives in Bangladesh. Two groups of household members remained outside the purview of that research, these are - left behind elderlies and siblings. This book fills that vacuum. It looks into the contributions of left-behind fathers, mothers, and siblings in making the migration dream of the household materialised. It explores social costs and gains experienced by the left behind parents and siblings. It also explores the agencies that may have accrued by the left behind elderlies and siblings while managing households in the absence of the migrant.

This book is based on a landmark survey of 6000 parents and siblings of migrant and non-migrant households. It covers both male

and female internal, international, and non-migrant households across 20 districts of the country. I am deeply indebted to the left behind elderly members and the siblings of migrant and non-migrant households who gave their time and shared their life experiences.

The study evolved through a long process encompassing one and a half years. In the process, we have received guidance from policy makers, government functionaries, researchers, and members of civil society. I deeply acknowledge their contribution. I express my gratitude to Mr. Imran Ahmed, MP, Minister of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment for showing keen interest in the outcome of the study. I am sure the findings of the research will help the ministry, particularly the Wage Earners' Welfare Board to design programmes for the elderlies and siblings. My thanks go to Md. Shahidul Alam NDC, the then DG, BMET, and his team at BMET and Demo offices. While conducting the field work our team received full cooperation from his offices.

35 enumerators and supervisors worked very hard in administering different questionnaires as well as preparing in-depth case studies. I deeply acknowledge their contribution. Mahmudol Hasan Rocky, Research Coordinator, provided able leadership in navigating the research. He has painstakingly prepared all the tables and monitored quality control. Parvez Bhuiyan has been one of the key persons who managed the field and the field researchers. He worked very hard in different stages - data cleaning, cross-checking, and editing 300 case studies which are an important part of the report. My thanks to both of them.

The study gained significantly from the review of Professor Shantanu Mazumdar, Department of Political Science, University of Dhaka, and Professor Salma Akter, Department of Sociology, University of Dhaka. My deep admiration for both of them.

RMMRU
Dhaka, October, 2023

Tasneem Siddiqui,
Founding Chair, RMMRU and
Chairperson of Political Science
University of Dhaka

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This book is on the social costs of migration borne by the elderlies and siblings of migrant workers. By the mid-1980s, migration researchers such as Stark and Bloom (1985) have shown that migration is not always a rational choice of individuals motivated by self-interest. In many cases, it is more of an attempt of a household to improve the socio-economic status of both, migrants as well as their left-behind family members. Those studies however have mostly treated households as the basic unit of analysis. Such approach tends to provide an aggregate analysis of migration, and particularly, the impact of remittances on households. Those hardly segregate the members of the households and analyse the economic or social costs and benefits experienced by individual members of the concerned households. However, not all household members experience the impact of migration in the same way. It varies based on the relationship with the migrant, position in household decision-making structure, gender, age, economic status, etc. The children and the elderly members would experience the impact of migration differently than the relatively physically fit adult members of the households. Even the impact on elderlies and siblings would vary further based on sex and age.

With the support of SDC in 2020 RMMRU conducted and published a study on the social cost of migration on left-behind husbands, wives, and children. It encompasses internal, international, and non-

migrant households. Initially, the study attempted to cover all types of household members including spouses, children, the elderly, and siblings. However, while designing the research it was recognised that covering all types of household members in a single study could be very ambitious in the given time frame and the resources allocated. Therefore, the study concentrated on three distinct types of household members i.e. left-behind husbands, wives, and children. Impact on the elderly and siblings was set aside for future research.

The SDC and RMMRU study on the Social Cost of Migration provides a deep understanding of the costs and gains borne by the spouses of internal and international migrants as well as their children. The findings have major policy ramifications. It highlighted that community-level awareness programme is required to make families not impose excessive household chores on children. It further notes that the differential needs of boy and girl children have to be accommodated in such an awareness campaign. A negative mindset of the society on left-behind husbands and wives has to be substituted by underscoring the positive contribution of the spouses in making their partners' migration effort successful. The study emphasises the need for integrating left-in-charge spouses in national policies to enhance the developmental outcome of migration.

The SDC and RMMRU study on “Social Cost of Migration on Left-behind Children, Husbands, and Wives” recommends further analysis of the social costs of migration on other members of the households. This includes elderly members and siblings of migrants' households. Elderly care may suffer due to the absence of male and female migrants who were the primary care givers of the elderly. On the other hand, the health care of the elderly members may have been better served with the flow of remittances to the household. In the context of Asia, some studies are available on the elderly¹, there is however, very little research on the siblings of migrants.

There is a general perception that the left behind siblings misuse

¹ Those are analysed in the literature section review.

the remittances sent by their migrant brothers or sisters. While it is a likely scenario; the other scenario is also possible. Migration of a member of the household may become possible as his/her sibling/s can shoulder some of the household responsibilities that used to be borne by the person concerned. This unpaid labour of the siblings is hardly counted in the discussion on the cost of migration of another family member. Besides, migrant households may enjoy additional gains from migration because of the presence of siblings. Siblings can contribute to enterprise development through the utilisation of remittances sent by the migrants. Siblings may gain individually from the migration of another member of the household. Migration of another member may facilitate the migration of the siblings in the future at a relatively low cost.

This research plans to understand the social costs of migration on the elderly members of migrant households as well as siblings of internal, international, and non-migrant households. It is well understood that the impact of migration is context specific, largely constructed within the gender, generational, and other cultural norms regulating the societies concerned (Rashid and Sikder, 2017). The aim of the research, therefore, is to understand the generational outcome of migration.

1.1 Objectives

Broad Objective of the Research

The broad objective of the research is to generate knowledge on the impact of international and internal migration on left-behind parents, as well as siblings. Combined with the previous SDC and RMMRU research on left-behind husbands, wives, and children this study will provide evidence to the policy makers, civil society activists, and development partners to integrate the interest of left-behind household members in national planning, particularly in migration-related policies.

Specific Objectives

Concerning the elderlies it attempts to understand

- Level of the contribution of the elderly members of the household in fulfilling the migration dream of offspring.
- Nature of social costs borne by the elderlies
 - ▶ The extent of care deficit and feeling of emptiness
 - ▶ Implications on the workload of the elderly members of the households, both male and female.
- The extent of social gains experienced by the elderlies (if any).
- Capacity to adapt and development of agency or lack of it.

Concerning the siblings it attempts to understand

- Level of the contribution of the siblings in fulfilling the household migration dream.
- Nature of social costs borne by the siblings
 - ▶ Impact of migration of brothers or sisters on the education of younger siblings.
 - ▶ Implications on the workload of the siblings of the households, both male and female.
 - ▶ Potential conflict within the households due to reduction of family assets for bearing the migration cost of siblings.
- The extent of social gains experienced by the siblings (if any).
- Role of migration in facilitating quality education and job opportunities of the siblings at home and abroad.
- Capacity to adapt and development of agency among the siblings or lack of it.

1.2 Literature Review: Elderlies and Siblings

This section reviews the literature on left-behind elderly family members and siblings of migrants who are currently abroad. The review focuses on four areas. These are the (a) contribution of the elderly members in facilitating migration, (b) social costs of migration on elderlies and siblings, (c) social gains attained through migration, and (d) agency or lack of it among the elderlies and siblings of migrant households. Literature on the elderlies has been reviewed first and then on the siblings.

Elderlies

Contribution in Achieving Migration Dream: Hoang (2011) notes that despite their immobility, the extended families of internal migrants in source areas have played a significant role in migration. Migrants often receive various kinds of support, including funds mobilised through family networks. In turn, they are expected to fulfill their duties to those family members. Ablezova (2008) also highlights the contribution of the elderly as a major decision maker in the household. Elderlies play a major role in deciding which member of the family will migrate. In the context of China, Fengbo (2016) shows households of three generations are more congenial in facilitating the migration of younger adults. Younger adults of a household which have children under 16, can work away from home when elderly relatives are present in the household to perform tasks that used to be performed by the migrant. Fengbo (2016) considers the smoothing effect of the presence of the elderly can be seen as their contribution to the economic growth of China even without migrating.

Social Costs: Migration of a family member usually brings additional income to the family through remittances and can therefore ease the budget constraint for family members in the home country or region. Yet migration also entails the absence of an economically active family member and the loss of that member's time inputs to both market and household production. This absence may translate into disrupted personal care for dependent family members, including elderlies. It adds a greater burden of responsibility for work and household chores to the elderlies (Démurger, 2015). In the short term, it may even translate into reduced income for the family. In the long term, the forgone market and household production may have been compensated for by a reallocation of labour among family members who stay behind. Evandrou et al. (2021) show that it forces parents to undertake more intensive farming tasks.

In rural China, if the household has a migrant child, grandmothers take on the bulk of the household chores and care of their grandchildren. Such extra burden may compromise their physical health (Li et

al, 2020). Elderly caregivers, mostly parents of internal labour migrants, felt that their overall health was significantly affected by the absence of the migrant. This was mainly due to having the added responsibility of caring for their young grandchildren. They felt that they did not have the physical nor psychological ability to cope with various challenges, stresses, and strains in caring for young children and felt ill-equipped to deal with the rapidly changing social demands associated with growing children (Siriwardhana et al, 2013; Siddiqui 2000).

There are also potentially negative impact on the health outcome of elderly parents (who may be already physically weak) due to fresh responsibilities of taking care of grandchildren and also physically demanding tasks such as cooking, cleaning, and teaching their young grandchildren. (Suvanov and Ukueva, 2021:9).

Links have been established between the migration of young adults and the health and well-being of the left-behind elderlies in Indonesia, where risks of dying amongst the elderly are doubled if children move abroad instead of within Indonesia (Evert et al, forthcoming). Hugo (2002) suggests that in Indonesia ties between the elderly and their adult migrant children have been weakened by international migration. In these instances, migration creates a vacuum for the much-needed care of the elderly parents. In Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, female migration has increased the workload of elderly women whose children have migrated abroad (INSTRAW/IOM 1999). For some women, looking after their grandchildren has been extremely demanding.

In a recent study, King et al. (2017) identify parents as the ‘zero generation’ and demonstrated that they are not passive recipients of the love and care of the migrants. They travel back and forth to help their migrant children in rearing theirs. King et al. (2017) challenge the prevailing notion that looks at the left-behind older generation as dependent and in need of care and stress instead of their active participation both in migration and in the administration of care and

support to their children and grandchildren make migration dream successful. Young families who migrated from rural areas to cities often send their first or even second child to grandparents. This was done for mutual benefits: the young adult members had few home responsibilities and could spend more time establishing their careers, while grandparents had grandchildren, who at a very young age were a joy to their eyes and later helpers at home (Ablezova et al, 2008). Adult children's migration, within and outside of the country, contributes to the breaking down of the traditional family support tree (Ghimire et al, 2018). A study from rural China finds that the migration of sons significantly negatively impacts the mental health of elderlies living in rural areas (Ghimire et al, 2018).

Compared to participants without a migrant child, participants with a migrant child had higher odds of self-perceived loneliness. In Indonesia, Thapa et al. (2018) also show older adults left behind were more susceptible to depression. Females may be at a higher risk of mental health disorders consistent with other studies reporting older women at greater risk of loneliness and depression. Males are more often engaged in social activities that help them overcome loneliness whereas women whose main role is domestic, may be limited in establishing and maintaining contacts outside the family circle (Thapa et al, 2018). In the European context Knodel and Saengtienchai (2007) show that those parents who saw or talked to their children more than once a week have significantly lower levels of depression. Just knowing that children had employment in urban areas provided parents with an important psychological benefit in addition to any economic ones (Knodel and Saengtienchai, 2007).

Antman (2010b) looks at international migration from Mexico to the US and finds that parents with at least one child in the US on average have the worst self-reported physical and mental health conditions and are more likely to suffer from a heart attack or stroke. Antman (2010c) offers some suggestive evidence that the negative impact of children's migration on mental health may be responsible for deteriorating physical health.

The relationship between migration and the health status of those who are left behind differs by gender, age (Démurger, 2015), presence or absence of other children in the household, and socio-cultural context. Those left behind experienced higher levels of depression, loneliness, cognitive impairment, and anxiety and had lower scores on psychological health compared to older parents with no migrant children (Thapa et al, 2018).

The literature on the vacuum of care for the elderly mostly deals with female migrants. They highlight how the absence of female members has contributed to neglect of the care of the elderly. Some even identify negative psychosocial impact. Interestingly, studies are few that look into similar vacuums created in the absence of male migrants.

Social Gains: The Vietnam Household Living Standard Survey (2002) reports that remittances in that country are disproportionately directed to those members of households who are over the age of 50. Furthermore, Vietnamese women aged 60 and over are more likely to receive remittances than men of the same age (Marx and Fleischer 2010:41). Similar findings existed in the earlier research on Bangladesh, where 50 percent of remittances sent by short-term international contract migrant workers were received by fathers of migrant, followed by elder brothers and mothers respectively (Siddiqui and Abrar 2003). A more recent study conducted by BBS on “Investment from Remittance” (2014) informs that parents (44.18%) are the main remittance recipients followed by spouses (41.78%) and siblings (9.87%). Access to finance through remittances creates a sense of security among the elderly.

A study conducted in the grandparent-headed households of migrants in Kyrgyzstan also found that it is usually the grandfather, who receives money from the bank and then distributes it among the family members, completing his role of a coordinator and organiser (Ablezova et al, 2008). The income transfer to the elderly is a complicated phenomenon. Li et al. (2020) of course argue that being

a conduit of remittance does not mean that the elderly would spend it for only him/her own well-being. Elderly parents may spend most of the remittances on their family members (e.g., grandchildren) incurring little or no expenses on themselves.

A section of woman who has been shouldering the responsibility of household work or child care rather felt important and enjoyed the mental satisfaction that they have some purpose to live. Siddiqui and Perera (INSTRAW/IOM 1999; Siddiqui 2001) show that the migration of adult children has strengthened extended family bonds.

Waite and Hughes (1999) find that left-behind parents in the USA enjoyed improved health conditions over those parents who have been living with their children. Wenger et al. (2007) in their multi-country study showed that elders whose children were living away had more freedom with more time to make friends and engage in social activities. Living alone provides parents with an opportunity for reconnection and reawakened interests (Thapa et al, 2018).

Higher income was associated with better mental health consistent with research reporting higher levels of income associated with lower depressive symptoms, improved quality of life, and decreased loneliness.

Thapa et al. (2018) have shown that social activities decrease with age, which is a risk factor for depression. Higher levels of loneliness and depression were reported with increased age among older adults as they have reduced opportunities for social contact due to physical limitations and loss of close friends and family members.

Knodel et al. (1995) revealed that healthcare concerns, including reaching a doctor or hospital, and securing personal care when ill or bedridden were the needs most salient to many elderly participants and constituted an important reason for wanting children either to co-reside or live nearby. The widespread availability of mobile phones seems to have noticeably reduced this concern (Knodel and Saengtienchai, 2007).

Agency: Migration of any household member creates some disruption and disorder in the management of the household. His or her responsibilities have to be shouldered by other members. A psychological cushion that one member provides to another member of the household also needs to be rearranged. The process of rearrangement when successful creates agency among the family members who successfully develop alternative mechanisms to adapt to the new situation and experience some form of transformation. This process of transformation creates agency among members. Li et al. (2020) show that elderly or the household as a whole reorganise their living arrangement. Living with at least one adult child, son-in-law, or daughter-in-law in the same household is seen as an adaptation mechanism that results in better physical and mental health of parents. One of the reasons can be that if an adult child migrates to an urban area, the other young family members (i.e., other children, son-in-law, or daughter-in-law) fill the vacuum by developing a similar relationship that the migrant member had when he/she was residing at home with the parents.

Siblings

Contribution in Achieving Migration Dream: There are very few studies on the contribution of siblings in achieving the migration goals of the households. Researches on the benefits accrued or social costs endured by the siblings due to the migration of their brothers or sisters are also scarce. Assumptions on the implications of sibling migration go both ways. Migration of brothers or sisters may only be possible if other siblings are there in the household to conduct agricultural or day-to-day activities of the households. Siblings may contribute to financing migration costs. When the siblings are of working age population they may constitute an additional income source of the family utilising the remittances sent by the migrant.

Social Costs: The migration of an adult brother may increase the workload of the siblings to the point that the education of the younger sibling may suffer. It may take away childhood and impose adult responsibilities on a child. Siblings may also misuse the remittance

resulting in zero outcomes of migration of the family member. Trap et al. (2004) and Maitra (2003) find that migration of elder siblings increased child labour within the family. Both studies show that in the absence of elder siblings, the family workload falls on the younger brothers and sisters. In many instances, this has stolen the childhood of the younger ones. The same researches also find that the educational achievement of a section of the siblings is affected negatively.

Démurger (2015) demonstrates that the migration of siblings impacts both negatively and positively on the work culture of the household members. He shows that an increase in disposable income brought by remittances dampens the incentives of left behind siblings to work. Anecdotal evidence in Siddiqui and Abrar's (2003) study on Bangladesh find a section of the left-behind brothers who used to receive remittances over the years created assets or developed enterprises. But the assets and enterprises were in their names and migrants were not part of it. Cases were noted in which when migrants returned, their brothers did not share any of the assets or businesses with them. Neither did the left behind siblings account for how the remittances were used by them. Again in some other cases, fathers of migrants purchased land in their names with the remittances sent by the migrants. After the demise of the father, assets created by migrants' remittances had to be shared among all heirs under the inheritance law of the land. In these cases, the fruit of migration is disproportionately enjoyed by migrant siblings.

Social Gains: Stohr's study on Moldova shows that households usually make strategic migration decisions to ensure some children stay behind to care for their parents and other household responsibilities. The same study also finds that the migration of an adult child does not necessarily mean that elderly parents lose their care and support. Rather income from migrant children and elderly care by remaining siblings create the best possible outcome. The findings of Stohr's study highlight that siblings contribute to making the migration dream of a household successful.

Mannan (2000) and Kandal (2003), show that in situations where the budget of the migrant households is enhanced and labour needs can be managed without the services of younger siblings, household participation in migration reduces the participation of siblings in the labour force. Randall Kuhn's research in Matlab *upazila* of Bangladesh on the impact of migration on siblings aged between 7 to 14 finds that migration of male members was associated with improvements in the pace of their brother's and sister's schooling. The migration of the sisters however has no impact on their younger siblings' education.

BBS (2014) identified that around 8-9 percent of remittances are received by migrant siblings. Démurger (2015) finds that financial transfers from migrants have enabled siblings who stay behind to venture into riskier higher-return activities that helped diversification of economic activities of left behind siblings. In the longer term, such investment has increased income from local initiatives.

Agency: No literature has been identified that looks into the development of agency among siblings when their brothers/sisters have migrated. However, it is assumed that when the siblings develop successful enterprises with migrant remittances or, take care of the household chores or look after the parents or members with disability, they develop some form of agency.

Review of the literature show that both elderlies and siblings contribute to making household migration initiatives successful. Depending on household characteristics, migration of sons/daughters and brothers/sisters do result in various types of social costs. However, it also allows a section of the parents and siblings to attain both social and economic gains. It also creates agency among some of the elderlies and siblings.

1.3 Research Gaps

Inter-generational impact analysis of migration is a recent phenomenon. There is no research available on the situation of 'left-behind' elderly members of migrant households in the

context of Bangladesh. The plight of elderly members is absent in the migration policy process. Civil society organisations conduct various programmes to ensure services to the migrants and some extent to their adult left-behind family members, particularly in the area of remittance management. Although in the case of widowed and separated women migrants, it is the parent of the migrant who provides all kinds of services to the left-behind children. This group of migrant family members is hardly provided with any services by civil society organisations.

Information on the role of siblings in making household migration projects successful is also insignificant. There is a major research gap with respect to how migration impacts left-behind siblings of the migrant, and the social costs that the siblings bear due to the migration of their brother or sister. The gap in research on siblings is not only in the case of Bangladesh, it is also limited at the regional or global level.

1.4 Research Questions

What contribution do the elderly members of an aspirant migrant household make to the migration journey of their family members? To what extent do they contribute financially to materialise the migration dream of the young members of their households? To what extent the care of the elderly suffers due to the migration of adult family members? How do migrants ensure the care of the left behind elderly members of the household in their absence? Does the impact of migration on the elderly vary based on gender and age of the elderly? Does migration of principal caregivers increase the workload of the elderly? What is the situation of the elderly in the power relationship among different household members? Does the elderly member receive remittances directly? What type of voice does the elderly member of the household have on the usage of remittance? What percentage of remittances is spent on elderly care? How does migrant contribute to the physical and mental well-being of the elderly? In what ways do they become active agents in the migration process and in the two-way process of intergenerational care?

Do the siblings of a migrant contribute to materialising the migration goal of the households? Does the contribution of the siblings vary based on their gender? How do the siblings benefit from the migration of their brothers or sisters? What percentage of remittances are spent on the siblings' health, education, marriage etc? Do the siblings become less interested in studies and want to go abroad following their elder siblings? Does it imply that in the absence of elder brothers or sisters, many of the household chores fall into the shoulder of the younger siblings? Does this extra workload affect their educational and other attainments? What impact does it make on their future livelihood? What role do the siblings play in managing remittances? Does remittance flow make siblings less active in pursuing their livelihood? Does migrant remittance help in creating employment for the siblings? How does the Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Policy, 2016 integrate the left-behind siblings in ensuring the maximum outcome of migration of the concerned households? What role can the government play in involving the migrant siblings in loans and other programmes of the government?

1.5 Terminology

Migration: Migration is the process by which an individual, household, group, and/or community leaves their usual place of residence for another location voluntarily or involuntarily in order to be nearer to opportunities, resources, or people within or beyond national boundaries. Migration is triggered by a change in the relative attractiveness, be it real or perceived, of the usual place of residence to the destination. Migrants may stay back permanently in the destination area or return after some time; circulate between locations; reside in two or more locations or keep moving in an itinerant manner (DECCMA, 2015).

Social Cost: Social cost is the sum of the private costs resulting from a transaction and the costs imposed on the migrant and his/her family as a consequence of being exposed to the transaction for which they are not compensated or charged. It includes emotional

and psychological costs, and lost opportunities for education and health care.

Social Gain: Social gain is the sum of the private gains resulting from a transaction and the gains obtained by the migrant and his/her family as a consequence of being exposed to the transaction for which they are socially compensated. It includes emotional and psychological gains, new opportunities for education, health care and social status, etc.

Agency: Agency is loosely defined as the capacity of individuals to act independently and to make their own free choices. It is the capacity to challenge and remake social order by going against the status quo to create new norms and relationships.

Short-term Contract International Labour Migrant: A person who is a member of a household and left for work in another country on a contractual basis for a stipulated period. This study only considers those who have been overseas for more than a year.

Internal Labour Migrant: A person who is a member of a household who left to work in another location within the country, and has been away from home, or intends to be away from home, for at least 3 months; or has been continuously moving between origin and destination for at least a year (Bilsborrow, Oberai, Standing 1984). The definition of internal migration allows the study to include seasonal migrants.

Migrants' Remittance: The portion of migrants' income, which they usually send to their family, friends, or community in their countries or areas of origin. Remittance can be both in cash and kind.

Households: This study uses the UN definition of household. It is defined as a group of two or more persons living together who make common provisions for food or other essentials for living. Of course, a household can also be constituted by a single person when he/she arranges all provisions for living by himself.

Migrant Household: It is defined as a group of one or more persons living together who make common provisions for food or other essentials for living and one or more members of the household who work and stay in another area or abroad. When the migrant returns, he/she would eat with the left behind households.

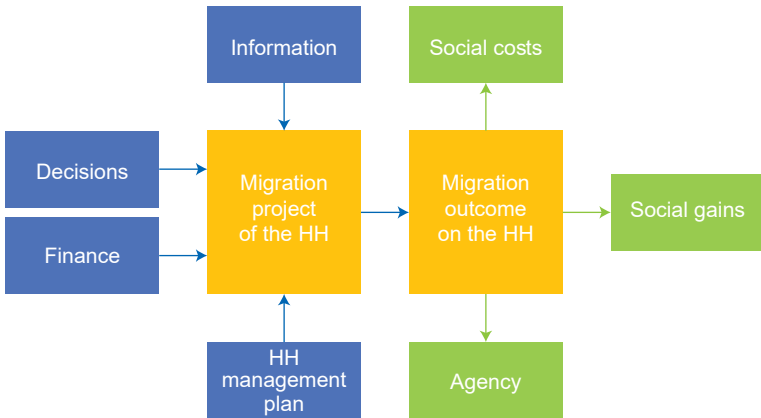
Non-migrant Household: It is defined as a group of one or more persons living together who make common provisions for food or other essentials for living. No member of non-migrant household works and stays in another area or abroad.

1.6 Conceptual Framework

In understanding the social costs and gains of migration on elderlies and siblings the following conceptual framework has been developed. It has two core elements. These are the migration project of the households and the migration outcomes of the households. The migration project of a household requires access to information, the decision to migrate, organisation of finance, access to network/migration processing agencies, and a plan for household management in the absence of a migrant. In understanding the outcome of migration on elderlies and siblings, it is important to understand to what extent the elderlies and siblings are involved in initiating the migration journey and management mechanism of the household in the absence of its migrant member. If the elderlies or the siblings have a major role in providing or ensuring access to the above services which are necessary for starting the migration journey, then they will have a major stake in benefiting from migration outcomes. There are three elements i.e., social costs of migration, social gains received from migration, and agencies developed through household members' participation in migration. The social cost of migration includes emotional and psychological costs, lost opportunities for education, care deficit, the experience of anxiety, loneliness, etc. Social gains are obtained as a consequence of being exposed to the transaction for which they are socially compensated. Elements of which are new employment, access to healthcare and education, social status, etc. The agency is the third outcome described in the

framework. Agency refers to the development of the capacity of individuals to take challenges and act independently to make their own free choices. Figure 1.6.1 explains how the immobile population gains or loses from the migration experience of household members.

Figure 1.6.1: Conceptual framework for understanding social costs and gains from migration



1.7 Research Methodology

This study espouses a mixed method encompassing both quantitative and qualitative research. Quantitative data has been gathered on socioeconomic and demographic profiles of the left-behind members including the elderly and siblings. Those include age, sex, educational background, marital status, health, access to remittance, participation in household work, etc. Quantitative data has also been generated on the perception of social costs, gains, and agencies developed through migration on the elderlies and siblings of the left-behind household members.

1.7.1 Research Instruments

The research has used four instruments. These are literature review, screening of households with left behind elderly and siblings from SDC and RMMRU panel survey 2020, household survey, and case study interview 2022.

Literature Review: The first step of any research is the gathering of secondary data. Secondary data includes research articles and books, government data, gray material, etc. The literature identified for review includes a) country-specific studies on social costs of migration b) multi-country quantitative surveys that partially reflect on this issue and c) concepts and methods used for understanding social costs and benefits.

Household Survey: This is a major instrument developed to create the empirical evidence of the research. Four sets of questionnaires have to be designed to capture the social costs and benefits of migration for two different groups. These are elderly members of migrant households, elderly members of non-migrant households, siblings of migrant households, and siblings in non-migrant households.

Case Study Interview: Quantitative methods have their limitations in probing issues such as social costs of migration, isolation, and mental stress vs. the development of agency to change the situation in favour of the affected person. Therefore, the study requires using some techniques that allow the generation of qualitative data. In this scenario, a case study interview is the most suitable instrument.

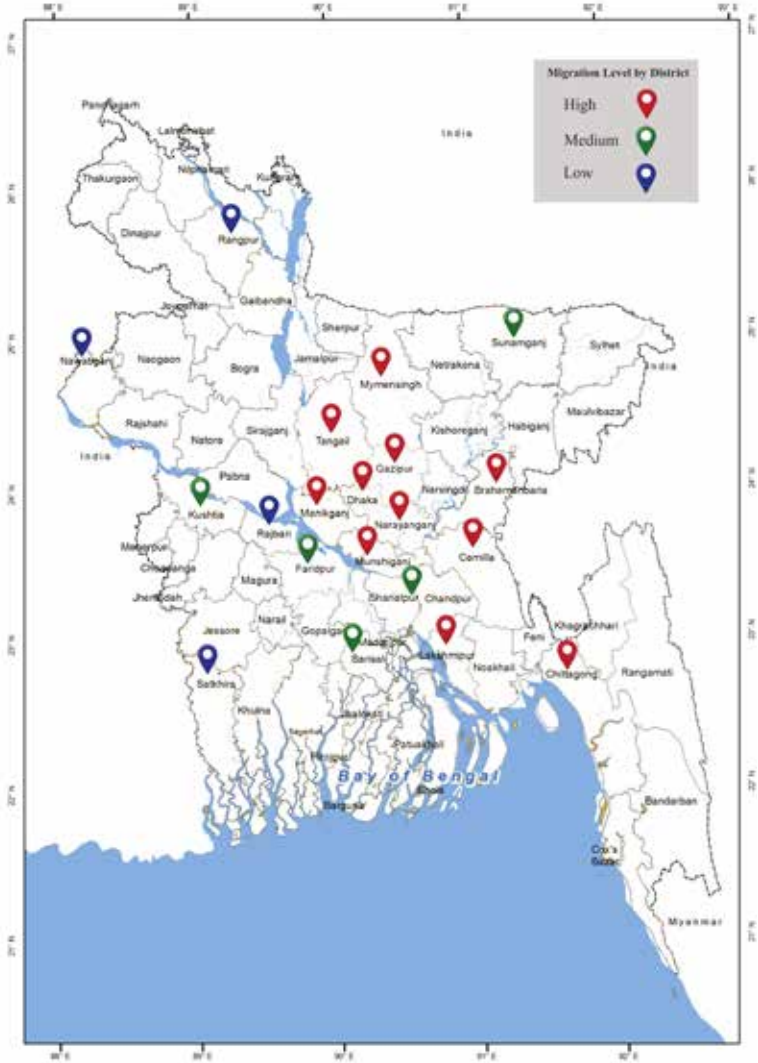
Ethical Principles: Before conducting the structured interview it is important to inform the interviewee about the purpose of the research and also the mechanism in place for the protection of his or her identity. The consent of every respondent was secured as a form on maintaining the ethical standard of the research.

1.7.2 Data Source

The survey households have been selected from the SDC and RMMRU panel survey area. This panel survey was conducted in 20 districts of Bangladesh, representing all 7 divisions. It followed both purposive and random sampling processes. The 20 districts have been selected by dividing BMET migration data into high, medium, and low migration-producing districts. Eleven of those represent high migration intensity districts, five medium, and four low-intensity districts. Following the selection of districts, *upazilas*, and *unions* have been selected again based on BMET data. The top three migrant-producing *upazilas* have been identified from each district, from which one *upazila* was selected at random. The top three migrant-producing *unions* were selected from the selected *upazilas* and 6 villages from that *union* were selected randomly. The villages were equally divided into various segments. Each segment contains at least 60 households. After segmentation, a near census was conducted in 2 of those segments. The 20 districts are Chattogram, Cumilla, Brahmanbaria, Tangail, Munshiganj, Manikganj, Lakshmipur, Dhaka, Gazipur, Narayanganj, Sunamganj, Chapainawabganj, Rajbari, Faridpur, Rangpur, Satkhira, Kushtia, Barishal, Shariatpur, and Mymensingh.

This survey, therefore, did not have to go through the process of selection of *upazilas* and villages. Household listings covered 14400 families. From them, 4414 households covering 1290 internal migrants, 2023 international migrants, and 1101 non-migrant households have been identified which have elderlies and siblings. Table 1.7.2.1 shows the distribution of the sample households across individual districts.

Figure 1.7.2.1: Delineation of the study area



Source: SDC and RMMRU Household Survey on Social Cost of Migration, 2022

Table 1.7.2.1: Distribution of the number of households by migration type and district

District	International HH	Internal HH	Non-migrant HH	Total HH
Cumilla	135	67	66	268
Chattogram	145	62	72	279
Dhaka	137	72	70	279
Narayanganj	123	39	47	209
Gazipur	102	56	50	208
Faridpur	115	49	44	208
Mymensingh	81	44	39	164
Manikganj	169	48	55	272
Chapainawabganj	22	158	54	234
Rangpur	65	115	64	244
Kushtia	107	62	60	229
Barishal	104	63	62	229
Tangail	129	61	68	258
Shariatpur	113	52	54	219
Lakshmipur	83	53	49	185
Rajbari	90	45	43	178
Munshiganj	78	45	45	168
Satkhira	11	147	56	214
Brahmanbaria	130	12	58	200
Sunamganj	84	40	45	169
Total	2023	1290	1101	4414

Source: SDC and RMMRU Household Survey on Social Cost of Migration, 2022

From this 4414 households, a total of 6004 members has been interviewed - 2604 elderlies and 1902 siblings from both international and internal migrant households, 860 elderlies and 638 siblings from non-migrant households constituted the data source of the quantitative survey (Table 1.7.2.2). 300 case studies constitute the source of qualitative data.

Table 1.7.2.2: Distribution of the number of respondents by migration type and district

District	Migration type											
	International			Internal			Non-migrant			Total		
	Elderly	Sibling	Total	Elderly	Sibling	Total	Elderly	Sibling	Total	Elderly	Sibling	Total
Cumilla	74	76	150	38	37	75	37	38	75	149	151	300
Chattogram	122	31	153	58	14	72	60	15	75	240	60	300
Dhaka	75	76	151	38	37	75	35	39	74	148	152	300
Narayanganj	142	32	174	36	12	48	64	16	80	242	60	302
Gazipur	74	75	149	39	37	76	37	38	75	150	150	300
Faridpur	78	77	155	35	35	70	37	38	75	150	150	300
Mymensingh	77	74	151	38	37	75	37	37	74	152	148	300
Manikganj	94	85	179	27	23	50	36	35	71	157	143	300
Chapainawabganj	18	14	32	95	99	194	37	38	75	150	151	301
Rangpur	67	18	85	113	27	140	60	15	75	240	60	300
Kushia	76	70	146	37	44	81	37	36	73	150	150	300
Barisal	75	73	148	37	40	77	38	37	75	150	150	300
Tangail	120	31	151	61	14	75	59	15	74	240	60	300
Shariatpur	77	79	156	34	35	69	37	38	75	148	152	300
Lakshmipur	120	30	150	60	15	75	60	15	75	240	60	300
Rajbari	78	76	154	37	35	72	39	36	75	154	147	301
Munshiganj	75	70	145	39	40	79	38	38	76	152	148	300
Satkhira	13	11	24	101	100	201	36	39	75	150	150	300
Brahmanbaria	104	105	209	9	6	15	38	38	76	151	149	300
Sunamganj	77	75	152	36	37	73	38	37	75	151	149	300
Total no. of cases	1636	1178	2814	968	724	1692	860	638	1498	3464	2540	6004

Source: SDC and RMMRU Household Survey on Social Cost of Migration, 2022

1.7.3 Operationalisation of Qualitative and Quantitative Field Survey

Both qualitative and quantitative fieldworks have been conducted simultaneously. Those had begun in May 2022 and was completed in September 2022. The fieldwork was held in four consecutive rounds. In the first round, Manikganj, Cumilla, Rajbari, Dhaka, and Brahmanbaria were covered; in the second round, Rangpur, Chattogram, Narayanganj, Tangail, and Lakshmipur were covered; in the third round Faridpur, Kushtia, Mymensingh, Barishal and Satkhira were covered; in the fourth round Gazipur, Chapainawabganj, Munshiganj, Shariatpur, and Sunamganj were covered. Through a rigorous process of application and interview, field enumerators and field supervisors were selected. Five supervisors and 28 field enumerators were chosen from 319 applications. Field supervisors and enumerators were trained over six days. Under the guidance of supervisors, the field enumerators administered four separate questionnaires.

In-depth qualitative interviews were conducted by the enumerators once the quantitative survey of a particular district was completed. The qualitative interview was done based on an open-ended interview schedule. A field monitoring team was constituted with two co-researchers and a RMMRU core staff.

1.7.4 Data Analysis

The quantitative data has been processed by using the SPSS programme. Once the data were entered, they were cleaned, cross-checked, edited, and tested for any inconsistencies. The statistical tools used to analyse the data included frequencies, cross-tabulation, reporting, and statistical tests. The book is based on a mixed method where quantitative data has been complemented by the case study information.

1.8 Structure of the Book

This book is divided into six chapters. Chapter I lays down the

objectives of the research, and presents a review of the literature on the impact of migration on left behind elderlies and siblings. It also articulates the major research questions and develops the methodology required to pursue the study. Chapter II provides an overall international migration scenario of Bangladesh. Chapter III presents the socio-demographic profile of the households which constitutes the empirical basis of the research. Chapter IV highlights the social costs and benefits of migration experienced by the left-behind elderlies of migrant households. Chapter V elaborates the social costs and benefits of migration experienced by the left-behind siblings of migrant households. Chapter VI draws major conclusions and explores their implications for future policymaking.

CHAPTER II

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR MIGRATION FROM BANGLADESH

This chapter highlights the recent trends of international contract labour migration from Bangladesh. Bangladesh has been participating in the short-term international labour market as one of the major sending countries since the early 1970s. However, data on the flow of migrants is only available since 1976. As such trends of labour migration can only be analysed from that year. In the recent past, COVID-19 has a significant impact on labour migration the world over. The Russia-Ukraine war is one of the most important global events of 2022. This war has not only affected the economies of the concerned countries but has also impacted the world economy in various ways. Bangladesh is no exception. In the following, a brief background of labour migration, the extent of migration flows, participation of females in the international labour market, major countries of destination, migration source districts, skill composition of the migrants, remittance flow, etc. is presented.

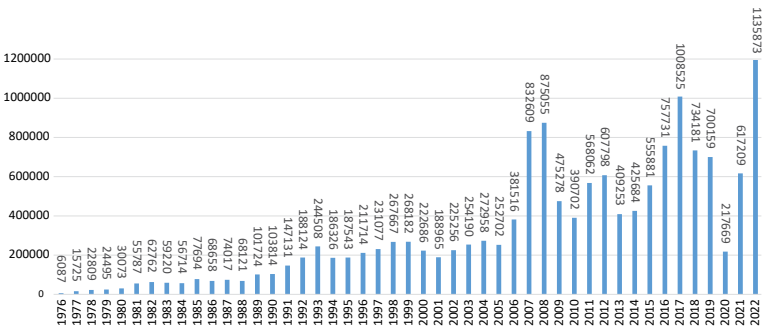
2.1 The Context of Labour Migration from Bangladesh

In the late 1960s when the short-term labour migration to Gulf and other Arab countries began, it is only the people of the then West Pakistan who could participate. Geographical proximity of the province to the receiving region contributed to the participation of the

West Pakistanis. The flow from the then East Pakistan was minimal. In 1971 when Bangladesh became an independent country new opportunity to take part in the Gulf labour market arose. By 1976 the number of migrant workers became quite substantive. Figure 2.1.1 illustrates the gradual growth of international labour migration from Bangladesh. It shows that in 1976 around 6,000 workers migrated to take up overseas employment. By 1989 it crossed 100,000. 200,000 Bangladeshis migrated in 1996. Migration grew exponentially by 2007. By this time the figure had reached 800,000. From 2009-2016 migration flow reduced quite a bit. Still, it hovered from 400,000 to 700,000. In 2017, a major growth in the outflow of migrants is visible. This year more than 1,000,000 people have gone abroad for employment. Then came COVID-19. The flow declined to 200,000 in 2020.

Now that COVID-19 has subsided to some extent, international migration flows have gradually gained pace. BMET inform in 2022 the total number of workers who migrated to different countries including the Gulf, other Arab and South-East Asian countries from Bangladesh stands at 11,35,873.² It is almost an 84 percent rise from the preceding year.

Figure 2.1.1: Labour migration from Bangladesh 1976-2022



Source: Prepared by RMMRU from BMET data

² <http://www.old.bmet.gov.bd/BMET/viewStatReport.action?reportnumber=24>

2.2 Female Migration

For years mostly males migrated from Bangladesh. Women hardly participated. There were either restrictions or bans on the migration of unskilled and semi-skilled woman workers from Bangladesh. Evidence-based research and the civil society movement, resulted in the lifting of restrictions on the migration of these female workers in 2003. Once the restriction was lifted a significant group of women started participating in the short-term international labour market. By 2016 female workers constituted 16 percent of the total labour flow from Bangladesh. Between 2016-2022 setting aside the COVID-19 period, more than 100,000 female workers have been migrating overseas for work each year from Bangladesh. A total of 1,05,466 female workers migrated in 2022.

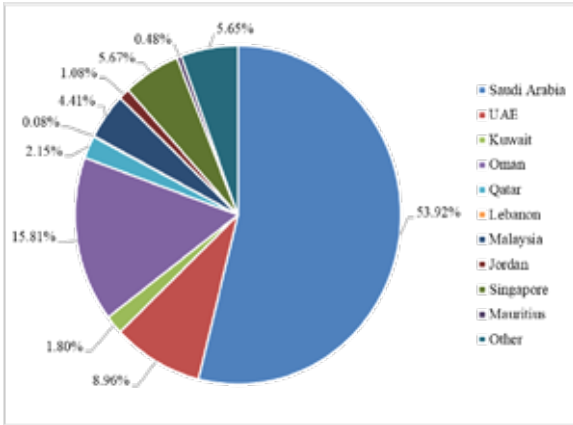
2.3 Countries of Destination

Traditionally workers from Bangladesh have predominantly migrated to Gulf and other Arab countries. Since the mid-1990s, Southeast Asia has also become an important destination region. From 1999 to 2004 Saudi Arabia received 60-70 percent of the Bangladeshi migrants. After that migration to Saudi Arabia gradually declined. In certain years, there has been a complete ban on migration to Saudi Arabia. The United Arab Emirates and Malaysia are the two other countries that in various years became the highest recipient countries of Bangladeshi workers. In recent years, Saudi Arabia again became the major destination for Bangladeshi workers.

Figure 2.3.1 shows that in 2022, Saudi Arabia has been the principal destination (54 percent) for Bangladeshi labour migrants accounting for 6,12,418 workers. The second-largest flow has been to Oman (1,79,612 migrants, 16 percent). In the same year, the United Arab Emirates has been the third largest destination country (1,01,775 workers, 9 percent) and Singapore has been the 4th largest, receiving 64,383 (6 percent) workers. The other major countries have been Malaysia (50,090 workers, 4.41 percent, fifth largest) and Qatar (24,447 workers, 2.15 percent, sixth largest), respectively.³

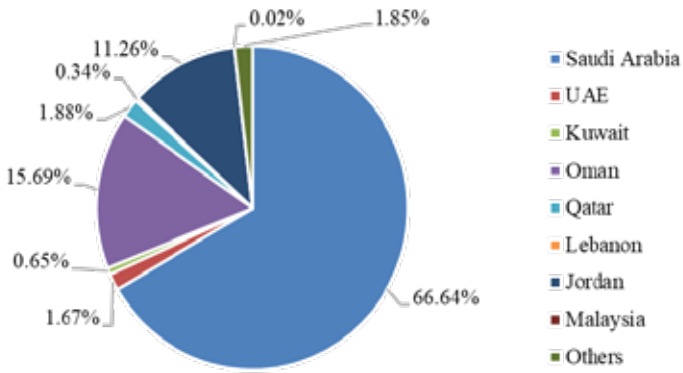
³ <http://www.old.bmet.gov.bd/BMET/viewStatReport.action?reportnumber=11>

Figure 2.3.1: Destination countries of Bangladeshi migrants in 2022



Source: Prepared by RMMRU from BMET data

Figure 2.3.2: Destination countries of Bangladeshi female migrants in 2022



Source: Prepared by RMMRU from BMET data

In the case of female migration as well, Saudi Arabia has been the main destination country in 2022. About 67 percent of total female migrants (70,279) have gone to this country. The second-largest flow is towards Oman (16,544 workers, 16 percent), the third is Jordan (11,879 workers, 11.26 percent), the fourth is Qatar (1,982 workers, 2 percent) and the fifth is the United Arab Emirates (1,761 workers, 1.67 percent).⁴

2.4 Source Area

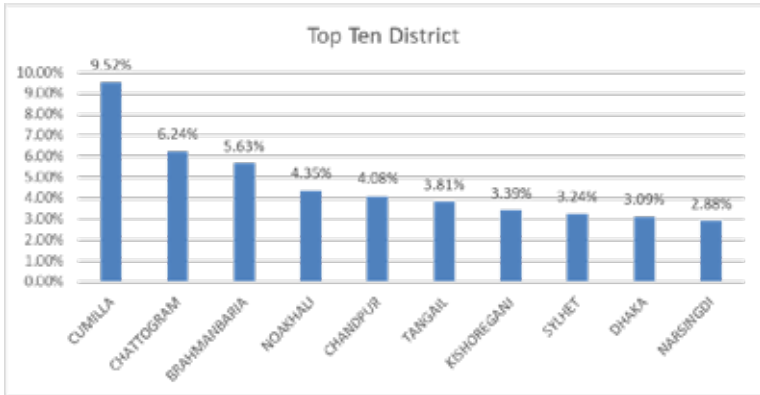
While Bangladesh is divided into 64 administrative districts, it is interesting to note that the majority of the migrants have originated from only 5 to 6 districts. These are Cumilla, Chattogram, Tangail, Brahmanbaria, Noakhali, Chandpur, etc. The major source areas of international migration in 2022 are the same. This year as well the largest outflow of international migrants has been from the Cumilla district. It accounts for 9.52 percent of the total flow (1,05,997 migrant workers). Chattogram is ranked second with 69,448 workers constituting 6.24 percent of the total flow. 6 percent has migrated (62,698 migrant workers) from Brahmanbaria, 4.35 percent (48,393 migrant workers), 4.08 percent (45,455 migrant workers), 3.81 percent (42,379 migrant workers) and 3.39 percent (37,785 migrant workers) are from Noakhali, Chandpur, Tangail, and Kishoreganj respectively.

2.5 Skill Composition

Bangladesh mostly participates in the unskilled and semi-skilled labour market. BMET classifies the labour migrants of Bangladesh into four categories. These are professional, skilled, semi-skilled, and less-skilled. In 2022 only 0.32 percent of the migrants have been categorised as professionals. In 2021, 21 percent migrated as skilled workers. In 2022, it has risen to 23 percent. 4 percent of the workers belong to the category of semi-skilled. As high as 74 percent of migrants belong to the less-skilled category.

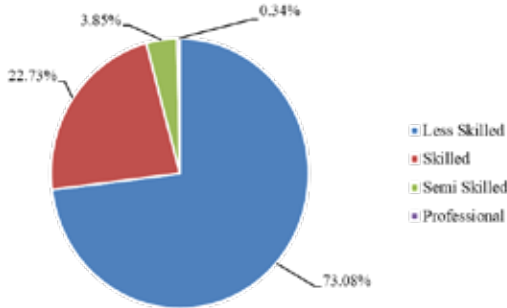
⁴ <http://www.old.bmet.gov.bd/BMET/viewStatReport.action?reportnumber=38>

Figure 2.4.1: Source areas of Bangladeshi migrants in 2022



Source: Prepared by RMMRU from BMET data

Figure 2.5.1: Skill composition of Bangladeshi migrant workers in 2022



Source: Prepared by RMMRU from BMET data

2.6 Remittances

Since the year 2000-2009, remittance flow to Bangladesh has grown exponentially (annually between 12-37%). From 2011-2020 remittance has grown annually between 10 percent to 18 percent except for the years 2013, 2016, and 2017. In 2021, remittance grew at a slow pace (1.4%). Bangladesh received USD 21.28 billion as remittance in 2022. This is 3.53 percent less compared to the previous year. Table 2.6.1 shows the year-on-year change in the remittance flows and the number of migrants going abroad.

Table 2.6.1: Changes in the number of migrant workers and remittance flows in past years (2001-2022)

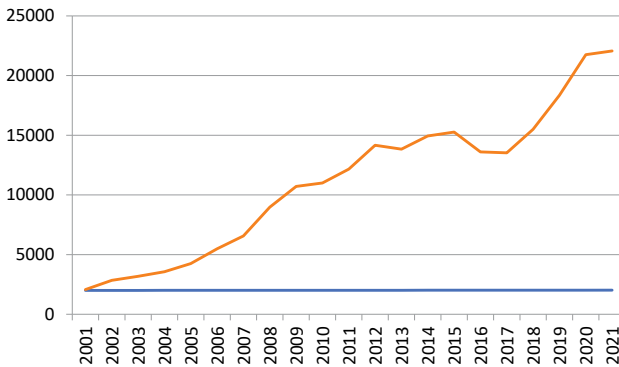
Year	Number of International Migrants	Changes in Percentage	Remittance (US Dollars)	Changes in Percentage
2001	189060		2071.0	
2002	225256	19.2	2847.8	37.5
2003	254190	12.8	3177.6	11.6
2004	272958	7.4	3565.3	12.2
2005	252702	-7.4	4249.9	19.2
2006	381516	51.0	5484.1	29.0
2007	832609	118.2	6562.7	19.7
2008	875055	5.1	8979	36.8
2009	475278	-45.7	10717.7	19.4
2010	390702	-17.8	11004.7	2.7
2011	568062	45.4	12168.1	10.6
2012	607798	7.0	14164.0	16.4
2013	409253	-32.7	13832.1	-2.3
2014	425684	4.0	14942.6	8.0
2015	555881	30.6	15,271.0	2.2
2016	757731	36.3	13609.8	-10.9
2017	1008525	33.1	13526.8	-0.6
2018	734181	-27.2	15497.7	14.6
2019	700159	-4.6	18354.9	18.4
2020	217669	-68.9	21752.3	18.5
2021	617209	183.6	22,063.8	1.4
2022	11,35,873	84	21,284.86	-3.53

Source: Prepared by RMMRU from BMET and Bangladesh Bank data

The table shows that migration has grown by 84 percent in 2022, whereas remittance growth has declined. Different factors both national and international have contributed to such disproportionate growth in remittance flow. Important among the international factors are the effects of the Russia-Ukraine war, the COVID-19 pandemic, inflation, adverse effect of global price hikes on the real income of

the migrants, non-payment and irregular payment of wages, wage theft in some of the destination countries, etc. Causes operational in the domestic market are demand for foreign currency to purchase work visas, the difference in the exchange rate in formal and informal markets (both *kerb* and *hundi*), the practice of under-invoicing of import for evading tax, financing smuggling, erosion of trust of migrants and their families on the banking system, etc.

Figure 2.6.1: Remittance flows from 2001-2022



Source: Prepared by RMMRU from BMET data

This year as well, Saudi Arabia constituted the most important source country of remittance. It accounted for 19 percent of the total remittances flow (USD 4015.49 million). The second highest remittances came from the United States (USD 3712.64 million, 17 percent). This is followed by the United Arab Emirates (USD 2593.23 million, 12 percent), United Kingdom (USD 2069.88 million, 10 percent), and Kuwait (USD 1611.97 million, 8 percent), respectively.⁵

⁵ <http://www.old.bmet.gov.bd/BMET/viewStatReport.action?reportn umber=23>

Table 2.6.2: Remittance flows by country of employment in 2022

Country	US Dollar (Million)	%
Bahrain	520.28	2.44
Kuwait	1611.97	7.72
Oman	729.5	3.43
Qatar	1360.31	6.39
Saudi Arabia	4015.49	18.87
UAE	2593.23	12.18
Italy	1161.51	5.46
Malaysia	1043.79	4.90
Singapore	360.29	1.69
UK	2069.88	9.72
USA	3712.64	17.44
Others	2106.46	9.91
Total	21285.35	100

Source: Prepared by RMMRU from Bangladesh Bank data

2.7 Death of Migrant Workers in the Countries of Destination

According to Wage Earners' Welfare Board (WEWB), 46,503 dead bodies of migrant workers have arrived in Bangladesh over the last 30 years. From 2017 to 2022, a total of 19,495 male and female Bangladeshis have died abroad. 96 percent of them are male and 4 percent are female. Information on causes of death is received from the death certificates provided by the destination countries. According to the certificates of 705 female migrants, 32 percent of cases of deaths are officially recorded as unnatural and 68 percent as natural. Unnatural death includes suicide, murder, and accident. The average age of those who died in different destinations has been 37 years. A high percentage of unnatural death of young female migrants does pose the question about the work condition and accountability of employers in those countries.

Chapter Conclusions

This chapter gives an overview of the international labour migration scenario in Bangladesh. It shows that in 2022, a record number of male and female workers migrated mostly to Gulf and other Arab countries. A small percentage of them also migrated to Southeast Asian countries. International labour migration from Bangladesh used to be dominated by men. Since the lifting of the restriction on the migration of women, a significant number of women are also taking part. In 2022, 9 percent of the total flow has been constituted by women. Over the last three consecutive years, Bangladesh received more than USD 21 billion as remittances. Saudi Arabia has again become the largest destination for both male and female migrants. Over the last 30 years, most Bangladeshis have migrated to 10-12 countries for overseas employment. 5-7 administrative districts of Bangladesh constitute major migrant source areas. Untimely and unnatural death of migrants is a phenomenon that has surfaced in a few recent studies. The following chapter will provide profiles of the elderly and siblings of the households under the study.

CHAPTER III

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

This chapter presents the socio-demographic profile of the elderly and sibling members of international, internal, and non-migrant households interviewed for this study. The socio-demographic profile includes distribution of household members, family size, age of the elderlies and siblings, marital status, level of education, employment, monthly income, and presence of persons with disability in the households.

3.1 Number of Household Members

Table 3.1.1 shows that these households altogether have 32,604 members. 17,211 them are male and 15,393 are female. 4,554 of them are migrants. 3,457 are elderlies and 2,543 are brothers and sisters who have been interviewed as siblings. Besides them, 22,050 other members in the households including brothers and sisters have not been interviewed.

3.2 Household size

Table 3.2.1 gives an idea of the sizes of the households. Household size is defined as the total number of all those who have common provisions for food or other essentials for living. Thus, domestic workers or relatives residing in the concerned house are counted. Therefore, the actual family size should be lower than the average household size. The average size of international migrant households

and non-migrant households is 5. For internal migrants it is 4.5. Further disaggregation shows that the household size of 26 percent of the international migrant is 3 and below. 37 percent of the internal migrant households have 3 or fewer members. As high as 10 percent of international migrant households have 8-10 members. This may indicate that in the absence of migrant member/s, households that were split earlier have merged with their extended families. Only 5 percent of internal migrant households have 8-10 members.

Table 3.1.1: Distribution of migrant and non-migrant HH members

Type of HH members	International			Internal			Non-migrant			Grand Total
	F	M	Total	F	M	Total	F	M	Total	
Migrants	190	2653	2843	103	1608	1711	N/A	N/A	N/A	4554
Elderly respondents	1008	624	1632	609	369	978	452	395	847	3457
Sibling respondents	394	795	1189	263	465	728	186	440	626	2543
Total respondents	1402	1419	2821	872	834	1706	638	835	1473	6000
Other members	6200	4698	10898	3147	2348	5495	2841	2816	5657	22050
Total HH members	7792	8770	16562	4122	4790	8912	3479	3651	7130	32604

Source: SDC and RMMRU Household Survey on Social Cost of Migration, 2022

Note: F=Female, M=Male, HH= Household

Table 3.2.1: HH size by migration type (%)

Family size	International	Internal	Non-migrant
1-3	26.0	37.4	19.6
4-5	40	40.2	51.7
6-7	22	16.7	21.6
8-10	10	5.3	6.9
10+	1	0.4	0.3
Total No. of HHs	2813	1692	1498
Average family size	5	4.5	5

Source: SDC and RMMRU Household Survey on Social Cost of Migration, 2022

3.3 Age Group

The average age of the elderly in international migrant households is 60 (table 3.3.1). In the case of internal and non-migrant households, it is a little less (57 years). Female elderlies are 7-8 years younger than male elderlies in both international and internal migrant households. The highest percentage of elderly in the case of international migrant households belongs to the age group of 55-64. In the case of internal and non-migrant households, the highest number of elderlies belong to the age group of 45-54. It may be assumed that the majority of those who are up to 65 years of age are capable of pursuing professions. Except those with physical conditions, others may not require assistance in maintaining their day-to-day life. Nonetheless, they do have psychological needs to be fulfilled from their interaction with the migrant son or daughter. A majority of those who are above 75 years, have less outside engagements and thus need more people at home to converse with.

Table 3.3.1: Age group of elderlies by migration type and gender

Age	Parent of international migrant (%)			Parent of internal migrant (%)			Parent of non-migrant HH (%)		
	FP	MP	Total	FP	MP	Total	FP	MP	Total
25-34	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	.4	.3	.3
35-44	5.3	.8	3.6	11.7	.9	7.8	10.3	2.6	6.8
45-54	39.6	12.7	29.3	43.3	20.9	35.2	41.8	31.1	36.9
55-64	30.8	34.5	32.2	27.1	39.4	31.5	25.9	35.2	30.2
65-74	16.9	36.1	24.2	12.6	25.1	17.2	14.3	23.7	18.6
75-84	5.7	12.3	8.2	4.4	10.6	6.6	4.9	5.4	5.1
84+	1.7	3.7	2.4	1.0	3.1	1.8	2.4	1.8	2.1
Total no. of cases	1013	624	1637	617	350	967	467	392	859
Average Age	57	64	60	54	62	57	55	59	57

Source: SDC and RMMRU Household Survey on Social Cost of Migration, 2022

Note: FP= Female Parent, MP= Male Parent

Interviews have been taken only with those siblings who are more than 15 years of age. The average age of the interviewees who are

siblings of international migrant is 23. For internal migrant siblings, it is 22 and for the non-migrants' siblings it is 21. In each category, more than 60 percent of the siblings belong to the age group of 15-24. In every three types of groups (international, internal, and non-migrant households), female siblings are much younger than males. In the case of internal migrant households, the age difference between male and female siblings (in 15-24 age group) is almost 20 years. In the rest of the two groups, international and non-migrant, the age difference between the two sexes is around 10 years. Around 3 percent or less of the total sibling respondents are more than 35 years old. This logically means that the majority should be either studying or working. Technically, the siblings, represent a large pool of human-resource that have the potential to participate in different economic enterprises where remittances can be utilised to multiply the positive gains of migration.

Table 3.3.2: Age group of siblings by migration type and gender

Age	Sibling of international migrant (%)			Sibling of internal migrant (%)			Sibling of non-migrant HH (%)		
	FS	MS	Total	FS	MS	Total	FS	MS	Total
15-24	67.1	56.1	59.6	80.1	61.1	68.0	83.6	72.0	75.5
25-34	31.3	39.8	37.1	16.5	35.2	28.5	14.9	26.2	22.7
35-44	1.3	3.2	2.6	3.4	2.4	2.8	.5	1.8	1.4
45-54	.3	.7	.6	0.0	1.1	.7	1.0	0.0	.3
55-64	0.0	.1	.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
64+	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	.2	.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total no. of cases	377	801	1178	261	463	724	195	443	638
Average Age	22	24	23	20	23	22	20	22	21

Source: SDC and RMMRU Household Survey on Social Cost of Migration, 2022

Note: FS= Female Sibling, MS= Male Sibling

3.4 Marital Status

Table 3.4.1 shows the marital status of elderlies and siblings. Elderlies of 77 percent of international migrant households and 78 percent of the internal and non-migrant households are married. Elderlies of

22 percent of the international migrant households, 21 percent of the internal migrant households, and 19 percent of the non-migrant households are widowed. It is mostly the other members of the households who have to take care of widowers.

Table 3.4.1: Marital status of the elderlies by migration type and gender

Marital status of Elderly	Parent of international migrant (%)			Parent of internal migrant (%)			Parent of non-migrant HH (%)		
	FP	MP	Total	FP	MP	Total	FP	MP	Total
Single	.1	.2	.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	.3	.1
Married	66.4	93.8	76.8	68.9	94.9	78.3	64.7	94.4	78.2
Separated	.5	.2	.4	.3	0.0	.2	1.9	.3	1.2
Divorce	1.2	.3	.9	.6	.3	.5	1.9	0.0	1.0
Widow/widower	31.8	5.6	21.8	30.1	4.9	21.0	31.5	5.1	19.4
Total no. of cases	1012	624	1636	618	350	968	467	392	859

Source: SDC and RMMRU Household Survey on Social Cost of Migration, 2022

If we segregate the data based on gender interesting finding emerges. Close to 96 percent of the male elderlies are married, whereas 66 and 69 percent of the female elderlies' marital status is 'married'. Again only one-twentieth of the male of all three types of households are widowers, but as high as one-third of the female elderlies are widows.

Table 3.4.2: Marital status of the siblings by migration type and gender

Marital status of Sibling	Sibling of international migrant (%)			Sibling of internal migrant (%)			Sibling of non-migrant HH (%)		
	FS	MS	Total	FS	MS	Total	FS	MS	Total
Single	65.0	64.3	64.5	77.4	66.3	70.3	77.4	72.5	74.0
Married	28.1	34.7	32.6	12.3	33.0	25.6	12.8	26.9	22.6
Separated	2.1	.4	.9	2.7	0.0	1.0	1.0	.2	.5
Divorce	2.7	.5	1.2	5.7	.4	2.3	4.1	.5	1.6
Widow/widower	2.1	.1	.8	1.9	.2	.8	4.6	0.0	1.4
Total no. of cases	377	801	1178	261	463	724	195	443	638

Source: SDC and RMMRU Household Survey on Social Cost of Migration, 2022

65 percent of the international migrants' siblings, 70 percent of the internal migrants' siblings, and 74 percent of the non-migrants' siblings are unmarried. 33 percent of the international migrants' siblings, 26 percent of the internal migrants' siblings, and 23 percent of the non-migrants' siblings are married. There is no significant difference in percentage share between male and female siblings who belong to 'currently married' status. Around 2-3 percent of the siblings of all types of households are either divorced or separated. The categories of divorced and separated are dominated by women.

Table 3.5.1: Education level of the elderlies by migration type and gender

Education level of elderly	Parent of international migrant (%)			Parent of internal migrant (%)			Parent of non-migrant HH (%)		
	FP	MP	Total	FP	MP	Total	FP	MP	Total
No education	64.5	55.3	61.0	56.6	45.4	52.6	63.0	51.6	57.7
Up to 5 th level	24.2	23.2	23.8	25.1	24.9	25.0	21.0	21.9	21.4
Up to 10 th level	8.5	11.7	9.7	11.7	13.4	12.3	10.1	14.5	12.1
SSC/equivalent	1.3	5.8	3.0	3.9	7.4	5.2	3.4	5.6	4.4
HSC/equivalent	.4	1.6	.9	.8	2.6	1.4	0.0	2.6	1.2
Bachelors/equivalent	.1	1.6	.7	.2	2.9	1.1	.9	1.8	1.3
Masters/equivalent	.1	.2	.1	.2	.9	.4	0.0	.5	.2
Diploma	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	.3	.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Others	.9	.6	.8	1.6	2.3	1.9	1.7	1.5	1.6
Not applicable	.2	.2	.2	.3	0.0	.2	0.0	.3	.1
Total no. of cases	1012	624	1636	618	350	968	467	392	859

Source: SDC and RMMRU Household Survey on Social Cost of Migration, 2022

3.5 Educational Level

Tables 3.5.1 and 3.5.2 show the educational levels of elderlies and siblings respectively. 50-60 percent of the elderlies have no educational background. Another 15-20 percent only studied up to class 5. Less than or around 5 percent have completed SSC. In the category of no education, the representation of females is again higher than males.

Table 3.5.2: Education level of the siblings by migration type and gender

Education level of sibling	Sibling of international migrant (%)			Sibling of internal migrant (%)			Sibling of non-migrant HH (%)		
	FS	MS	Total	FS	MS	Total	FS	MS	Total
No education	4.0	4.2	4.2	3.8	4.1	4.0	4.1	4.3	4.3
Up to 5 th level	8.0	18.6	15.2	8.8	17.9	14.6	10.8	23.0	19.3
Up to 10 th level	43.2	33.3	36.5	40.6	28.3	32.7	41.5	32.3	35.1
SSC/equivalent	21.2	16.5	18.0	19.5	19.7	19.6	19.0	20.5	20.1
HSC/equivalent	11.9	15.1	14.1	18.4	18.1	18.2	16.9	14.0	14.9
Bachelors/equivalent	8.5	6.2	7.0	5.4	6.7	6.2	3.6	4.3	4.1
Masters/equivalent	2.9	3.7	3.5	2.3	3.5	3.0	1.5	.9	1.1
Diploma	.3	1.2	.9	.4	1.1	.8	2.1	.2	.8
Others	0.0	1.0	.7	.8	.6	.7	.5	.5	.5
Total no. of cases	377	801	1178	261	463	724	195	443	638

Source: SDC and RMMRU Household Survey on Social Cost of Migration, 2022

Since the 1990s a major breakthrough with respect to education has taken place in Bangladesh. Several initiatives such as free primary education, stipend for the girl child, and afternoon meal programmes have contributed to increased enrolment of both girl and boy children at school. This is reflected in this data as well. Educational qualification is much higher in the case of siblings compared to the elderlies. Siblings with no education are very low (around 4 percent) in all three types of households. These 4 percent of the siblings should be those, who belong to the higher age group. 15 to 20 percent of the siblings have studied up to class 5. As high as 32-37 percent studied up to class 10. 18-20 percent have secondary school certificates and 14-18 percent possess higher secondary school certificates. 5-10 percent have either bachelor's or master's degree.

The impact of special programmes undertaken by successive governments with respect to girl child's education is visible when data is segregated on the basis of sex. In the case of international migrant households, the percentage of girl child (43) who has

studied up to class 10 is way higher compared to that of boy child (33). Achievements of girl children are even higher (13%) in the case of internal migrants. The same trend is visible in the case of non-migrant households as well.

3.6 Health Condition

It is important to understand the physical state of the elderlies. Table 3.6.1 shows more than 80 percent of the parents of international, internal, and non-migrant households are in good health. But 15-17 percent of them are not in good health. Parents of 3 percent of the international, 2 percent of the internal, and 4 percent of the non-migrant households are either invalid or need assistance to perform day-to-day activities. This gives an idea which segment of the elderlies will be able to take part in day-to-day household management in the absence of the migrants and what percentage would themselves require assistance from other household members.

Table 3.6.1: Physical state of elderly household members by migration type and gender

Physical state	Parent of international migrant (%)			Parent of internal migrant (%)			Parent of non-migrant HH (%)		
	FP	MP	Total	FP	MP	Total	FP	MP	Total
Healthy	79.5	86.5	82.1	78.0	87.4	81.4	77.9	83.9	80.7
Not in good health	18.1	10.3	15.0	20.5	11.1	17.1	17.4	13.7	15.7
Bedridden, need assistance	2.6	3.2	2.8	1.5	1.4	1.5	4.7	2.3	3.6
Total no. of cases	1010	622	1632	615	349	964	467	393	860

Source: SDC and RMMRU Household Survey on Social Cost of Migration, 2022

When the data is segregated on the basis of sex, the percentage of elderlies in good health is 7 percent higher for men belonging to international migrant households, 10 percent higher for men of internal migrant households, and 6 percent higher in the case of non-migrant households. Patriarchal social norms of prioritising male members' health and nutrition needs compared to females is well reflected here.

3.7 Persons with Disability

Based on the criteria set by the ‘Persons with Disabilities Rights and Protection Act 2013, 2.80 percent of the Bangladesh population have some form of disability. At the national level, disability is prevalent among 3.28 percent of males and 2.32 percent among females. Both migrant and non-migrant households have members with a mental or physical disability. Around 2 percent of the international migrant households, 1 percent of the internal migrant households, and 2 percent of the non-migrant households have members with disability. Extra responsibilities have to be borne by other household members in taking care of these members. Perhaps looking after members with a disability works as a hindrance to those households’ participation in migration.

Table 3.7.1: Persons with disability by migration type

Disability	International (%)			Internal (%)			Non-migrant (%)		
	F	M	Total	F	M	Total	F	M	Total
Percentage of disable member in elderly household	.7	1.4	1.0	.3	.6	.4	1.5	2.6	2.0
Total number of elderly HH	1013	624	1637	617	350	967	467	392	859
Percentage of disable member in sibling household	2.4	2.2	2.3	2.3	1.5	1.8	3.6	1.1	1.9
Total number of sibling HH	377	801	1178	261	462	723	195	443	638
Percentage of disable member in all household	1.2	1.9	1.5	0.9	1.1	1.0	2.1	1.8	1.9
Total number of all HH	1390	1425	2815	878	812	1690	662	835	1497

Source: SDC and RMMRU Household Survey on Social Cost of Migration, 2022

The table also shows that in elderly households persons with disability is less compared to the sibling households. This may have been due to a lack of diagnosis of the condition in earlier times.

3.8 Occupation

72 percent of the elderlies of international migrant households are pursuing some occupation (table 3.8.1). Elderlies of 80 percent of the internal and 82 percent of the non-migrant households also pursue certain occupation. Having an occupation does not necessarily mean that accrues income to the individual concerned. The assets such as agricultural land and shops owned by elderlies are now managed by their children. However, the elderlies perceive their previous profession as their identity. The main professions for male elderlies are agricultural farming, fish farming, poultry farming, small business, trading, etc. Skill-based professions are insignificant. The majority of the elderly female are housewives. Four-fifths of the elderly women of all three categories are housewives. Similar professions are also pursued by the elderlies of internal and non-migrant households. Compared to international and internal migrant households, the percentage of daily labour as profession is higher in case of non-migrant households.

Siblings of 54 percent of international migrant households, 69 percent of internal migrant households, and 58 percent of non-migrant households are not involved in any type of profession (table 3.8.2). A large number of them are not employed because they are still studying. Siblings of 39 percent of the international, 48 percent of the internal and non-migrant households are students. Again, 11-14 percent (depending on the type of migration) of those are unemployed.

Table 3.8.1: The main occupation of the elderlies by migration type and gender

Occupation of elderly	Parent of international migrant (%)			Parent of internal migrant (%)			Parent of non-migrant HH (%)		
	FP	MP	Total	FP	MP	Total	FP	MP	Total
Agro farmer/ fish farmer/ poultry farmer	1.2	33.0	13.3	2.8	28.6	12.1	2.1	30.4	15.0
Business/small business/trading	.6	12.5	5.1	.6	12.9	5.1	.6	13.8	6.6
Housewife	77.4	0.0	47.8	78.9	0.0	50.3	73.2	0.0	40.3
Domestic worker	.3	0.0	.2	1.8	.3	1.2	2.1	0.0	1.2
Day labour/ agri labour	.1	3.2	1.3	.5	8.3	3.3	1.7	10.7	5.8
Construction worker	0.0	.6	.2	.2	.6	.3	0.0	2.0	.9
Electrician/plumber/carpenter/ Painter/tiles fitting/Thai fitter	0.0	.6	.3	0.0	1.7	.6	0.0	2.3	1.0
Driver	0.0	1.4	.6	0.0	4.0	1.4	0.0	4.6	2.1
Factory/garments worker	0.0	.7	.3	.2	1.4	.6	.2	1.5	.8
Service	.4	2.5	1.2	.8	3.7	1.9	.9	5.6	3.0
Tailor	.1	.3	.2	.2	.9	.4	.2	1.0	.6
Government job	0.0	.2	.1	.3	.6	.4	0.0	.8	.3
Professional	.1	.5	.2	.2	.9	.4	.2	3.3	1.6
Others	0.7	2.0	1.3	0.9	2.4	1.8	2.3	4.4	2.9
Unemployed	1.4	4.5	2.5	.5	2.6	1.2	.9	2.8	1.7
Retired	17.7	38.0	25.4	12.1	31.1	19.0	15.6	16.8	16.2
Total no. of cases	1013	623	1636	620	348	968	469	390	859

Source: SDC and RMMRU Household Survey on Social Cost of Migration, 2022

Table 3.8.2: The main occupation of the siblings by migration type and gender

Occupation of sibling	Sibling of international migrant (%)			Sibling of internal migrant (%)			Sibling of non-migrant HH (%)		
	FS	MS	Total	FS	MS	Total	FS	MS	Total
Agro farmer/ fish farmer/ poultry farmer	.8	7.2	5.2	.4	7.3	4.8	0.0	6.1	4.2
Business/small business/trading	.5	11.7	8.1	.4	10.8	7.0	0.0	10.2	7.1
Housewife	29.9	0.0	9.7	18.2	0.0	6.6	15.1	0.0	4.7
Domestic worker	.5	0.0	.2	.4	0.0	.1	1.5	0.0	.5
Day labour/agri labour	.3	3.1	2.2	.4	6.5	4.3	.5	6.5	4.7
Construction worker	0.0	3.9	2.6	0.0	5.0	3.2	0.0	4.5	3.1
Welder/electrician/plumber/carpenter/painter/tiles fitting/thai mistry	0.0	5.9	4.0	.4	4.2	3.0	0.0	4.8	3.4
Driver	0.0	4.9	3.3	0.0	3.9	2.5	0.0	5.4	3.8
Factory/garments worker	0.0	2.9	2.0	.8	2.2	1.7	1.5	2.7	2.4
Service	.3	3.5	2.4	.4	5.2	3.5	.5	4.8	3.4
Tailor	.8	1.0	.9	1.5	.4	.8	1.0	.9	.9
Government job	0.0	.4	.3	0.0	.4	.3	.5	0.0	.2
Professional	2.7	2.0	2.2	0.0	1.7	1.1	1.0	.7	.8
Student	53.1	33.0	39.4	60.9	40.0	47.5	66.7	39.1	47.5
Others	2.1	3.5	3.1	1.9	2.8	2.5	1.0	3.2	2.5
Unemployed	9.3	16.7	14.3	14.5	9.3	11.2	10.7	11.0	10.9
Total no. of cases	379	799	1178	262	462	724	196	442	638

Source: SDC and RMMRU Household Survey on Social Cost of Migration, 2022

3.9 Monthly Income

The monthly income of those elderlies who have independent income is presented in table 3.9.1. Only 28 percent of the elderlies

of international migrant households, 33 percent of the internal migrant households, and 44 percent of the non-migrant households have independent income. It is rational that more elderlies of non-migrant households have independent income because they are the main earning members of their households. Elderlies of migrant households are comparatively more dependent on their migrant family members' income. Elderlies of international and internal migrant households on average earn BDT 9500, and elderlies of the non-migrant earn BDT 10,000. Gender-segregated data informs that it is the male elderlies who have an independent income, not the female. Only 7 percent of female elderlies of international migrant households, 12 percent of internal migrant households, and 14 percent of non-migrant households have independent income.

Table 3.9.1: Average monthly income of the elderlies and siblings by migration type and gender

Monthly Income	International			Internal			Non-migrant		
	F	M	Total	F	M	Total	F	M	Total
Elderly									
Have (in percent)	7	62	28	12	71	33	14	80	44
Total no. of cases	1012	624	1636	618	350	968	467	392	859
Average income in BDT	5860	10228	9556	4526	11002	9518	4112	11253	10016
Sibling									
Have (in percent)	8	50	37	9	51	36	9	51	38
Total no. of cases	377	801	1178	261	463	724	195	443	638
Average income in BDT	7825	12938	12584	4222	11671	11009	5809	11301	10915

Source: SDC and RMMRU Household Survey on Social Cost of Migration, 2022

In contrast, as high as 62 percent of the male elderlies of international migrant households, 71 percent of internal migrant households, and 80 percent of non-migrant households have an independent income.

36-38 percent of the siblings of international, internal, and non-migrant households have an independent income. On average, siblings of international migrant households earn BDT 12,500, internal migrant households earn BDT 11,000, and non-migrant households earn BDT 10,000 (Table 3.9.1). Like the elderlies, the same trend of male siblings' dominance in having an independent income is visible. Only 8-9 percent of the female siblings have their income. In contrast, more than 50 percent of the male siblings in each migration group have their own independent income.

Table 3.10.1: Ownership of bank account of elderlies and siblings by migration type and gender

Bank account	International			Internal			Non-migrant		
	F	M	Total	F	M	Total	F	M	Total
Elderly									
Have (in percent)	32.7	40.4	35.6	15.9	30.9	21.3	11.6	25.8	18.1
Total no. of cases	1012	624	1636	618	350	968	464	392	856
Sibling									
Have (in percent)	12.8	26.8	22.3	8.4	22.0	17.1	8.2	13.1	11.6
Total no. of cases	376	801	1177	261	463	724	194	442	636

Source: SDC and RMMRU Household Survey on Social Cost of Migration, 2022

3.10 Bank Account

More elderlies of international migrant households have their own bank accounts compared to the other two groups. If a comparison is made between elderlies of international and non-migrant households, persons with a bank account are double for the former. In all three types of groups, more male elderlies have bank accounts. 40 percent of the males of international migrant households have bank accounts and for females it is 33 percent. In the case of internal migrants compared to females, double the number of males have bank accounts. Access to bank accounts is 55 percent higher for male elderlies when it comes to non-migrant households. Compared to the elderlies, a lower number of siblings have bank accounts. 22 percent of siblings of international migrant households, 17 percent

of internal migrant households, and 12 percent of non-migrant households have bank accounts. In this respect as well, more male siblings have personal bank accounts compared to female siblings.

Chapter Conclusions

This chapter has provided an overview of the socio-demographic background of the households. The average household size of international and non-migrant is slightly larger than that of internal migrant households. The average age of the elderlies hovers between 57-60. For siblings, the average age varies between 21-23 depending on the type of household. One-fifth of the elderlies are widows or widowers and the majority of the siblings are unmarried (64-70 percent). More than half of the elderlies in all three types of households have no education whereas only 4 percent of the siblings did not attend school. The rest 96 percent of the siblings are literate. This indicates that major changes have taken place in Bangladesh with respect to educational attainment.

15-17 percent of elderlies are not in good health and another 2-4 percent depending on the type of household are bedridden. Again 2 percent of the households have members with some form of disability. Elderlies of close to one-third of the international and internal migrant households have independent income (BDT 9,500). More elderlies (44 percent) of non-migrant households have independent income (BDT 10,000). Nonetheless, in the case of both elderlies and siblings, mostly men had independent income, not women. One-third of the elderlies of international migrant households and one-fourth of internal and non-migrant households have their own bank accounts. Again it is mostly men who possess bank accounts. The following chapter concentrates on the social cost of migration on the elderly member of a household.

CHAPTER IV

SOCIAL COST OF MIGRATION: THE LEFT-BEHIND ELDERLIES

This chapter concentrates on the social costs of migration of male and female migrants on left behind elderly parents. It is divided into four sections. Section 1 locates the contribution of the elderlies in materialising the migration dream of the young adult members of the household. Section 2 highlights the social costs borne by the parents due to the migration of the adult member. Section 3 identifies the social benefits that have been accrued by the elderlies for investing in household members' migration. Section 4 probes into innovation that the families have made to adapt to the changed situation that arises due to the absence of the migrant member of the household.

4.1 Contribution in Fulfilling Migration Dream

Migration Decision: As seen in the literature review, contrary to the theory of migration decision as a rational choice of individuals, theories of new economics analysed migration decisions primarily as a household strategy aimed to diversify sources of family income or minimising household risks or insurance against income loss from traditional sources (Stark and Bloom 1985). This new analytical framework provides space for other members of the family in migration decision-making. In the context of South Asia, traditionally family resources are inheritance based. It is the parents, particularly the fathers, who have a major role in decision-making on important

family matters. This research demonstrates that although a large section of migrants develop their migration aspiration independently or through demonstration effects from relatives, neighbours, and friends in the majority of cases, parents have to agree to the decision and generate resources for financing it. Of course in some cases, it is the father or the elder brother who plays a major role in deciding which family member should migrate, when, and where.

Table 4.1.1 shows that 69 percent of the parents of international migrants have contributed financially to the migration of their son or daughter. On an average, parents of international migrants have raised BDT 3,47,600 for bearing the cost of migration. The cost of internal migration is low. Even then 21 percent of parents provided financial support to their internal migrant children. On average, they provided BDT 5,600 to support the migration plan of their children.

Table 4.1.1: Contribution of parents in financing migration by type and gender

Contribution	Parent of international migrant			Parent of internal migrant		
	FP	MP	Total	FP	MP	Total
Average	329387	368109	347619	5543	5751	5633
Minimum	1000	5000	1000	500	500	500
Maximum	970000	900000	970000	30000	30000	30000
No. of cases	599	533	1132	116	89	205
Total no. of cases	1013	624	1637	617	350	967
Percentage of total	59	85	69	19	25	21

Source: SDC and RMMRU Household Survey on Social Cost of Migration, 2022

Note: FP= Female Parent, MP= Male Parent

Migrant parents arranged the finance from different sources. These include own savings, land sale, sale of other assets, informal lending from relatives, and formal loan. The formal loan includes NGO loans, bank loans, and loans from local associations. 21 percent of the parents of international migrants arranged a part of the migration finance from or their own savings. 15 percent have disposed of their

land and another 9 percent have sold other assets. The social and family network of the parents has been a major source for managing finance. 36 percent of parents raised a section of the migration cost by taking loans from relatives. As high as 25 percent of the parents took formal loans in their names to support migration. Parents of internal migrants hardly took loans. They mostly managed the cost from their savings and support from relatives.

Table 4.1.2: Sources of managing finance by the parents by type of migration and gender

Sources of managing finance	Parent of international migrant (%)			Parent of internal migrant (%)		
	FP	MP	Total	FP	MP	Total
Personal savings	13.7	32.1	20.7	11.7	20.3	14.8
Land sale	10.3	22.6	15.0	.3	.9	.5
Selling other assets	7.4	11.5	9.0	1.1	1.1	1.1
Lending from relatives	33.4	39.6	35.8	5.3	2.9	4.4
Loan	21.4	30.4	24.9	1.3	1.1	1.2
Others	1.5	3.8	2.4	.6	.9	.7
Total no. of cases	1012	624	1636	618	350	968

Source: SDC and RMMRU Household Survey on Social Cost of Migration, 2022

Note: Each cell represents percentage of the total number of responses

The contribution of parents in supporting the migration of their children accords them a stake in the latter's migration outcome. They are the ones who are largely accountable for repayment of loans taken for financing migration. Therefore, the parents have to convince other children that financing migration would lead to the expansion of family assets and resources that will eventually benefit other members as well.

In Bangladesh, family assets are generally recorded in the name of male members. Therefore, the popular belief is that fathers are able to financially contribute to migration and other efforts of their children and the mothers are not. Table 4.1.1 shows that more than half the female parents financially contributed to sons'/daughters'

international migration. In case of male parents, it is as high as 85 percent. The gap between male and female parents' contribution in migration finance is much less in case of internal migration.

4.2 Social Cost

In the literature review (Chapter 1), it has been seen that along with the burden of economic cost of children's migration, the parents also incur various forms of social costs. This section highlights the social costs experienced by the elderlies. Before engaging into a discussion on social costs it is important to understand the physical state of the elderlies.

Table 4.2.1: Physical state of the elderly by migration type and gender

Physical state	Parent of inter-national migrant (%)			Parent of internal migrant (%)			Parent of non-migrant HH (%)		
	FP	MP	Total	FP	MP	Total	FP	MP	Total
Healthy and participates in family work/ decision making	79.5	86.5	82.1	78.0	87.4	81.4	77.9	83.9	80.7
Not in good health but take part in HH work	14.1	4.8	10.5	17.2	7.4	13.7	14.8	12.2	13.6
Bedridden, need others assistance	2.6	3.2	2.8	1.5	1.4	1.5	4.7	2.3	3.6
Others	4.0	5.5	4.5	3.3	3.7	3.4	2.6	1.5	2.1
Total no. of cases	1010	622	1632	615	349	964	467	393	860

Source: SDC and RMMRU Household Survey on Social Cost of Migration, 2022

In Chapter 3 (table 3.3.1) it was seen that more than 70 percent of the elderlies are below 64 years of age and around 2 percent of them are above 84 years of age. Table 4.2.1 specifically provides information on the physical state of male and female elderlies. Around 80 percent of the elderlies in all three types of households are in good health. Another 12 percent are not in good health but take part in different household activities. 2 percent of the elderlies of internal migrant households, 3 percent of international, and 4 percent of non-migrant

households are incapacitated. They are bedridden and require constant care. This entails that the social cost of migration will vary on the basis of physical ability and age.

Self-identification of Social Cost by the Elderlies: The elderly men and women of migrant households identified different types of social costs that they have to endure. These are additional responsibilities of household work, child care, elderly care, care of household members with a disability and lack of time for leisure; lack of human resources to accompany the sick for medical treatment, anxiety, loneliness, lack of personal safety, and insecurity of family assets; early marriage, death in family and dispute in the family.

Anxiety: 56 percent of the elderlies of international migrant households and 46 percent of the elderlies of internal households go through different types of anxiety. However, the nature of such anxiety varies on the basis of the type of migration. Parents of international migrants who have shouldered extra responsibility to secure loans are anxious when they are not able to repay installments. Parents of those who migrated recently suffer mentally about whether their son/daughter will be able to get a decent job, whether they will be able to send remittances so that they can repay the loan, and also whether the income from migration would compensate the income that his or her offspring earned when he or she was in Bangladesh.

Aminul Haque (69) is from Chapainawabganj. His 32-year-old son Mojid has been working in Oman for the last 5 years. Everything worked smoothly for the initial few years for his son. However, subsequently, he got involved with a wrong crowd and became addicted to gambling. Mojid was arrested and jailed. During that period Aminul sent BDT 30,000 to cover his expenses. His son had to return home after his visa expired. Instead of pursuing any work he began looking for a fresh visa to go to Oman again. During this period the family survived on Mojid's wife's income from tailoring. In another case, Morjina's (Goalondo, Rajbari) son has been working in Kuwait for the last 7 years. Everything was fine for the first 3

years. He came home, got married, and again went back to Kuwait to join his work. He was also jailed because of his visa status and served his sentence. Subsequently, he has been suffering from vision problems. Morjina is worried that anytime her son would be sent back home.

Table 4.2.2: Anxiety, reverse remittance, personal safety, safety of assets by migration type and gender

Sources	Parent of international migrant (%)			Parent of internal migrant (%)		
	FP	MP	Total	FP	MP	Total
Anxiety	59.9	48.9	55.7	52.0	34.0	45.5
Lack of personal safety of female adult	6.0	2.7	4.8	7.3	4.6	6.3
Reverse remittance	12.0	12.0	12.0	6.2	5.4	5.9
Insecurity of family assets	4.3	4.5	4.4	3.6	4.0	3.7
Drug addiction	.4	.6	.5	1.0	.6	.8
Total no. of cases	1012	624	1636	618	350	968

Source: SDC and RMMRU Household Survey on Social Cost of Migration, 2022

Note: Each cell represents percentage of the total number of responses

A few parents had the experience of sending money to their offspring abroad, as the latter were not able to find work for several months and have been facing severe hardships, including hunger (4.2.2). As high as 12 percent of the elderlies of international migrant households send money to their offspring from Bangladesh. Parents of internal migrants also send money to their offspring. Salam, a father of an internal migrant, had just received news of his son's workplace injury in a brickfield. Ariful, father of an internal migrant, worries about his son's ill temper. The other day he had to send money to his son as he got injured and was hospitalised after a brawl with his fellow workers.

Shamima Begum of Raipara village of Dhaka district is 70 years old. She has two sons. One died a couple of years ago. Her other son has been living in the USA for 12 years. She has no one else

in the house. Day in and day out she completes all her household chores alone. What worries her the most is when she dies, her only surviving son may not be here to shoulder her coffin to the grave. She is also concerned that as there is no one else to inform her son, for months he may not be knowing that his mother had passed away. Internal migrants can come to the village at any time if their work permits. Therefore, many of the above problems are not faced by internal migrant households.

Insecurity: 4 percent of the elderly members of both international and internal migrant households identify insecurity of property in the absence of a male member. 5 percent of the elderlies of international migrant households and 6 percent of internal households worry about the safety of their daughter/daughter-in-laws. 1 percent of them are worried about drug addiction of younger members of the family left-behind.

In the absence of the migrant son, fear of theft, is another source of insecurity. Rahima's husband passed away three years ago. She has sent her son abroad to maintain the household expenditure. She stays with her two daughters who have crossed puberty. She has to be very careful about them. In the recent past, someone has stolen 2 *mon* of paddy from her store. The absence of any male member in the household have made them extremely vulnerable after the incident.

Peyara Begum's son is an internal migrant to Dhaka City for the last 7 years. 4 years ago he got married and his wife was residing with Peyara in Chapai Nawabganj. After a couple of years of marriage, her son started behaving differently. While staying separately from the family her son developed another relationship in Dhaka and eventually divorced his wife. His wife went back to her parental home leaving Peyara alone to perform all the household chores. Her son no longer communicates with Peyara. With her failing health she is worried about how she is going to manage all her expenses from now on.

Loneliness: One of the most important social costs for the elderly members of a household is loneliness. 62 percent of the elderlies of international migrant households have felt lonely in the absence of the migrant member. In the case of internal migrant households, 53 percent of the elderlies have been experiencing loneliness. Loneliness is also common for elderlies of non-migrant households. Although all household members are present in the non-migrant households or the children of the elderlies live close by, 39 percent of them experience loneliness in different phases of their lives. Irrespective of the fact that the elderly belongs to a migrant or non-migrant household he/she suffers from loneliness and has to put up with ageing. However, such feeling of loneliness is endured more by elderlies among international migrant households.

Sometimes other members of the household communicate less with the elderlies. Some of the day-to-day matters are discussed among younger members of the household. Though the elderlies are eager to participate in the problems that the family may encounter, they are not considered a stakeholder in such matters. In some cases, other family members feel that they do not want to unnecessarily burden the elderlies with stress. This creates a feeling of alienation among the elderlies. Among the two types, the elderlies of international migrant households experience loneliness the most.

Table 4.2.3: Experience of loneliness by type of migration and gender

Feeling	Parent of international migrant (%)			Parent of internal migrant (%)			Parent of non-migrant HH (%)		
	FP	MP	Total	FP	MP	Total	FP	MP	Total
Loneliness	1010 (66.8)	624 (52.9)	1634 (61.5)	618 (55.3)	348 (48.3)	966 (52.8)	467 (43.7)	393 (34.1)	860 (39.3)

Source: SDC and RMMRU Household Survey on Social Cost of Migration, 2022

Ranu Begum (55) resides in Bormi *Union* of Sreepur, Gazipur. For the last 15 years, her son has been residing in Malaysia. A few years ago, Ranu Begum's husband got married again and lives with his second wife. Ranu Begum feels that if her son was here, her husband

would not dare marry again. Nonetheless, her husband gave Ranu some land where she had been staying for a while. Unfortunately, her other son sold the land for doing business. Now she is homeless. Her other son who is residing in Malaysia wanted to stop his brother from selling the property but failed to do so for being abroad.

There exists a gendered difference with respect to experiencing loneliness. In all three types of households it is the mothers or other female elderlies who suffered from loneliness more compared to the fathers. Experience of loneliness is 8-14 percent higher in the case of female elderlies compared to the male elderlies in all three types of households: international, internal, and non-migrant. For obvious reasons, the difference is the highest among the international migrant households. One of the reasons assigned by the elderly females is that they stay home most of the time, whereas, male elderly members can go out and interact with others.

Extra Work Load: 30 percent of elderlies of international migrant households and 32 percent of the elderlies of internal migrant households have shouldered additional home management responsibility due to the migration of their adult household member. In a number of cases in both types of families, the sole responsibility of maintaining the household is on the shoulders of the elderlies.

Table 4.2.4: Increased household chores by type of migration type and gender

Household chores	Parent of international migrant (%)			Parent of internal migrant (%)		
	FP	MP	Total	FP	MP	Total
Additional responsibility of household work	21.7	43.1	29.9	23.1	46.9	31.7
Less time for rest	20.7	20.5	20.6	23.1	28.0	24.9
Total no. of cases	1012	624	1636	618	350	968

Source: SDC and RMMRU Household Survey on Social Cost of Migration, 2022

Note: Each cell represents percentage of the total number of responses

For elderly persons, rest is an important part of maintaining good health. Table 4.2.3 shows that 21 percent of the elderlies of international migrant households and 25 percent of that of internal migrant households have compromised their rest time. The inability to take rest due to additional workload by the elderlies of migrant households is again gendered. Interestingly a large section of grandmothers generally did not think that the increase in workload has affected their health due to lack of adequate rest. On the contrary, some even thought the responsibility was normal and did not consider it as an additional task. In contrast, the fathers of migrants could clearly identify workload such as grocery shopping, agricultural work in the field, etc. as additional work.

Additional Role as Child Carer: 26 percent of the parents of international migrant households and 16 percent of the parents of internal migrant households bear some responsibility for nurturing their grandchildren (table 4.2.5). The responsibility varies on the basis of the gender of the parent. Female elderlies of international migrant households take care of their food intake, study, and games (29 percent), whereas male elderlies are more involved in accompanying young children to school and different festivals, payment of private tutors, ensuring ethical and religious upbringing (20 percent). Surjobanu (50) is from Dhalla *Union* of Manikganj District. She and her 13-year-old grandson constitute their household unit. Her only son and daughter-in-law reside abroad for work. The grandson Naim and Shurjobanu have been managing their household more or less efficiently. However, she thinks that economic and social reality has compromised Naim's childhood and made him behave like an adult.

Some of the grandparents noted that looking after the young ones is not necessarily stressful. However, those who have adolescent grandchildren face difficulty. Belly Akter (54) is from Gazirtek *Union* of Charbhodrason *Upazila* of Faridpur. Her family has gone through multiple stresses. Her homestead got eroded away by the river. All of a sudden her husband became sick. Her elder daughter Afsana Khatun was staying with them along with her son when her

husband abandoned her. Afsana subsequently migrated to Saudi Arabia. For the last 6 years, the family of three is maintained by Afsana's remittance. Belly Akter feels that she or her husband do not have the physical or psychological strength to address the challenges that their growing-age grandson throws at them. She wishes that her daughter Afsana was in the village to look after her son.

Unlike Siriwardhana et al, (2013) Démurger (2015) a majority of the elderlies of the interviewed families did not perceive taking care of grandchildren as a burden. Rather some mentioned that they regard it as their contribution to the fulfillment of the migration dream of their households. Elderlies of households that do not have an extra hand to take care of members with disability do perceive it as a work load.

Care for Members with Disability: Around 2 percent of households have persons with disability. In these households, the elderlies have been shouldering major responsibilities of caring for the disabled persons (table 4.2.5).

Table 4.2.5: Additional responsibility as care giver by type of migration and gender

Additional responsibility	Parent of international migrant (%)			Parent of internal migrant (%)		
	FP	MP	Total	FP	MP	Total
Child care	29.3	20.0	25.8	18.3	12.9	16.3
Care of HH members with disability	2.1	1.1	1.7	1.9	2.3	2.1
Elderly care	2.6	3.2	2.8	1.5	1.4	1.5
lack of human resource to accompany for medical treatment	14.9	17.9	16.1	16.5	18.9	17.4
Total no. of cases	1012	624	1636	618	350	968

Source: SDC and RMMRU Household Survey on Social Cost of Migration, 2022

Note: Each cell represents percentage of the total number of responses

Elderly Care: 3 percent of the elderly members of the international migrant households and 2 percent of the internal migrant households

are bedridden (table 4.2.5). They require assistance with food intake, bath, and other day-to-day chores. In non-migrant households, all the family members are present and they jointly take care of their elderlies. In both international and internal migrant households, one or more members are absent. Day to day care-work of these groups of elderlies suffer more in the absence of adult migrant family members. Another 11 percent of the elderlies of international migrant households, and 14 percent of the elderlies of internal migrant households are not bedridden but not in good health. Participation in different household activities is sometimes strenuous for them (table 4.2.1).

Medical treatment: Table 4.2.5 shows that in 16 percent of the international migrant households and 17 percent of internal migrant households, there is a scarcity of human resource for taking the elderlies for treatment.

Elderlies also expressed their concern about ill-treatment by other household members. Hasina Begum (60) from Manikganj needs assistance to maintain their day-to-day life. Hasina herself was a migrant for a long time. It is her income that brought the household into a stable condition. She returned a few years ago. Now her younger son is working in Malaysia. He regularly sends money. Her elder son is a farmer. He and his wife handle the remittance. Hasina complained that her daughter-in-law does not take care of her. She even deprives Hasina of a regular meal. She suffers from severe diabetes and blood pressure. Every day she requires BDT 100 worth of medicine. Although her son sends money from Malaysia for her medicine, her daughter in law expressed her displeasure about such expenses.

Marriage and Death in Family: Weddings of siblings are very special in Bangladeshi households. 2 percent of parents of international migrant households and 3 percent of internal migrant households expressed their regret though their migrant son/daughter has provided financial support for the wedding they could not attend it. International migrant families face demand for higher amounts of dowry for their daughters' wedding.

7 percent of the migrant households both international and internal experienced death in the family in the absence of the migrant member. Rahim Mia reflected that there was a death in the family, but his daughter who is working abroad could not take part in the final rituals. Families felt that they could have coped better if the absentee migrant was with them.

Table 4.2.6: Early marriage and death by migration type and gender

Social cost	Parent of international migrant (%)			Parent of internal migrant (%)		
	FP	MP	Total	FP	MP	Total
Marriage	1.9	2.7	2.2	3.1	2.3	2.8
Death in family	8.2	4.2	6.7	8.1	4.0	6.6
Others	2.4	1.6	2.1	1.1	1.7	1.3
Total no. of cases	1012	624	1636	618	350	968

Source: SDC and RMMRU Household Survey on Social Cost of Migration, 2022

Note: Each cell represents percentage of the total number of responses

Age, physical ability, and the presence of other children at the homestead have some correlation with loneliness. Those who feel lonely are relatively older compared to those who do not. Again those who are not physically fit experience loneliness more. Elderlies who live with other children are less lonely compared to those who live on their own.

4.3 Social Gains from Migration

While bearing the social costs, the elderlies also gain from the participation of household members in migration. The ability to live a better life, experience higher social status, ability to perform greater social responsibility, perform necessary rituals for the wedding of family members, have free time to practice religion, and ability to perform *hajj* are some of the social gains that are identified by the elderlies of migrant households.

Living a Better Life: Elderly members of international and internal migrant households defined ‘better life’ as the ability to eat better

and healthy food, increased space in the homestead, ability to attend *hajj*, ability to ensure medical treatment as well as better educational opportunity for children. 72 percent of the elderlies of international migrant households and 62 percent of the elderlies of internal migrant households opined that compared to the pre-migration situation they are enjoying a better life. More than 75 percent of both groups of the elderlies can attain better treatment now. 36 percent of the international and 27 percent of the internal migrant households have already extended their homestead or built new homesteads.

Table 4.3.1: Fulfillment of the dream of a better life through migration by type and gender

Human development gains	Parent of international migrant (%)			Parent of internal migrant (%)		
	FP	MP	Total	FP	MP	Total
Living a better life	73.0	70.2	71.9	62.8	65.4	63.7
Can avail medical treatment	80.5	75.8	78.7	74.9	75.1	75.0
Increased the number of room in the house	34.4	39.6	36.4	25.2	30.0	27.0
Total no. of cases	1012	624	1636	618	350	968

Source: SDC and RMMRU Household Survey on Social Cost of Migration, 2022

Note: Each cell represents percentage of the total number of responses

Table 4.3.2: Social gains from migration by type and gender

Social gains	Parent of international migrant (%)			Parent of internal migrant (%)		
	FP	MP	Total	FP	MP	Total
Increased social status	56.9	63.6	59.5	48.4	52.0	49.7
Increased social responsibility	16.3	27.4	20.5	12.3	19.1	14.8
Get leisure	24.9	27.2	25.8	24.8	17.4	22.1
Free time to practice religion	41.0	42.9	41.7	37.7	40.0	38.5
Performed <i>hajj</i> with remittance	3.0	3.5	3.2	.5	.6	.5
Total no. of cases	1012	624	1636	618	350	968

Source: SDC and RMMRU Household Survey on Social Cost of Migration, 2022

Note: Each cell represents percentage of the total number of responses

Experiencing Higher Social Status: 64 percent of the elderlies of international migrant households and 50 percent of the elderlies of internal migrant households claimed that their social status has increased due to the migration of their children. Of course, a large number of the elderlies do not feel the same way. Social status is also linked with the ability to perform social responsibility. 27 percent of the elderlies of international migrants and 15 percent of the internal migrant household mentioned various types of social responsibilities that they take on their shoulders. These include participation in community work during disasters, festivals, mosque, temple, or school management committees, etc.

In the earlier section on the social cost of migration, it was seen that a section of elderlies do not have time for leisure as they have to take part in additional household chores or child-rearing. For another section of elderlies, the migration of their family members created an opportunity to enjoy free time. 26 percent of the elderlies of international migrant households and 22 percent of the elderlies of internal migrant households now enjoy leisure time. This allows them to participate in different social activities.

Ability to Practice Religion: 42 and 39 percent of the elderlies from international and internal migrant households respectively reported having more free time to practice religion. Because of income from outside sources (remittance), the need for elderlies' labour in household chores gets reduced. *Hajj* is a very important religious ritual for the Muslims. 3 percent of elderlies of international migrant households and 1 percent of elderlies of internal migrant households have performed *hajj* with the remittances sent by their migrant children.

Rituals of Wedding of Family Member: The marriage of a family member is a big ritual that is celebrated by families with their friends and relatives. Weddings took place in 12 percent of international and 7 percent of internal migrant households. During weddings or *Eid*, or other festivals, migrants tend to send higher

amounts of remittances. In such cases, the majority of the wedding expenditure was borne from the remittances. Elderlies of 10 percent of international and 4 percent of internal migrant households noted that their migrant household status contributed to securing better marriage arrangements.

Table 4.3.3: Better marital opportunities in migrant households by gender

Marriage	Parent of international migrant (%)			Parent of internal migrant (%)		
	FP	MP	Total	FP	MP	Total
Supported wedding ceremonies of other HH members	12.3	12.2	12.2	6.6	6.3	6.5
Upward social mobility through marriage	9.8	10.7	10.1	3.7	4.3	3.9
Total no. of cases	1012	624	1636	618	350	968

Source: SDC and RMMRU Household Survey on Social Cost of Migration, 2022

Note: Each cell represents percentage of the total number of responses

Treatment of the elderlies in migrant or non-migrant households differs on the basis of the ability to earn independent income. Elderlies of 27 percent of international migrant households and 31 percent of internal migrant households have their own independent sources of income.

It is natural that the percentage of elderlies having an independent income will be higher in the case of non-migrant households. 44 percent of elderlies of non-migrant households have their own income. The capability of earning income is very much gendered. In the case of international migrant households, 57 percent of male elderlies have their own income whereas only 8 percent of the female elderlies have some income of their own. In the case of internal migrants, the gendered difference is even higher. 67 percent of the male elderlies have some income whereas female elderlies having income constituted only 11 percent of the interviewees. The number of male elderlies in non-migrant households compared to female elderlies with income is 64 percent higher.

Table 4.3.4: Percentage of elderlies who have their own income by migration type and gender

Income	Parent of international migrant (%)			Parent of internal migrant (%)			Parent of non-migrant HH (%)		
	FP	MP	Total	FP	MP	Total	FP	MP	Total
Own income of elderlies	1011 (7.7)	623 (57.0)	1634 (26.5)	617 (10.9)	350 (66.9)	967 (31.1)	465 (14.0)	393 (78.4)	858 (43.5)

Source: SDC and RMMRU Household Survey on Social Cost of Migration, 2022

Treatment of Elderlies: Table 4.3.5 shows the health expenditure pattern of elderlies in migrant and non-migrant households over the last year. It is the international migrant households who spent the most on healthcare for the parents and other elderlies. On average these households spent BDT 28,800 of treatment. The lowest spending has been recorded in the case of internal migrant households. Their spending has been 50 percent lower than international migrant households. Expenditure in the treatment of non-migrant households is also lower compared to international migrant households, though much closer (14 percent less).

Table 4.3.5: Cost of treatment of elderlies borne by remittance by migration type and gender

Expense for the treatment of elderly person	Parent of international migrant			Parent of internal migrant			Parent of non-migrant HH		
	FP	MP	Total	FP	MP	Total	FP	MP	Total
Mean	28189	29806	28784	15042	13154	14428	25272	24081	24751
Minimum	300	500	300	200	500	200	500	100	100
Maximum	700000	269000	700000	120000	120000	120000	322000	400000	400000
Total no. of cases	1012	624	1636	618	350	968	467	392	859

Source: SDC and RMMRU Household Survey on Social Cost of Migration, 2022

Mosammat Shirin Akter (51) is from Koya Union of Kushtia. For the last 13 years, her son Shihab has been a migrant to Singapore. Every month he sends BDT 30,000 to the family. It is because of him, her other son did not have to join work and was able to study at Rajshahi University. A year before, her husband was diagnosed

with cancer. Her migrant son is bearing the full cost of his treatment. After hearing the news, he also came from Singapore last year to personally oversee his father's treatment. Shirin thinks if her son was not working in Singapore, her husband would have been dead by now.

It will be interesting to know if the earning capacity of the elderlies contributes to accessing healthcare. Table 4.3.6 shows that those elderlies who had their own income had better access to treatment compared to those who did not have independent sources of income. Migrants are more likely to send remittance for the treatment of elderlies when the elderlies do not have any other income source.

Table 4.3.6: Access to remittance by independent income, migration type, and gender

Access to remittance for treatment	Elderly with independent income (%)			Elderly without independent income (%)		
	FP	MP	Total	FP	MP	Total
International	6.2	52.7	23.3	93.8	47.3	76.7
Internal	10.8	62.9	27.8	89.2	37.1	72.2

Source: SDC and RMMRU Household Survey on Social Cost of Migration, 2022

4.4 Agency in Overcoming Social Cost

In the previous section, it was seen that the elderlies of migrant and non-migrant households face different types of social costs due to the migration of adult son/daughters. Some of the social costs are feeling of loneliness, anxiety, insecurity, extra family responsibility, lack of leisure, etc. An earlier study (Siddiqui and Ansar, 2020) on the social costs of left-behind children, husbands, and wives shows that the migrants and their left-behind family members develop their own mechanisms to cope with the situation. Their capacity to challenge and remake their social order is termed an agency (Siddiqui and Ansar, 2020: 76). The majority of the elderlies also have adjusted and in some cases developed resilience by adopting different measures to the changes which have fallen upon them due to the migration of their sons/daughters. In the following paragraph,

the methods applied by the elderlies in adjusting to the absence of their adult children are presented.

Earlier, table 4.2.7 shows that 62 percent of the elderlies of international migrant households and 59 percent of the elderlies of internal migrant households have reported feeling lonely because of the absence of their migrant adult child. 56 and 46 percent respectively felt mentally weak (table 4.2.2).

The mechanisms that the elderlies have employed to address their loneliness are multi-prone. 82 percent of the parents of international migrants and 81 percent of the parents of internal migrants are able-bodied. The rest are either bedridden or have some health issues (table 4.2.6). Elderlies of around 35 percent of the international and 31 percent of the internal migrant households keep themselves busy with work. Men occupy themselves with agricultural work, business and household work. Women mostly perform household chores. Household works are of course different for male and female elderlies. Rehana Akter (62) of Faridpur lives on her own. She has the fear that she would not be able to see her son before she dies. Earlier she used to work as a tailor. Now her eyes do not permit it. Moreover, she does not require to earn as her son regularly sends money. In order to avoid all sorts of bad thoughts she has taken a new profession. Now she teaches Quran to all the children of the village.

51 percent of the parents of international migrants and 46 percent of the parents of internal migrants talk to their migrant children over the phone. They also try to have regular conversations with their other children, relatives, and neighbours (27% international and 24% internal). 26 percent of the international and 16 percent of the internal migrants' parents spend time with their grandchildren. Some of them accompany them to school and some others keep an eye on if they are studying or not. A small section of the elderlies particularly men spend time on social activities outside the home. 5 to 6 percent of both categories of elderlies take part in local mediation, local politics, help organise social ceremonies of others,

accompany sick neighbours to doctors, etc. A few of them pass time watching television.

Table 4.4.1: Methods of dealing with loneliness by migration type and gender

Activity	Parent of international migrant (%)			Parent of internal migrant (%)		
	FP	MP	Total	FP	MP	Total
Use work as therapy	39.7	27.9	35.2	32.5	28.0	30.9
Spending time with grandchildren	29.3	20.0	25.8	18.3	12.9	16.3
Regular communication with the migrant	54.9	45.7	51.4	48.4	42.0	46.1
Passing time with HH members, relatives and neighbours	27.9	25.5	27.0	28.2	15.1	23.5
Take part in mediation, Wedding, election campaign, help neighbour's etc.	4.4	7.3	5.5	4.7	5.2	4.8
Pray for the wellbeing of migrant son	4.8	5.5	5.0	5.3	2.9	4.5
Stay alone and worry	12.3	12.2	12.2	6.6	6.3	6.5
Total no. of cases	1012	624	1636	618	350	968

Source: SDC and RMMRU Household Survey on Social Cost of Migration, 2022

Note: Each cell represents percentage of the total number of responses

Around 5 percent of the elderlies resort to prayers. Ashraf Uddin (58) is a farmer from Kumarkhali *Upazila* of Faridpur. His son migrated to Malaysia quite some time ago. In Malaysia, he was infected with COVID-19 and faced near death situation. Praying 5 times a day became Ashraf Uddin's major refuge since then. He feels that his son will remain well if he continues his prayers.

Gender differences are pronounced in developing agency. Adjustment mechanisms of physically fit and bedridden males and females also vary. Women spend more time cooking, watching TV, visiting next-door neighbours, etc. Left behind elderly men participate in agricultural work, running businesses, participating in election campaigns and local mediation, etc.

Use of Technology in Coping: Before the mass use of mobile phone became operational, regular communication between the migrant and their family members was rare. However, when mobile and other communication media became easily accessible one to one communication increased manifold. Regular communication with elderlies and the migrant member became an important avenue for sharing love, affection, and exchange of advice.

Table 4.4.2: Personal mobile phone and level of communication with migrants by type and gender

Ownership	Parent of international migrant (%)			Parent of internal migrant (%)		
	FP	MP	Total	FP	MP	Total
Have personal mobile	62.0	76.0	67.3	65.5	80.3	70.9
Frequency of talking						
Almost daily	67.6	55.1	62.8	71.5	61.1	67.8
Once a week	27.4	36.7	30.9	25.4	33.7	28.4
Once a month	3.1	5.6	4.1	2.3	3.7	2.8
Once every 3 month	0.6	1.1	0.8	0.2	0.3	0.2
Communication lost	1.4	1.5	1.4	0.6	1.1	0.8
Total no. of cases	1005	621	1626	618	350	968

Source: SDC and RMMRU Household Survey on Social Cost of Migration, 2022

Note: Each cell represents percentage of the total number of responses'

Table 4.4.2 shows that more than 67 percent of the parents of both categories have personal mobile phones. There has been direct communication with the migrant on a regular basis. Even those who did not have mobile phones talked with their migrant household member by accessing the devices of other family members. As high as 81 percent of the elderlies of international migrant households talk with their migrant member regularly. 63 percent of the elderlies of international and 68 percent of internal migrant households talk almost daily. Elderlies of 31 percent of the international and 28 percent of the internal migrant households talk at least once a week and 1 percent of households lost communication with the migrants.

Table 4.4.3: Mode of communication by migration type and gender

Type	Parent of international migrant (%)			Parent of internal migrant (%)		
	FP	MP	Total	FP	MP	Total
Mobile	78.7	85.1	81.1	98.9	98.9	98.9
IMO	67.9	59.1	64.5	15.2	10.0	13.3
WhatsApp	6.0	5.1	5.7	3.2	2.6	3.0
Viber	.2	0.0	.1	0.0	.3	.1
Facebook	.5	.3	.4	0.0	.9	.3
Messenger	2.2	2.9	2.4	1.9	.9	1.5
Others	.3	.3	.3	0.0	.3	.1
Total no. of cases	1012	624	1636	618	350	968

Source: SDC and RMMRU Household Survey on Social Cost of Migration, 2022

Note: Each cell represents percentage of the total number of responses

Table 4.4.3 shows that the use of IMO was more common in the case of international households. 65 percent of them use IMO. Only 13 percent of the elderlies of internal migrant households used IMO. Around 6 percent of international and 3 percent of internal migrant households used WhatsApp. Use of Messenger was very low. Only 2 percent of both international and internal migrant households use it. Members of internal migrant households mostly use regular mobile.

Chapter Conclusions

This chapter shows that three-fourths of the elderlies of international migrant households have contributed financially to the migration of their offspring. One-fifth of the elderlies of internal migrant households as well supported their offspring with cash. In managing the sources of finance the elderlies use their social network.

Social costs experienced by the elderlies are loneliness, anxiety, insecurity, reverse remittance, additional responsibility, lack of rest, the dispute in the family, looking after disabled household members and elderlies alone, etc. Elderlies' capacity to adjust varies on the basis of physical fitness, gender, and access to independent income.

Those who are physically unfit, incapable of moving on their own and need assistance, unable to maintain their independent homestead miss their adult migrant member differently than those who are physically fit and able to work and have their independent income.

While bearing social costs the elderlies also made social gains out of the migration of his/her offspring. Living a better life, availing better medical treatment, increasing social status, renovating homes are some of the important social gains. The spare time to practice religious duty and improved scope of marriage of family members to upper social echelon have been identified as major gains by the elderlies. A section of the elderlies have developed their own agency to minimise the social cost and maximize the social gains. Keeping themselves busy with household or social work, regular communication with migrant offspring and other offspring who stay in the country are the two most important ways of expression of agency of the elderlies.

CHAPTER V

SOCIAL COST OF MIGRATION: THE LEFT-BEHIND SIBLINGS

The previous chapter has concentrated on the contribution and the impact of migration on the elderly members of the household. This chapter explores the same on the siblings of migrants. First, it probes into the contribution of the siblings in materialising the migration dream of their brothers and sisters or for that matter, of their households. Section 2 investigates the social costs borne by the siblings due to the migration of their brothers or sisters. Siblings also personally as well as a member of the household make both social and economic gains. Section 3, therefore, has attempted to identify those gains. Section 4 highlights innovative approaches if any, undertaken by the siblings to adapt to the void that the absence of migrants create in their lives. It also looks into situations where siblings or their households have failed to manage in the absence of their migrant siblings.

5.1 Contribution in Fulfilling Household Migration Dream

Migration Decision and Finance: Three types of motivation for migration have been identified in this research. These are, the migrants themselves were deeply interested to migrate; the parents of the migrants were interested to send one or more of the family members abroad for various reasons; and other family members

mostly elder brothers or sisters of the migrant who have been the principal decision-maker in the family (both in presence or absence of the father) were interested to send their brother or sister abroad for diverse reasons.

Table 5.1.1: Contribution of siblings in financing migration by type and gender

Contribution	Sibling of international migrant			Sibling of internal migrant		
	FS	MS	Total	FS	MS	Total
Mean	111429	145413	139097	8667	8877	8852
Minimum	5000	5000	5000	1000	300	300
Maximum	600000	650000	650000	20000	40000	40000
Valid N	21	92	113	3	22	25
Count	377	801	1178	261	463	724
Percentage of total	5.6	11.5	9.6	1.1	4.8	3.5

Source: SDC and RMMRU Household Survey on Social Cost of Migration, 2022

Note: FS= Female Sibling, MS= Male Sibling

Table 5.1.1 shows that in 10 percent of cases of international migrant households and 4 percent of cases of internal migrant households it is the siblings who have supported the migrants financially. They have supported mainly for diversification of sources of household income or to distance him/her from local problems. In some instances, it was the elder brother who decided who, when, and with what resources would the family pursue the migration journey. Younger brothers have also played a role, particularly in convincing parents to allow their brother/sister to migrate. Riyad was saving to purchase a motorbike for years. When his elder brother was processing his migration there was shortage of funds. Riyad sacrificed his dream of owning a motorcycle and helped materialise his household's goal of sending his elder brother to Saudi Arabia by contributing his entire savings to match the shortfall in migration cost. It is generally assumed that mostly brothers provide financial assistance, however, this research found that sisters also made financial contributions. Of course, the percentage share of female siblings is half of those of

male siblings. 12 percent of the male siblings of the international and 5 percent of the internal migrants have contributed. 6 percent of the female siblings of international migrants and 1 percent of the internal migrants have made such a contribution. Tania from Brahmanbaria has been residing in her parental home when her husband deserted her. She sold most of her gold jewelry to send her younger brother abroad.

Table 5.1.2: Sources of finance managed by the siblings by type of migration and gender

Sources	Sibling of international migrant (%)			Sibling of internal migrant (%)		
	FS	MS	Total	FS	MS	Total
Personal savings	3.7	8.4	6.9	1.1	4.3	3.2
Land sale	.3	.7	.6	0.0	0.0	0.0
Selling other assets	1.3	.6	.8	0.0	.2	.1
Lending from relatives	1.1	2.9	2.3	.4	0.0	.1
Loan	.3	2.1	1.5	0.0	.2	.1
Total no. of cases	377	801	1178	261	463	724

Source: SDC and RMMRU Household Survey on Social Cost of Migration, 2022

Note: Each cell represents a percentage of the total number of responses

On average, these siblings of international migrants have managed BDT 1,39,000 for migration. The amount mobilised by the male siblings has been higher. Brothers have mobilised BDT 1,45,400 and sisters have arranged BDT 1,11,429. This means that female siblings also managed quite a significant sum for their siblings' migration costs. In financial terms, the contribution of female siblings is only 23 percent less than the contribution of the male siblings. In the case of internal migrants, around 5 percent of the brothers and only 1 percent of the sisters have financially contributed to fulfilling household/individuals migration dreams. On average, they supported BDT 8,800. The lower percentage of participation of the siblings in financing migration is due to the fact that the cost of transportation for the internal migrants is not that high and in a majority of cases they can manage that. Those who take extra money to survive in the

new urban locations until they find a job take assistance from parents or siblings.

Siblings of both international and internal migrants mainly have managed the funds from their personal savings. This is followed by lending from relatives. Salam is from Tangail. When Salam's father wished to send his younger brother Intas to Oman, all the members of the household tried to mobilise resources from different sources. At that time Salam was getting married. The money he received as dowry from his in-laws was used by his father in sending Intas abroad. The experience of siblings approaching formal loan-providing organisations is quite insignificant.

Along with financial contribution migrant siblings also have helped the migration process in many other ways. Siblings have taken part in finding a suitable *dalal*, negotiating the cost of migration, processing passport, etc. Some of them have provided mental support and necessary advice. Kakoli Akter of Bhagolpur village, Rajbari has been married to a business family of Chotovakla *union*. One of her husband's cousins is involved in sending people abroad. She connected her family with this brother-in-law of hers and in the end her brother successfully migrated to the Maldives.

5.2 Social Cost

Studies in different countries have identified major social costs endured by siblings of migrants. These include increased demand for labour, adverse impact on education and missing out enjoyment of childhood in general. The other side of the social cost in case of the overall well-being of the migrant and the household could be a misuse of remittance, keeping bad company, and addiction to substances in the absence of migrant, etc. Insecurity of young female members of the household, and demand for a higher amount of dowry are other types of social costs that migrant siblings, mostly the unmarried ones, may have to bear. In the following, the social costs faced or perceived are discussed in detail.

Perceived Social Cost by the Siblings

Concerns: The siblings, both brothers and sisters, have identified various types of social costs that they have endured. Apathy to take up employment is deeply significant in this respect. As seen earlier, 70 percent of the siblings are students. They are not in the job market. As high as 7 percent of the rest of the siblings of both international and internal migrants are not pursuing any vocation even though they belong to working-age population. The reason is obvious. The expenditures of their households can be managed by the remittances sent by their migrant siblings.

Table 5.2.1: Perceived social cost by migration type and gender

Cost	Sibling of international migrant (%)			Sibling of internal migrant (%)		
	FS	MS	Total	FS	MS	Total
Not pursuing any profession	6.1	7.5	7.0	10.0	6.5	7.7
Family consumption got increased but no surplus	22.0	21.1	21.4	24.1	29.4	27.5
Total no. of cases	377	801	1178	261	463	724

Source: SDC and RMMRU Household Survey on Social Cost of Migration, 2022

Note: Each cell represents a percentage of the total number of responses

Extra Work Load: Siblings of 35 percent of international and 34 percent of the internal migrants have to participate in different types of household work which were earlier performed by the migrant siblings. For males, such household work includes day-to-day shopping, monthly groceries, payment of bills, taxes, keeping accounts of agricultural or business expenses, and tutoring young siblings. Female siblings take part in child care, cooking, cleaning, and tutoring of young brothers and sisters. It was noted earlier, on average 2 percent of households have children and elderlies with physical or mental disabilities. Taking care of the disabled members demands labour of all other family members. The migration of an adult male/female member has put extra pressure on the siblings left behind. Migration management itself can bring extra work for household members. Shopon is from Rangpur. His sister migrated to Saudi Arabia a year ago. She is having a difficult time in her

employer's house. Being subjected to employers' physical abuse his sister insists on the phone that the family brings her back home. For the last six months, Shopon is spending a substantial amount of time negotiating with the sub-agent to bring his sister back. It hampers his education and also makes him mentally weak. He is hesitant to share many things that he is hearing about his sister with anyone at home.

Table 5.2.2: Extra workload by migration type and gender

Social cost	Sibling of international migrant (%)			Sibling of internal migrant (%)		
	FS	MS	Total	FS	MS	Total
Had to take many family responsibility	14.9	44.4	35.0	10.7	46.9	33.8
Extra responsibility of looking after elderly/ disabled family member	.5	.9	.8	1.9	1.5	1.7
Hampering the study due to extra work	1.6	5.9	4.5	3.8	4.1	4.0
Do not get free time	12.2	18.2	16.3	9.2	21.2	16.9
Total no. of cases	377	801	1178	261	463	724

Source: SDC and RMMRU Household Survey on Social Cost of Migration, 2022

Note: Each cell represents a percentage of the total number of responses

Table 5.2.2 also shows that although workload of the siblings has increased not many of the siblings felt that it has hampered their studies. 5 percent of the international migrant and 4 percent of internal migrant's siblings complained that their education has suffered due to the migration of their elder siblings.

Free Time: In the earlier section on the impact of migration on elderlies it has been seen that more than 20 percent were overworked and did not find time to have fun. In the case of siblings also lack of free time is a concern. As high as 16 percent of the siblings of international migrants and 17 percent of the same of internal migrants felt burdened with work pressure due to the absence of their migrant siblings. Amina's brother lives in Malaysia. She is separated from her husband and has been staying in her parental home for the last 5 years. Her parental household used to be constituted of 3 members- herself,

her mother, and a physically disabled brother. Amina and her mother have been jointly looking after all the household work and assisting her physically disabled brother. As all of a sudden, her mother passed away she has to perform all household tasks ranging from shopping to cooking and also bathing to feeding her brother. Despite her increased contribution to managing the family instead of receiving neighbour's appreciation she is subjected to their taunt as a person who could not keep her husband and in-law happy. Neighbours also whisper that she is somehow stopping her migrant brother from getting married so that she does not have to share the decision-making authority in spending the remittances that are sent by her brother.

Table 5.2.3: Insecurity of the siblings by migration type and gender

Social cost	Sibling of international migrant (%)			Sibling of internal migrant (%)		
	FS	MS	Total	FS	MS	Total
Feel alone	53.1	50.4	51.3	53.3	41.9	46.0
Insecurity	8.2	9.2	8.9	14.2	8.6	10.6
Sister feels lack of safety for siblings migration	12.2	3.6	6.4	17.6	4.5	9.3
Early marriage	3.2	1.4	2.0	4.2	2.4	3.0
Death of family member	6.9	7.2	7.1	7.7	7.1	7.3
Total no. of cases	377	801	1178	261	463	724

Source: SDC and RMMRU Household Survey on Social Cost of Migration, 2022

Note: Each cell represents a percentage of the total number of responses

Loneliness: More than half of the siblings of international migrant households sometimes feel lonely due to their siblings' migration. Both male and female siblings experience emptiness in the absence of migrant siblings. They miss their sibling in their day-to-day enjoyment of fun and coping with family tragedies. It seems it is difficult to strike the right balance. Those who have too much work, do not have time to feel lonely, those who have less responsibility, feel lonely.

Insecurity of Adolescent Female Siblings: 6 percent of the international and 9 percent of the internal migrants' siblings who

are mostly adolescent sisters expressed feelings of insecurity in the absence of their brothers. Romisa is 14 years old. She lives with her mother and two other young brothers and sisters. Her father passed away a few years ago. She has to be extra cautious now while going to school or other places. Earlier her brother used to accompany her. Now in the absence of her brother, she worries about being subjected to eve teasing. She fears there is no one to protect her if she faces any danger. That is why her mother has restricted her movements.

Neelima (19) is from Manikganj. Her family belongs to the Sonatan Hindu religion. She has a brother and a sister. Her brother has gone to Gazipur and works in a garment factory for the last 12 years. Her father resides in Bhaluka town. Her mother worries about Neelima and her sister's safety as there is no male member in the household. She feels their vulnerability is higher as they belong to the minority community.

Early Marriage and Higher Dowry: Studies found (Siddiqui, 2001) when parents migrate, early marriage of boy or girl child increases. However, migration of siblings has not contributed to the increase of early marriage of their siblings. Only 2 percent of the international and 3 percent of the internal migrants' siblings have been married of before they reached 18 and 21 respectively. This means early marriage is not highly prevalent in case of these households. An interesting observation is made by Fatema, who is a sibling of an international migrant. Her parents are looking for wedding proposals for her. Parties interested are demanding a higher amount of dowry as her brother is working abroad. In one proposal, the parents of the would-be groom demanded that Fatema's brother takes their son abroad.

Death in Household: 7 percent of the migrant households both international and internal experienced death of relatives in the family in the absence of the migrant. The majority of the siblings of internal migrants could come back to the village to take part in family rituals. However, international migrants could not do so. Their absence was deeply felt by the siblings as well as other family

members. Not being able to share grief is one of the major social costs of international migration.

Insecurity of Assets and Conflict: Although not very common, a very important social cost of migration is related to the insecurity of land and other assets. 3 percent of international migrant households and 4 percent of internal migrant households experienced undue encroachment by neighbours or other powerful locals on their homestead or other types of land. In 2 percent of cases international migrant households migration financing has created conflict in the family. The siblings were not happy with their father for selling ancestral land for financing their brothers' migration. Shofiq's brother went to Oman for employment. He is there for the last two years. He did not get the job that was promised. He could hardly send any remittance and even sometimes the family has to send money to him. Siblings think that sending brothers by selling land was a bad investment for the family. Instead of adding new resources to the family coffer this has depleted their inheritance.

Table 5.2.4: Insecurity and conflict in migrant households by migration type and gender

Insecurity and Conflict	Sibling of international migrant (%)			Sibling of internal migrant (%)		
	FS	MS	Total	FS	MS	Total
Insecurity of family assets	3.2	2.7	2.9	4.6	4.3	4.4
Conflict amongst siblings	1.6	1.9	1.8	0.0	.2	.1
Reverse remittance	10.6	12.2	11.7	8.8	8.2	8.4
Total no. of cases	377	801	1178	261	463	724

Source: SDC and RMMRU Household Survey on Social Cost of Migration, 2022

Note: Each cell represents a percentage of the total number of responses

Generally, it is the migrants who send remittances to their households. However, there are also occasions in which migrant households also have to send money to the migrants, either when the latter are in financial crisis due to non-payment of wages or retrenchment, sickness, accident, etc. As high as 12 percent of the households of international migrants and 8 percent of the internal

migrant households have reported sending money to their migrant members. An interesting observation is that trend of sending reverse remittances is similar for both male and female siblings.

Shawon an internal migrant from Satkhira migrated for 6 months to work in a brickfield in Khulna. He got involved in a brawl that led to the breaking of the arm of another worker. Later, the family had to send money for bearing the cost of the treatment of the worker who was injured by Shawon. Sameena's brother went to Saudi Arabia a year ago. He has failed to obtain a job. He is in constant fear of police harassment. Sameena's father is continuously in touch with the sub-agent. The sub-agent claims to be trying to contact the recruiting agent but so far there has not been any progress. In the meantime, her family has borrowed money from a money lender to send to the migrant member.

5.3 Social Gains from Migration

Siblings also have highlighted that they experience substantive social gains from the migration of their family members. Important among those are access to nutritious food, quality education and medical treatment, increased social status, increased standard of living, and enhanced ability to finance family weddings that help marry off household members to good households. Psychological satisfaction is attained by siblings for being able to generate their own income by utilising remittances, availing the opportunity to migrate abroad, ability to fulfill material aspirations, etc.

Sociology of Gains from Migration: 77 percent of the siblings of international migrant households and 72 percent of the siblings of internal migrant households opined that compared to the pre-migration situation they are enjoying a better life. 86 percent of the siblings of international migrant households and 83 percent of the siblings of internal migrant households felt that their quality of food has been better than the pre-migration situation. More than 20 percent of the households belonging to both international and internal migrants have school-going children and siblings stated

that they could create better educational opportunities for those children. School/college-going children can be siblings of migrants. Bobita (20) is from Goalondo *Upazila* of Rajbari. She has two other sisters. Her elder sister Kushum works in Saudi Arabia. For the last 5 years Kushum maintains the household by sending remittances as her father has fallen sick and cannot work anymore. Bobita feels deeply for Kushum's sacrifice. Babita thinks that Kushum did not get married so that the rest of the family can make ends meet. She thinks, it is their gain at the cost of Kushum.

More than 60 percent of both groups of siblings can attain better medical treatment now. Chameli (25) is from Koya *Union* of Kushtia. She is visually impaired. Her family includes her father, mother and two siblings. Her sister has already been married off and her brother is working abroad. Chameli requires different types of medical assistance. Her brother's remittances finance her treatment. Every day her brother talks with her over the phone and that is Chameli's main recreation.

Table 5.3.1: Sociology of gains from migration by type and gender

Social gains	Sibling of international migrant (%)			Sibling of internal migrant (%)		
	FS	MS	Total	FS	MS	Total
Satisfaction of consuming quality food	83.8	86.5	85.7	78.9	86.0	83.4
Satisfaction for increased standard of living	77.2	76.3	76.6	66.3	74.5	71.5
Satisfaction for accessing quality education	23.8	25.8	24.7	25.2	24.3	23.7
Better access to medical treatment	69.5	63.9	65.7	59.0	64.1	62.3
Increased social status	52.0	64.4	60.4	54.0	59.8	57.7
decent wedding spending	10.4	9.0	9.5	4.7	5.5	5.2
Upward mobility of HH through marriage	7.5	4.6	5.5	3.1	2.2	2.5
Total no. of cases	377	801	1178	261	463	724

Source: SDC and RMMRU Household Survey on Social Cost of Migration, 2022

Note: Each cell represents a percentage of the total number of responses

60 percent of the siblings of international households and 58 percent of the siblings of internal migrant households have felt that because of the migration of their family members, their social status has increased. Wedding ceremonies are quite costly. 9 percent of the international and 5 percent of the internal migrant households had reported such family weddings. In the majority of cases, it is the remittances sent by the migrant members that allowed the families to arrange decent wedding ceremonies. 6 percent of the siblings of international and 3 percent of the internal migrant households have been successful in marrying members to households that are of socio-economic status higher than that of the migrant families. Having an international migrant member makes a household perceived as a stable one due to a steady inflow of remittances. Therefore, establishing a family relationship with such a household is viewed as lucrative for the other party.

Psychological Gains from Migration: Some of the social gains are psychological. Economic achievement, in other words, material well-being, of the migrant households has created subjective sense of wellbeing among the siblings. For example, 31 percent of the international and 24 percent of the internal migrant households have additional rooms in their homes or built new homes. Along with outcome such as better health, sanitation or hygiene, this has also generated a sense of achievement resulting in psychological satisfaction.

Almost all the siblings, be it male or female, have certain material desires. The most common desire of the male siblings is to own a motorbike. Some wanted to have a laptop and others wanted to have a good quality mobile phone, cycle, smart TV, crockery, cosmetics and other non-food items. These desires have been fulfilled for 48 percent and 31 percent siblings of international and internal migrant households respectively because of access to remittance.

Migration is a risk minimising strategy for many households. Generating household savings is one of the avenues in minimising such risk. 26 percent of the siblings of international and 17 percent

of the internal migrant households have derived satisfaction from the fact that their families have been successful in generating some savings for unforeseen misfortunes. A good number of younger siblings are very much interested to take up foreign employment. It is particularly pronounced for the male siblings of international migrant households. 25 percent of the male siblings would like to go abroad. They think their migration journey would be easier as their brothers or sisters would be able to secure work permits for them.

Table 5.3.1: Psychological gains from migration by type and gender

Psychological gains	Sibling of international migrant (%)			Sibling of internal migrant (%)		
	FS	MS	Total	FS	MS	Total
Created own income source with the money sent by the migrant siblings	1.6	11.0	8.0	1.9	8.6	6.2
Increased the number of room in the house	26.5	33.0	30.9	16.1	28.3	23.9
Able to fulfill various material hobbies	44.3	50.1	48.2	27.2	32.4	30.5
Increased family savings	22.3	27.3	25.7	17.2	17.3	17.3
Increased his/her opportunity to go to abroad	5.0	24.8	18.5	3.1	8.4	6.5
Total no. of cases	377	801	1178	261	463	724

Source: SDC and RMMRU Household Survey on Social Cost of Migration, 2022

Note: Each cell represents a percentage of the total number of responses

Some households do not see remittances to be utilised only in consumption. They want to invest a portion of the remittances in generating further income. In developing income sources families need to have working age members. In the case of young migrants particularly those unmarried, it is the siblings who have the potential to venture into enterprise development. A section of the siblings is interested to become entrepreneurs, however, they face all kinds of challenges. Only 8 percent siblings of international and 6 percent of internal migrant households have established their own income sources by utilising remittances. Their material achievement has created a strong sense of subjective well-being among them.

5.4 Agency in Overcoming Social Costs

The majority of the siblings have developed their own mechanism to deal with the changed situation created by the absence of the migrant. Like the elderlies, they also resort to multiple actions to deal with the psychological vacuum. Similarly, some of them innovatively share their time between household activities and education. While dealing with the absence of the migrants, some develop their own agency by engaging themselves in family work, taking care of the younger and elderly members, communicating with their migrant sibling, spending time with friends and relatives, and participating in social and political activities. Some keep themselves busy with mobile phones or watching TV. However, the methods adopted to adjust by male and female siblings are very much gendered.

Table 5.4.1: Methods used in developing agency by migration type and gender

Activity	Sibling of international migrant (%)			Sibling of internal migrant (%)		
	FS	MS	Total	FS	MS	Total
By being engaged in family work	23.9	21.5	22.2	21.1	20.7	20.9
By taking care of the younger, disabled, and elderly members of the HH	11.4	8.0	9.1	7.7	4.1	5.4
Watch TV, play games in mobile	40.3	43.6	42.5	45.2	34.1	38.1
By passing time with friends and relatives	23.1	25.7	24.9	25.3	21.6	22.9
Participate social and political activities	1.9	3.5	3.0	.4	5.2	3.5
Others	2.7	3.1	3.0	2.3	3.7	3.2
Total no. of cases	377	801	1178	261	463	724

Source: SDC and RMMRU Household Survey on Social Cost of Migration, 2022

Note: Each cell represents a percentage of the total number of responses

Methods used: Table 5.4.1 shows that 25 percent and 23 percent of the international and internal migrant siblings respectively spend more time with friends compared to before. Male siblings are more

involved with friends whereas female siblings spend their time with other siblings and relatives. Female siblings also spend a significant time with their neighbours and friends.

Involving themselves in Household Work: It has been seen in section 5.2 that family responsibilities increased for both male and female siblings of both types of migrant households. It has also been seen that for some siblings increased workload has compromised the finer qualities of life. However, 22 percent of the siblings of international migrants and 21 percent of internal migrants did not mind household work rather they saw it as their share of responsibility in making the migration dream of the household successful. 9 percent and 5 percent of the international and internal migrant siblings respectively have shouldered additional responsibilities of looking after younger siblings, younger nephews/nieces, and also their grandparents. In households that have persons with disability, siblings shared the responsibility of looking after them with other members of the household. 43 percent and 38 percent of the international and internal migrant siblings respectively spend free time watching TV. A few of them also participate in different social events and some others are involved in political activities such as election campaigns, rally, displaying posters, etc. Of course, it has been seen in the section on social cost borne by the siblings that at least one-fifth of the siblings are over-burdened with work and do not enjoy any free time.

Table 5.4.2: Personal mobile phone of the siblings by migration type and gender

Ownership	Sibling of international migrant (%)			Sibling of internal migrant (%)		
	FS	MS	Total	FS	MS	Total
Mobile phone	377 (56.00)	801 (90.60)	1178 (79.50)	261 (50.20)	463 (88.60)	724 (74.70)

Source: SDC and RMMRU Household Survey on Social Cost of Migration, 2022

Communication: Table 5.4.2 shows that as high as 80 percent and 75 percent of the international and internal migrant siblings respectively, own personal mobile phones. However, compared to

females, more male siblings possess personal phones. In the case of male siblings, the ownership of a personal phone is as high as 90 percent, whereas for females it is around 50 percent.

Table 5.4.3 shows 99 percent of the siblings of both international and internal migrants communicate with their migrant brother/sister. The highest number of siblings perceived that communicating with their migrant brother/sister was therapeutic in coping with their absence. More than 50 percent of the siblings of both types of migrants communicate with their migrant brother/sister almost every day (table 5.4.3). 40 percent of the rest communicate at least once a week. 8 percent and 6 percent of the international and internal migrant siblings respectively have communication with their migrant brothers/sisters at least once a month. The percentage of siblings who have no communication with their migrant household member is extremely low.

Table 5.4.3: Level of communication with migrants by type and gender

Frequency of talking	Sibling of international migrant (%)			Sibling of internal migrant (%)		
	FS	MS	Total	FS	MS	Total
Almost daily	52.7	48.9	50.1	54.8	51.2	52.5
Once a week	37.8	40.8	39.8	39.8	40.8	40.5
Once a month	6.4	8.3	7.7	4.6	6.5	5.8
Once every 3 month	2.1	.8	1.2	.8	.9	.8
Communication lost	1.1	1.3	1.2	0.0	.6	.4
Total no. of cases	376	797	1173	261	463	724

Source: SDC and RMMRU Household Survey on Social Cost of Migration, 2022

Mode of Communication: Major development has taken place the world over with respect to the mode of communication. Earlier migrants and their families have communicated through letters, tape-recorded messages or an occasion through fax. Internet-based communication has brought migrants and their households much closer. Along with mobile phones, they use multiple media such as IMO, WhatsApp, Messenger, Facebook, etc.

Table 5.4.4: Mode of communication by migration type and gender

Type	Sibling of international migrant (%)			Sibling of internal migrant (%)		
	FS	MS	Total	FS	MS	Total
Mobile	6.2	8.5	7.7	98.5	96.8	97.4
IMO	73.7	75.9	75.2	27.6	34.1	31.8
WhatsApp	14.6	17.4	16.5	11.5	14.3	13.3
Viber	.3	1.0	.8	.4	.2	.3
Facebook	4.5	9.0	7.6	6.9	10.8	9.4
Messenger	11.1	18.7	16.3	11.1	22.9	18.6
Others	.3	.2	.3	0.0	.4	.3
Total no. of cases	377	801	1178	261	463	724

Source: SDC and RMMRU Household Survey on Social Cost of Migration, 2022

Note: Each cell represents a percentage of the total number of responses

The use of mobile as a communication method is more common for internal migrant households. As high as 97 percent communicate regularly through mobile phones. The use of IMO is almost half for the internal migrant households compared to the international migrants. They also use WhatsApp and Messenger for communication. International migrant households invariably use different internet-based communication apps. For this reason, figures are very low when it came to communication through mobile calls. As high as 75 percent of international migrant households use IMO, 17 percent use WhatsApp and 16 percent use Messenger to communicate. Siblings of 8 percent of international and 9 percent of internal migrant households use Facebook. Through Facebook, they are updated about the recent activities of their migrant siblings as well as see their photos.

Chapter Conclusions

This chapter explores the contribution of migrant siblings in making family migration projects successful. It also highlighted the social costs and gains made by the migrants and their capacity to withstand the negative outcome of social costs on themselves. It has been seen

that siblings contribute in different ways in materialising the desire for migration of their siblings. Elder siblings have contributed financially; younger ones help in convincing parents to allow their brothers/sisters to migrate. One-tenth of the siblings of international migrants on average managed BDT 1,39,000 to bear the migration cost. Both male and female siblings made financial contributions. Siblings also contributed by committing to take extra responsibility in household management in the absence of their migrant brothers/sisters.

The migration of siblings also results in important social costs in the lives of their left-behind brothers and sisters. In a closely knit family the absence of a migrant brother/sister creates a sense of vacuum which sometimes results in feeling of loneliness among left behind members. Half the siblings of international and internal migrant households experience loneliness. 7 percent of both categories of households have experienced the death of immediate family members. Siblings yearned for their migrant brothers and sisters the most during family tragedies. 12 percent of the sisters of international and 18 percent of the internal migrants faced eve teasing and other forms of insecurities while going to school in the absence of the migrant brother. One-third of both international and internal migrant siblings experience extra workload. For some siblings increased workload adversely affected their educational attainment. However, in the majority of cases household activities remained within the limit and did not impact the siblings adversely. However, around one-twentieth felt that their studies suffered due to extra workload. One-sixth of the siblings felt that they do not have any free time because of the extra workload. Work performed in the absence of the migrant is different for male and female siblings. Those siblings are more pressed when the households have bedridden elderly members and disabled members. Studies have shown (Siddiqui and Ansar 2020) that mothers' migration leads to early marriage of children. Migration of siblings does not contribute to the early marriage of left-behind siblings. Although not very common, insecurity of assets in the absence, particularly of male migrants, has been experienced by 3 to 4 percent of the families. The sale of property for supporting

the migration cost of siblings in a few cases has generated conflict among the siblings as well as siblings and their parents.

Siblings have also identified some major social gains from the migration of their brothers/sisters. Better food intake, quality health care, and education are the positive outcomes of migration. In general, the social status of the households has increased that augured well among the siblings; particularly in the case of international migrants. Siblings of those families which have been able to increase their savings feel more secure compared to the pre-migration stage of their migrant member. A handful of them also created their own income sources by investing in remittances.

The migration of brothers and sisters has exposed the siblings to a situation that generated certain transformations in their lives. Now they participate in household work more. They have learned that taking extra responsibility is necessary for the wider good of the family. The siblings have also used playing games on mobile phones and watching TV for refreshing their minds when they felt lonely in the absence of their migrant brothers/sisters. Access to communication by using internet-based apps is the most important avenue in developing resilience while facing the hardship of the absence of the migrant member of the household. Some of the siblings have redefined their roles by incorporating new forms of activities, such as participation in different competitions and social activities. A section of them also takes part in political programmes.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study is part of a broader project of disaggregating the social costs and benefits of migration on different members of a migrant household. Earlier research located the social costs of migration on left-behind children, wives, and husbands. This research has focused on the intergenerational implications of migration when it concentrates on the social costs of migration on the elderly members (mostly parents) of a household. It also deals with migration implications on male and female siblings of a current migrant. The broad objective of the study is to generate knowledge on the differential impact of migration on male and female elderly members as well as siblings.

6.1 Summary

Very little research has been undertaken on the plight of elderly members and siblings of households in the absence of young adult migrants in the context of Bangladesh and also globally. It is observed that elderly or siblings, for that matter any other type of left-behind household members, are fully outside the spectrum of the policy process. The purpose of this research is to bring the voices of elderly and siblings to policy discussion.

Chapter I presents the broad and specific objectives of the research. It also reviews existing literature on elderly and siblings. Literature

review shows that both the elderlies as well as siblings of the migrant contribute to making migration project of the household successful. Elderlies and siblings encounter different forms of social costs; however, they also experience social gains out of the migration of their family members. Depending on gender, age, and specific context, the social costs of migration borne by different household members are different. Chapter I also explains the conceptual framework based on which the analysis of social costs and benefits of elderlies and siblings has been conducted. The four basic elements of the framework include contribution, social costs, social gains, and agency. The assessment is based on empirical research. It is conducted in 20 districts of Bangladesh representing high, medium, and low international migration-prone areas. The research followed a mixed-method approach. It interviewed 3,464 elderlies and 2,540 siblings in 20 districts. They include international migrant households, internal migrant households, and non-migrant households.

Chapter II highlights that Bangladesh has a large emigrant population mostly working in the Gulf and other Arab and Southeast Asian countries. In 2022, more than 1.1 million Bangladeshis migrated abroad to take up employment. 9 percent of them are women. Bangladeshi men and women workers participate mostly in semi-skilled and lowly-skilled professions. Men mostly work in the construction, service, and manufacturing sectors. Women predominantly participate in domestic work, cleaning work, and in the formal employment sector of garments and other manufacturing. Over the last 30 years, major destination countries have been Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, UAE, Oman, Qatar, Bahrain, Singapore, etc. The impact of migration on elderlies and siblings is very much characterised by the destinations where these migrants go to. Some of the challenges of migrating to these countries are contract substitution, non-payment or partial payment of wages, crammed accommodation, little scope of returning to Bangladesh on holidays etc. A section of women domestic workers while facing other forms of violation of rights also encountered verbal, physical, and sexual

abuse. Some Bangladeshi male and female migrants also die in the countries of destination. The social and economic cost of migration is very high for those parents whose offspring encounter any of the above work conditions.

Chapter III outlines the socio-demographic profile of the migrant households. The average household size of the sample group is a little higher than the national average. This is because it includes those who reside in the household and share same provisions of food and other essentials. The average age of elderlies hovers around 57-60 years. The siblings are much younger. They belong to the age group of 21-23 years. More than 77 percent of the elderlies are married and as high as 19-21 percent are widowed. The widow population is overrepresented in the case of female elderlies. 23-33 percent of the siblings are married. Elderlies have very poor educational backgrounds. 52-60 percent have no education at all. Another 21-24 percent only studied up to grade 5. There is hardly any sibling with no education. 33-37 percent of them studied up to class 10. 15-17 percent of the elderlies are not in good health and another 2-4 percent are bedridden. 2 percent of the households have members with some form of disability. Compared to international and internal migrant households, more elderlies of non-migrant households have an independent income. More elderlies of international migrant households have personal bank accounts.

Chapter IV looks into the social costs of migration on elderly members of households. It shows that 70 percent of the elderlies of international migrant households have contributed financially to the migration of their offspring. On average, they organised BDT 3,47,600 for bearing the cost of migration. One-fifth of the elderlies of internal migrant households supported their offspring with cash. In managing the sources of finance the elderlies use their social network.

A number of types of social costs have been identified by the elderlies. These are loneliness, anxiety, insecurity, additional

responsibility, lack of rest, dispute in the family, having to deal with situations of the migrant family member in distress overseas, looking after migrant children, disabled household members, and bedridden elderlies all by themselves, etc. Elderlies are particularly ill-equipped to deal with rapidly changing social demand of growing left behind children. While bearing social costs the elderlies also made social gains out of the migration of his/her offspring. Living a better life, availing better medical treatment, enhanced social status, and improved living conditions of rooms in the households are some of the important social gains. The ability to practice religion and marriage of family members to upper echelons of society have been identified as major gains by the elderlies.

A section of the elderlies has developed their own ways to minimise the social costs and maximise the social gains. The gradual growth of relationships with other left behind sons or daughters of the elderly, taking part in household management, looking after the migrant children's welfare, regular communication with the migrant offspring, taking part in social events such as mediation, wedding, election campaign, helping neighbours, etc. are some of the avenues in coping with the absence of migrants. The mechanism of adjusting to the changed situation is different for male and female elderlies. Male elderlies get more involved with the outside world. Women elderlies mostly occupy themselves with home-bound activities and leisure. They also start spending more time or connecting more deeply with their other offspring. Compared to the male elderlies, more female elderlies watch TV. Both male and female elderlies use technology in communicating with their migrant offspring. More than 62 percent of the female elderlies of international migrant households and 65 percent of internal migrant households have personal mobile phones and they communicate with their migrant offspring almost on a daily basis. More women elderlies of international migrant households use IMO to communicate with their offspring.

Chapter V explores the social costs of migration on the siblings. Contrary to the general perception that migrant siblings misuse

the resources generated through migration, this research finds that siblings also contribute in many ways in making the migration project of the households successful. Elder siblings of migrants are one of the major decision-makers. In a few households, there is only one elderly and one sibling. If the sibling was absent then the family may not have been able to participate in migration. Around 10 percent of the siblings who are usually older than the migrant, have made financial contributions in offsetting the migration cost. On average, they managed BDT 1,45,400 in this regard.

Migrant remittances has worked as disincentive to labour force participation of siblings in 7 percent households of internal and international migrants. These siblings would not take the challenge of finding employment as the households could somehow manage the remittances as well as other incomes of the family. In the absence of an adult household member, one-third of the siblings have to take part in substantive household activities. For males, household activities include day-to-day shopping, monthly grocery, payment of bills, taxes, tutoring young siblings, etc. Services of female siblings are demanded with respect to child care, cooking, cleaning and tutoring young brothers and sisters. Work load is even higher in those households, which have persons with disability. Therefore, unpaid labour of siblings in household management is an important contribution to the migration project of a family.

Loneliness is more pronounced in the case of elderlies than siblings. Of course, in day-to-day fun and sorrow the siblings miss their brothers/sisters. Although not many, some of the households have experienced death in the family. In such cases internal migrants could attend the funeral but international migrants could not. A major social cost for these siblings is that, they could not share their sorrow and grief with their migrant brothers or sisters. Left-behind female adolescent siblings face a different type of challenge. They face eve teasing when taking public transport or going to public places alone. Their movement to some extent get restricted in the absence of adult male brothers.

Substantive social gains are also experienced by the siblings. More than 80 percent of the siblings of both international and internal migrants have expressed their satisfaction for being able to consume quality food. 37-41 percent have felt that the quality of their education has improved, and so did their families' ability to access medical treatment. Qualitative case studies reveal that the siblings felt they have become more responsible than before. Migration has increased the social status of their family and better marital relationships could be arranged for the siblings of migrants. The material well-being of some of the households has resulted in psychological wellbeing. 8 percent of siblings of international and 6 percent of internal migrant households have established their own income sources by utilising remittances.

Siblings have also developed their own mechanisms to deal with the changed situation created by the absence of migrants. Like the elderlies they also use multiple actions to address the psychological vacuum as well as demand on their time to keep the family maintenance activities managed. Around half the siblings (both male and female) have kept themselves busy by spending time with friends, playing games as well as watching TV shows. Passing time with friends both at school and outside the school/college is the most important adaptation method for male siblings. Friendship is important for female siblings but they mostly spend time with friends at school. This is of course due to the dominant cultural norm of not allowing girl-child to remain outside the home for long. More than 21 percent of the siblings cannot be engaged with other things because they are extremely busy with family work. Migration of a family member has exposed the siblings to a situation in which they have to shoulder many responsibilities.

6.2 Major conclusions

- Without the financial contribution of the elderlies, in many instances migration of the young adult members of the households would not be possible. Both male and female elderlies contribute

to making the migration effort of the concerned family member successful. Male elderlies have their own sources of finance whereas female elderlies use their kinship network to generate resources. Therefore, it is natural that the elderlies will have certain aspirations to be fulfilled through the migration of their household members.

- Contrary to popular belief, siblings also contribute both financially as well as non-financially to make migration of a family member successful.
- Though along with household members the benefits of migration are enjoyed by the state and private sectors the social and economic costs are only borne by the individual members of the households. No formal intervention by the government, private sector, and civil society organisations is there to reduce the social costs of migration borne by the elderlies and their siblings.
- Social costs and benefits of migration are intergenerational and the nature of social costs borne by the elderlies and siblings vary on the basis of age, gender, ability to earn independently, and physical fitness.
- A section of both elderlies and siblings developed their agency in the process of addressing the social and economic disruptions and constraints imposed upon them due to the migration of their family members.

6.3 Recommendations

Specific Recommendations

The Left-behind Elderlies

- At the community level, awareness programmes are required to make families conscious not to impose excessive household chores on elderlies. The awareness campaign needs to be designed to address the differential needs of male and female elderlies.
- Not all the parents or grandparents of the households are physically weak. Those who are able-bodied can be provided with information and training to create alternative income

opportunities with a section of the remittances.

- WEWB can develop special care support programmes for migrant families that have bedridden elderlies and elderlies with disability.
- WEWB is establishing service centers in 35 districts. Workers of these offices can conduct research workshops with *Upazila*-level government functionaries and service-providing NGOs to develop programme for the elderlies. Gradually, WEWB's district office employees can train *Upazila* office bearer and local NGOs on how innovatively they can include the bedridden elderlies and disabled members of migrant households in their service delivery programmes.
- In cases where a relevant household member is not available, district offices of WEWB can create youth volunteer groups at the *Union* level to accompany the elderlies to secure healthcare services.

The Left-behind Siblings

- At the community level awareness programmes are required to make families conscious not to impose excessive household chores on the boy and girl siblings to the extent that it is affecting their education.
- Awareness campaigns may be launched to build a positive image of the contribution of the siblings in making the migration project of a household successful.
- Organise a motivational campaign targeting siblings who are of working age and have not taken up employment due to the flow of remittances to inform why it is important to join the workforce.
- Encourage the siblings to undertake skills development, financial literacy, business advisory, and enterprise development training in order to ensure effective utilisation of migrant remittances.
- Encourage the siblings who aspire to migrate to develop their skills in professions that are in demand in the destination countries.
- WEWB may develop special care support programmes for

migrant families which have siblings with disability.

- Sensitise community leaders to inform the youth that eve teasing is a punishable offense. In cases where the problem persists, adolescent female siblings need to be made aware of the redress mechanisms that may be available at the community level.

General Recommendations

- The Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment needs to incorporate left-behind elderlies and siblings as important stakeholders along with left-in-charge husbands, wives, and children of the migrants.
- Targeted services for the left-behind elderlies and siblings with that of other members should be made an integral part of the Wage Earners' Welfare Board (WEWB) mandate.
- The voice of elderlies and siblings should be incorporated into the National Policy on Overseas Employment and Migration, 2016.
- In order to make the WEWB's educational scholarship programme more effective a monitoring system has to be established.
- At bilateral and multilateral forums, the government and civil society organisations of Bangladesh should reiterate their demand for granting annual leave to migrants on a regular basis. This will reduce the problem of loneliness and isolation endured by both migrants and their left-behind members of the families to some extent.

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