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WORKING DOCUMENT

From: Presidency
To: MOCADDEM Roundtable

N° prev. doc.: 15412/2024 INIT

Subject: Action File - Bangladesh

In view of the Mocadem Roundtable of 17 October 2025 delegations will find attached the "Action File - Bangladesh".

Introduction / objectives

Make use of the established fora, i.e. the Migration and Mobility Dialogue, the Joint Working Group on the implementation of the Standard Operating Procedures on return (SOP) and the Talent Partnership Roundtable, to continue and further enhance a comprehensive and balanced migration partnership with Bangladesh in order to:

- Prevent irregular migration, by reinforcing border management capacity, countering migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings, increasing the use of awareness-raising and information campaigns, and by addressing the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement;
- Ensure effective return cooperation and sustainable reintegration of returnees in Bangladesh;
- Support international protection and sustainable solutions for the Rohingya people, with assistance extending beyond humanitarian aid to include livelihood support and development opportunities;
- Strengthen legal migration cooperation between interested Member States and Bangladesh, notably by implementing the Talent Partnership with Bangladesh.

The protection of the human rights of all migrants and the full respect for international law are the guiding principles for the EU's engagement.

The third meeting of the informal Migration and Mobility Dialogue (MMD) took place on 10 September 2025 in Dhaka, back-to-back with the 9th EU-Bangladesh Joint Working Group (JWG) on the implementation of the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) and with the 3rd Talent Partnership Roundtable back-to-back with the Talent Partnership Technical meeting held on 8-9 September 2025. The meetings were prepared by a technical mission in January 2025, which helped to update the new administration on the state of play of various strands of cooperation on migration and security.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The JWG was preceded by a technical meeting on the EU-Bangladesh Returnee Case Management System (RCMS) on 8 September 2025.

The 3rd Talent Partnership Roundtable acknowledged the progress made in the implementation of the EU-funded Talent Partnership project, including the recent start of vocational training of Bangladeshi candidates by the implementing partner, International Labour Organisation in the tourism/hospitality and construction sectors. In addition, there was an exchange on the Talent Partnership Roadmap, the matrix of sectors of common interests, existing challenges and ways of mitigating them as well as the next priorities on the implementation of the Talent Partnership. Since 2017, the EU has been assisting Bangladesh with EUR 38.2 million to address migration governance-related issues, sustainable return, and reintegration, including efforts to counter trafficking in human beings.

The collapse of Sheikh Hasina's government has not affected Bangladesh's approach to cooperation with the EU in migration, which was reflected in the discussions at the 11th Joint Commission.

Actions¹

Action	Specific Objectives	Lead actor(s)	Timeframe	Actions completed, Results ²	Next Steps / Comments ³
1. Political and technical outreach	Continue engagement with Bangladeshi authorities, to follow up on the third meeting of the migration and mobility dialogue on 10 September 2025	Commission, EEAS, Presidency, Member States, Frontex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Q3 2026 next Migration and Mobility Dialogue, Joint Working Group on the implementation of the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) and Talent Partnership Roundtable. 12th Joint Commission meeting in Brussels (planned for 2026). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 11th Joint Commission meeting on 4 November 2024. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] The third Migration and Mobility Dialogue with Bangladesh took place 8-10 September 2025 back-to-back with the 9th Joint Working Group (JWG) on the implementation of the SOPs on return and reintegration of Bangladesh nationals and the 3rd Talent Partnership Roundtable, both of which were held on 9 September 2025. 	<p>Continued contacts with the authorities at technical and high level.</p> <p>Next Migration and Mobility Dialogue, Joint Working Group on the implementation of the SOP and Talent Partnership Roundtable to be held in Brussels in Q3 2026.</p> <p>Decision to withdraw the proposal on visa measured endorsed by the College, [REDACTED] return cooperation.</p> <p>Since a good rhythm of meetings taking place side-by-side and the fruitful technical discussions, taking place against the backdrop of the ongoing Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) negotiations, both sides recognised the added</p>

¹ As per the agreed new structure : List of actions with objectives following a list identified in the introduction

² As per agreed new structure: Key actions completed in the last 6-12 months

³ As per agreed new structure: Key actions planned for next 6-12 months

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				- In view of the substantial and sustained progress on readmission cooperation, COM expressed its intention to withdraw the proposal for restrictive visa measures, in July 2025.	value of organising additional exchanges to keep momentum between high-level meetings and deepen exchanges on all topics.
	Strengthen coordination and information sharing locally, including among liaison officers, or other relevant officials. (including once new EMLO is seconded, and the new EURLO is deployed)	EEAS (EU delegation), Commission, Member States (Embassies), and Frontex	• 2026: Consider more regular EU meetings on migration-related issues coordinated by the EU Delegation/EMLO and ensure broad participation.	- Regular coordination meetings on migration-related issues coordinated by the EU Delegation/EMLO and ensure broad participation.	EMLO and EURLO vacancies open.
2. Migration and border management, including information campaigns	Building more effective and efficient border management systems, including introducing integrated border management concept	Commission, Member States, Europol		- The action "Integrated Border Management in the Silk Route countries" (EUR 12 million, implemented by ICMPD, ended December 2024), was implemented in Bangladesh, Iraq, Pakistan. Steering Committee met on 15 November 2023. [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. In Bangladesh activities focused on the human and institutional capacity development of the	The IBM Silk Route Project was closed in December 2024. An IBM follow up Action in Bangladesh is being prepared.

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				<p>country's law enforcement agencies. ██████████</p> <p>██████████ the project focused on the immigration police in the form of a support to the human and institutional capacity development of this border agency and the modernisation of the training programmes and curricula of the School of Intelligence (the training institution for Bangladesh border officers). Following this intervention, the detection rate of fraudulent EU travel document has surged by over 200% since 2023.</p> <p>- The EU-funded information and awareness-raising campaign "Pathways EMR-WBR - A dynamic platform for changing irregular migration behaviour along the Eastern Mediterranean and Western Balkans routes" (EUR 1,4 million under AMIF) was implemented by Seefar (BE) with META (IT, NGO), the Austrian Ministry of Interior, and the German Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (April 2023 – March 2025). The project focused its outreach on Pakistan, Iran, Iraq, Egypt, Bangladesh,</p>	

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				<i>Türkiye, Serbia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina.</i>	
3. Fight against trafficking in human beings and migrant smuggling, including implementation of the NDICI-financed action on preventing and Addressing Trafficking in Human Beings and Smuggling of Migrants in South Asia (THB-SOM)	<i>Continue the discussions in order to establish a closer operational cooperation to tackle migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings.</i>	<i>Commission, Member States</i>	Ongoing	<p>- Bangladesh in support of Global Alliance to Counter Migrant Smuggling</p> <p>- Closer engagement at technical level through regular meetings of Bangladesh and EU (COM) focal points for migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings who were appointed as a follow-up to the 2nd Migration and Mobility Dialogue.</p>	<i>Continue exploring strengthening of further operational cooperation and capacity building through EU funded projects.</i>
	<i>Effective rights-based and gender equal responses to trafficking in human beings (THB) and smuggling of migrants (SOM): To ensure that South Asian countries develop and implement more effective responses to THB and SOM, with a particular focus on criminal justice elements, in line with international law and with full respect for human rights.</i>	<i>Commission</i>	Ongoing	<p>The INTPA (NDICI) funded Regional Migration project was launched in January 2025 and is ongoing.</p> <p>Outcome 1 – Evidence-based policy and legal frameworks</p> <p><i>Comprehensive Country Reports and Legal Assessments were completed in Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka, guiding priority areas for legislative and policy support. Significant progress was made on national legislation: Sri Lanka advanced amendments to criminalise migrant smuggling; Bangladesh initiated legal reform to integrate smuggling</i></p>	<p><i>Under the Regional migration project on trafficking in human beings and the smuggling of migrants:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Support the Ministry of Home Affairs (MOHA) on the effective inception and operation of the digital data.</i> • <i>Collection system for the preparation of the analytical annual country.</i> • <i>Report on Trafficking in Persons (TIP) in Bangladesh,</i>

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				<p><i>provisions into its TIP law; Nepal registered amendments to strengthen victim identification and referral; and Bhutan received legal inputs to align its Penal Code with UNTOC standards.</i></p> <p><i>UNODC supported harmonization of TIP data collection systems in Sri Lanka and Nepal and began research on the impact of climate change on trafficking in Bangladesh and Nepal. High-level participation in the UNTOC COP (Vienna, Oct 2024) strengthened advocacy for SOM Protocol ratification and regional legal alignment.</i></p> <p>Outcome 2 – Building rights-based operational capacity</p> <p><i>In Bangladesh, UNODC supported the development of national SOPs for victim-centred investigation and prosecution of trafficking cases, now under final review by MOHA. In Sri Lanka, revised SOPs for border surveillance integrated gender and human rights principles, and new training modules for police</i></p>	<p><i>ensuring the database complies with data protection standards and national reporting requirements through the International Classification Standard for Administrative Data on Trafficking in Persons (IC-TIP).</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Develop the second national research on TIP in Bangladesh under the leadership of MOHA, based on data collected through the digital database.</i> • <i>Annual TIP reports, and national and divisional level consultations.</i> • <i>Support the Bangladesh segment of specific research according to tailored methodology on the impact of climate-induced disasters on</i>

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				<p><i>academies incorporated victim protection and assistance approaches.</i></p> <p>Outcome 3 – Strengthening regional and bilateral cooperation</p> <p><i>A regional law enforcement meeting (July 2025) brought together anti-trafficking police units from Bangladesh, Nepal, the Maldives, and Sri Lanka, initiating real-time communication and cooperation. Formal collaboration with BIMSTEC was launched to promote joint TIP/SOM capacity-building. In Bangladesh, MLA training improved officials’ capacity to draft mutual legal assistance requests on TIP-linked financial crimes. The Women’s Network on TIP/SOM established its South Asia chapter to promote women’s leadership and gender-sensitive justice.</i></p> <p>Outcome 4 – Enhancing victim protection and assistance</p> <p><i>Rapid cross-border coordination between Bangladesh, India, Nepal,</i></p>	<p><i>the prevalence of Trafficking in Persons in Bangladesh and Nepal (Env-on-TIP).</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Coordinate with key stakeholders to finalise and submit the assessment report on trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants in Bangladesh's border and maritime regions to the Ministry of Home Affairs, incorporating final feedback and recommendations.</i> • <i>Implement a training programme to operationalise the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)/Case Management Guidelines for investigating TIPcases, including Training of Trainers</i>

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				<p><i>and Iraq (KRI) enabled safe repatriation of TIP victims. UNODC began identifying partners in Bangladesh and Nepal to expand direct victim assistance. On World TIP Day (30 July 2025), national awareness events were held in Bangladesh and Nepal, while survivor voices were amplified through participation in the Global Forum for Human Trafficking Survivors hosted by UNODC in Vienna.</i></p>	<p><i>(ToT) sessions, inception workshops for investigating officers, and structured follow-up trainings to ensure sustained application.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• Strengthened institutional capacity of the judiciary and prosecution authorities, including Anti-Trafficking Tribunals, to effectively prosecute and adjudicate cases of TIP and SOM.</i> <i>• Finalise and roll out training in partnership with Judicial Administration Training Institute (JATI) for judges of Anti-Human Trafficking Tribunals, incorporating the Bench Book on Adjudicating TIP and Sentencing Guidelines on TIP.</i>

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					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Deliver capacity-building for law enforcement and relevant officers on specialized investigative techniques and new emerging forms of TIP exploitation, which may include financial investigations, illicit financial flows, forced criminality, forced begging, cyber-enabled trafficking within organised crime contexts, TIPOR, electronic evidence collection, and opensource intelligence (OSINT) methodologies to strengthen complex trafficking case investigations.</i> • <i>Support identification, orientation and participation of Bangladeshi</i>

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					<p><i>members in the South Asian chapter of the Women's Network, designed to address the gendered nature of TIP and SOM as well as the unique needs and challenges faced by female officials in policymaking, law enforcement and civil society roles.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Financial support (grant) disbursed to CSOs (e.g., pro-bono lawyer organisations/legal aid service-providing NGOs) in Bangladesh for the direct provision of assistance services to trafficking victims, smuggled migrants, and other vulnerable migrants.</i> • <i>Build the capacity of government authorities and civil society organisations that provide services</i>

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					<i>to trafficking victims and smuggled migrants following rights-based approach.</i>
4. Support measures for return and reintegration	<i>Organise, on a regular basis, return operations to Bangladesh, including related activities, in coordination with Frontex, including Joint Return Operations and Frontex led operations organised directly by the Agency, to support effective returns and prevent an accumulation of a backlog of cases.</i>	<i>Commission, Member States, Frontex</i>	Ongoing	<p><i>- Return operations are organised on a regular basis by scheduled flights, 2025 Jan-August, 842 were returned on scheduled flights; two joint return operations with Frontex support took place in 2025, with 49 returnees in total between January – September 2025.</i></p> <p><i>- Deployment of EBCG Standing Corps to Member States to support return (identification)-related cooperation with Bangladesh, reinforcing capacities of MS authorities responsible for return.</i></p>	<i>Two Frontex-chartered double-destination joint return operation to Bangladesh and Pakistan organised by Greece took place in December 2024 and April 2025.</i>
	<i>Strengthen the capacities of Bangladeshi authorities for identification and the issuance of travel documents, in line with the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), ensure functioning and improvement of the Readmission Case</i>	<i>Commission</i>	Ongoing		<i>- Currently Commission funded project under EURCAP on supporting the EU-Bangladesh Standard Operating Procedures through the RCMS Readmission Case management System ongoing.</i>

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	<i>Management System (RCMS) tool.</i>				
	<p><i>Support programmes for the sustainable reintegration of returnees.</i></p> <p><i>Prottasha II: Sustainable Reintegration of Bangladeshi Returnees and Improved Migration Governance.</i></p> <p><i>Specific objectives:</i></p> <p><i>1. Improve sustainable reintegration of Bangladeshi returnees and their families in their communities in a gender sensitive manner.</i></p> <p><i>2. Contribute to improve policy and regulatory framework, and coordination system of national and local authorities responsible for migration management</i></p> <p><i>Frontex EURP active in Bangladesh since 2022, implemented by BRAC.</i></p>	<p><i>Commission, Member States, Frontex</i></p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p><i>Prottasha II: project began in 2023 and is set for completion in 2027 (48 months).</i></p>	<p><i>- The implementation of the NDICI-funded PROTTASHA II in Bangladesh (EUR 20 million). The program comprises two projects—one implemented by BRAC (Bangladesh international NGO), and the other by IOM.</i></p> <p><i>BRAC project focus: specific objective 1. Results so far:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate assistance to 3945 returnees (M 3784, W 161) • Returnees selected: 5359 (M 3612, W 1747) • Psychosocial counselling: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Enrolled 1399 (M920 W479) ○ Completed counselling: 1054 (M659 W 395) ○ Medical Treatment: 79 (M42 W 37) ○ Trauma Treatment: 5 (M 5 W 0) • Economic Reintegration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Career counselling: 4293 (M 2794 W1499) 	<p><i>The BRAC project remains on track and is progressing as planned, with implementation advancing steadily toward its expected results.</i></p> <p><i>The IOM project, which received Government approval on 15 April 2025, is now accelerating activities to catch up with the work plan in the coming quarter. Key priorities include supporting the Government of Bangladesh to develop and roll out the National Action Plan for implementing migration and reintegration policy frameworks, and to mainstream migration into national and sectoral development policies for greater policy coherence.</i></p> <p><i>IOM will also assist the Government in operationalising diaspora-related policy frameworks,</i></p>

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				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Financial Assistance: 2932 (M 1813 W 1119) from EU MS 483, Transit countries 14 and GCC & others - 2453 ○ Market-oriented Skills Training: 957 (M 503 W 454) ○ Entrepreneurship Training: 2456 (M 1654 W 802) <p><i>Awareness raising reach:</i></p> <p><i>Events: 520, audience 17491 (M 13519 W 3962)</i></p> <p><i>Courtyard meeting: 35 156, participants: 477761 (159410 W 318351)</i></p> <p><i>Video Show: 882, Audience 89,713 (82125 W 7588)</i></p> <p><i>The IOM project focus: Specific objective 2. Results so far:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● TOTAL = 5587 ● MEN = 4939 ● WOMEN = 475 ● MINORS = 173 <p><i>Frontex European Reintegration Programme (EURP) - since April 2023</i></p>	<p><i>including piloting global tools such as the Diaspora Investment Readiness Index (DIRI), and in implementing the Bangladesh Migration Crisis Operational Framework.</i></p> <p><i>At the subnational level, IOM will contextualise and operationalise district-level plans of action for comprehensive, rights-based, and gender-responsive migration service delivery in five selected districts. Capacity enhancement activities will continue for MoEWOE, BMET, and WEWB, focusing on technical, operational, and organisational aspects of migration and reintegration service delivery.</i></p> <p><i>Further efforts will support the establishment of a protection-sensitive national referral mechanism involving state and non-state actors to</i></p>

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				<i>until now the NGO BRAC has implemented the assistance (Total number of beneficiaries: 893)</i>	<i>ensure gender-inclusive, safe, and dignified migration and reintegration services. IOM will also upgrade the ReMiMIS / returnee database to ensure interoperability with other national systems and operationalise the Probashi Support Centre by piloting the MSIS platform (including its grievance and case management functions) and providing essential training and institutional support to MoEWOE and related agencies.</i>
6. Protection and sustainable solutions for Rohingya people in Bangladesh	<i>Support international protection and sustainable solutions for the Rohingya people, with assistance extending beyond the humanitarian aid to include livelihood support and development opportunities</i>	<i>Commission, EEAS, Member States</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>FPI action (EUR 1.5m) – helping Rohingya refugees be aware of and pursue their legal rights.</i> - <i>FPI action (EUR 3m) – improving the protection environment of Rohingya refugees relocated to Bhasan Char.</i> - <i>NDICI-funded Action (EUR 35m): Rohingya Resilience Programme in Bangladesh. Contracts signed with UNHCR, WFP, World Bank and BRAC.</i> 	<i>Commission Action: UNHCR, WFP and World Bank and BRAC projects are progressing, but with serious overall underfunding for the crisis, due to donors and mainly USAID withdrawing or reducing support. New influx of refugees (UNHCR estimate more than 125.000) in Cox's Bazar refugee camps further compounds the situation.</i>

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7. Legal migration and mobility	Implement a Talent Partnership with Bangladesh, increasing the number of participating EU Member States.	Commission, EU Member States	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Three Talent Partnership Roundtables organised - NDICI funded action in support of the Talent Partnerships (EUR 3m) - the contract signed on 8 July 2024 in Dhaka, approved by BGD authorities in November 2024, kicked off in December 2024 the ILO is the implementing partner. Training of Bangladeshi nationals started in early September 2025. - EL, RO and SK joined the Talent Partnership with Bangladesh as observers 	<p>The latest Talent Partnership RoundTable took place in Dhaka on 9 September 2025</p> <p>Next Roundtable, to take place in Brussels in Q3 2026.</p>

ANNEX I: Member States actions

Action	Objective	Budget	Timeframe
<p>IT: <i>Support the Protection, Empowerment and Peaceful Coexistence of Rohingya Refugees in Bangladesh</i></p>	<p><i>To provide assistance to Rohingya refugees; to foster the peaceful co-existence of Rohingya refugees with the host community. (linked to Action 6)</i></p> <p><i>Implemented through UNHCR.</i></p>	<p><i>EUR 1 million (financed by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs; MFA Migration Fund 2024)</i></p>	<p><i>13 months (1st December 2024 – 31st December 2025)</i></p>
<p>IT: <i>Cinemarena - The Itinerant Education and Information Programme Raising Awareness on Socio-Economic Opportunities and Promoting Empowerment in Bangladesh, as Alternatives to Irregular Migration</i></p>	<p><i>Implementation of information campaigns on the risks of irregular migration; capacity building of local authorities. (linked to Action 2)</i></p> <p><i>Implemented through IOM.</i></p>	<p><i>EUR 1 million (financed by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs; MFA Migration Fund 2024)</i></p>	<p><i>17 months (1st December 2024 – 30th April 2026)</i></p>
<p>SE: <i>Support to Rohingya response through bilateral development cooperation strategy to Bangladesh</i></p>	<p><i>Protection and sustainable solutions for Rohingya people in Bangladesh (linked to Action 6)</i></p>	<p><i>EUR 20 million (financed by Sweden)</i></p>	<p><i>2024 - 2026</i></p>

ANNEX II: Common messages to Bangladeshi authorities

- Welcome the commitment of the Bangladeshi interim government to continue close cooperation with the EU in the management of migration. Appreciate the very good discussion on the issue at the 11th Joint Commission and during the Migration and Mobility Dialogue and the related meetings in September 2025.
- Congratulate Bangladesh on the successful Migration and Mobility Dialogue and Joint Working Group on the implementation of the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) on return and reintegration of Bangladeshi nationals as well as the Talent Partnership Roundtable that took place in Dhaka in September 2025 and thank Bangladesh for its involvement. The broad agenda of the dialogue between the EU and Bangladesh reflects the EU's comprehensive approach to fostering a balanced and mutually beneficial migration partnership with Bangladesh.
- Emphasise that the EU will continue to support Bangladesh in addressing challenges related to migration, including migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings, Rohingya displacement and the sustainable reintegration of returnees from the EU.
- Stress the importance of adhering to human rights principles, respecting the principle of non-refoulement and of protecting vulnerable groups of Rohingya refugees and displaced people in Bangladesh.
- Stress that the significant number of irregular arrivals of Bangladeshi nationals in the EU continues to be an issue of great concern, in particular migrants arriving via the Central Mediterranean route. Enhancing cooperation on the prevention of migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings from Bangladesh to the EU is of utmost importance.
- [REDACTED]
- Underline that legal migration can offer opportunities to both countries of origin and destination and is an integral element of the EU's comprehensive approach to migration, while fully respecting national competences of EU Member States. Highlight the potential of the Talent Partnership and the ambition to foster legal migration in a mutually beneficial way.