

## **Lessons Learned – Participation in the 26<sup>th</sup> Session of UN Committee on CMW – Review of Bangladesh Report, 3 – 4 April 2017, Geneva**

MFA mobilised a six-member's delegation (of which five were Diplomacy Training Program Alumni) from Bangladesh, Singapore, and Philippines CSOs who were actively engaged in preparing shadow report for the 26<sup>th</sup> Session of the CMW for the initial review of Bangladesh's report. The shadow report from CSOs in Bangladesh was initiated by representatives of migrant's rights organisation and participants of DTP capacity building program to raise voice for migrant workers. The report was further reviewed to incorporate inputs from experts, DTP capacity building program participants and their respective organisations, and from CSOs through consultative processes.

The presence of the CSO representatives during the constructive dialogue session – delivering statement to the Committee, and constant engagement, was worthy of all the effort over the past one year. Being present in Geneva was favourable for civil society as this allowed us to reiterate the issues and make the Committee members aware about the magnitude of the problem that have been mentioned in the shadow report. MFA deserves sincere appreciation for all their efforts in mobilising resources and organising the meetings with Committee members. MFA colleagues also arranged additional meetings with representative of the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants, ILO and to attend the first initial discussion on of GFMD on Global Compact in Geneva on 6<sup>th</sup> of April.

The concluding observations of the Committee reflects the views of the civil society and that of the shadow report which is encouraging for CSOs, thus further highlights the importance of working together to engage with the Government as a unified and common voice - from one platform rather than working in isolation. This is specifically relevant in a situation where the space for NGOs has become limited. The process of engagement amongst Bangladesh CSOs for drafting the shadow report, and the inclusive process adhered to nominate CSO representative for Geneva has created a momentum for Bangladesh CSOs to work together after the GFMD-2016.

It is important for the CSOs now to take stock of the best practises, and have common advocacy plan to create pressure on the government to implement the recommendations of the Committee. It is also crucial to create awareness amongst the CSOs, with the media, and above all the migrant workers. It is positive to see that the media and the CSOs have taken the recommendations seriously and are reporting on highlighting various aspects.

For me, going to Geneva and engaging with the Committee was the best realisation/ application of the learning process that started back in December 2015 with the DTP capacity building course. I also view this process as a beginning of a new cycle for all CSOs to engage on advocacy and implementation of the recommendations in a coordinated manner. I have been given opportunity and space to make use of what I have learnt. With time, I further realise the relevance of the knowledge and learnings from the training which is always guiding me in my work on Migration, Gender and Social Inclusion. Now I also know how to work effectively with the existing networks of migration.

