

Question No. 07

National Covid 19 Response Plan

During this Covid 19 pandemic and its aftermath this Ministry and Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment have prepared a National Covid 19 Response Plan in collaboration with International Organization for Migration, International Labour Organization and other stake holders after conducting of several consultations. This was taken under five stages namely,

- (a) Measures required at the country of Destination (CoD)
- (b) Measures to be taken to repatriate the migrant workers to Sri Lanka
- (c) Measures to be taken at the point of entry and on immediate post – arrival
- (d) Measures required with regard to Reintegration
- (e) Measures to be taken to support (re)migration

Question No. 08

Project for Collection of Information of the Sri Lankan Migrant Workers who returned to Sri Lanka due to COVID-19 Pandemic

State Ministry of Foreign Employment Promotion and Market Diversification in collaboration with The Department of Manpower and the International Labour Organization and several other public institutions, has implemented a project to facilitate the migrant workers returning to Sri Lanka due to the COVID-19 pandemic, by way of identifying their skills to match with suitable employment opportunities and provide necessary vocational training.

Project for Supporting the Socioeconomic reintegration of Returnee Sri Lankan Migrant Workers due to the COVID 19 Outbreak

A project has been initiated for supporting the socioeconomic reintegration of returnee Sri Lankan migrant workers due to the Covid 19 outbreak. This project is to be implemented in collaboration with this Ministry jointly prepared by ILO and IOM with the funding support of Japan Government. Mainly this project will support to the Sri Lankan Government by contributing towards the sustainable socioeconomic reintegration of returnee migrant workers who impacted by the Covid 19 through sustained or restored livelihoods. Also this helps to reduce vulnerability of returnee migrant workers through enhanced skills development and improved capacity of Government Institutions which facilitates consistent economic participation of migrant returnees.

Ministry and Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment initiatives

This Ministry has taken steps to assisting returnee migrant workers by providing the guidance to reintegrate using the family development plans with the support of development officers who attached to the divisional secretariats under this ministry.

The Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment has arranged a Quarantine Centre operating for Migrant Workers that they do not need to pay in order to addressing the housing issues during the quarantine period.

Data has been collected at the Quarantine Centers and based on the preference of the returnee migrants, action has been taken to reintegrate through the livelihoods assistance, finding local opportunities and assisting to remigration.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) action has been taken to provide certificates for relevant National Vocational Qualifications.

National COVID-19 Response Plan for Migrant Workers

To prepare a response plan to the COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath on Sri Lankan migrant workers, Chairman of the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (SLBFE) formed a Working Group on 30th April 2020 comprising of members from the SLBFE, International Organization for Migration (IOM) and International Labour Organization (ILO) to formulate a National COVID-19 Response Plan for migrant workers for consideration by the Government.

Accordingly, this document contains the draft response prepared by the working group after a series of consultations. In doing so the working group has considered measures required at five stages namely; Measures to be taken at country of destination; Measures to be taken for return to Sri Lanka; Measures to be taken at point of entry and immediate post arrival; Measures to be taken in Sri Lanka for reintegration, and Measures to be taken for re-migration. Proposals and recommendations from Civil Society Organizations, Trade Unions and Association for Licensed Foreign Employment Agencies (ALFEA) have also been taken into consideration.

Recommended actions are categorized into immediate, short, medium and long-term timelines, along with budgets and division of responsibilities.

1. Measures required at the Country of Destination (CoD)

General Context

Since the inception of migration for employment in the 1970s, there has been a tremendous increase in the number of migrant workers, and according to the provisional data of the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (SLBFE), to date 1.7 million Sri Lankan migrant workers are employed abroad¹. On average, 230,000 to 250,000 workers leave Sri Lanka annually to work abroad.² In 2018 low-skilled and domestic worker categories represented 55.2 per cent of the total departures for foreign employment³. Middle Eastern region continues to be the main destination for Sri Lankan migrant workers. Around 97.4 per cent of domestic workers and 78 per cent of low-skilled workers were concentrated in the Middle Eastern countries such as Kuwait, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates. Remittances add up to 8.1 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product in Sri Lanka.⁴ Earnings from foreign remittances is considered as one of the main streams of foreign exchange revenue to Sri Lanka. The outbreak of COVID-19 has a direct bearing on the migrant workers and their families. Majority have been laid off work, permanently as well as temporarily, creating a decline massive deficit of remittances that support the national economy by 19 per cent in 2020.⁵

¹ Corporate Plan, Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment 2017 – 2021, <http://www.slbfe.lk/file.php?FID=386>, and see, National Policy & Action Plan on Migration for Employment for Sri Lanka 2020 – 2023 (2020), unpublished.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Migration data portal: http://migrationdataportal.org/data?t=2019&l=stock_abs_&cm49=144

⁵ COVID-19 Crisis Through a Migration Lens: <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/989721587512418006/pdf/COVID-19-Crisis-Through-a-Migration-Lens.pdf>

Note: The following assumptions were made when calculating the estimated costs:

- 5,000 migrant workers in the CoD require essential food and other basic requirements
- 10,000 migrant workers are willing to be repatriated to Sri Lanka
- 20,000 migrant workers in the CoD require medical assistance and personal protective equipment

Current Situation	Proposed Activity	Outcome	Timeline (Immediate/ Short Term/ Medium Term/ Long Term)	Responsibility		Strategies	Estimated Cost (USD)
				Leading Organization	Supporting Organization		
Lack of comprehensive information of migrant workers outside of Sri Lanka who are in need of assistance following the pandemic	1.1. Develop a database and register migrant workers requiring support including those who are undocumented	Timely and accurate information is available to provide immediate assistance to the migrant workers	Immediate	SLBFE & Ministry of Skills Dev., Emp. and Labour Relations (MSD, E & L) /Diplomatic Missions	Ministry of Foreign Relations (MFR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create database and provide link for registration • Provide publicity through media to general public and Mission for migrant workers to register in the web page • Use a format in Sinhala/Tamil to assist workers to understand what information is required to register • Use Mission official web-site and social media page, SLBFE web-site and social media page to provide easy access to the link • Provide login credentials to Missions to enter data collected by them into the system 	No cost

Current Situation	Proposed Activity	Outcome	Timeline (Immediate/ Short Term/ Medium Term/ Long Term)	Responsibility		Strategies	Estimated Cost (USD)
				Leading Organization	Supporting Organization		
	1.2. Introduce a special WhatsApp number by the Sri Lanka Diplomatic Mission to facilitate migrant workers to communicate the information requested under 1.1. above to the Mission		Immediate	SLBFE/Diplomatic Missions	MFR MSD,E&L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issue circular instructions to the respective Mission to create dedicated Whatsapp numbers to assist migrant workers who need to register in the link (backup a chat history to the Google drive) The format of the required details could be displayed as profile image of the whatsapp account The SLBFE's 24 hour information center may also assist in obtaining information 	No cost
Unavailability of basic essential items to assist the migrant workers in the CoD	1.3. Provide essential food and other items to most vulnerable migrant workers to ensure basic needs are met	Essential food and other items are distributed to the migrant workers through the diplomatic missions	Immediate	SLBFE/ Diplomatic Missions	International Organizations/ MFR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate allocation of funds to the Missions (Circular issued with guidelines) Send imprest to Missions that require funds Monitor expenses regularly through the FR Division Deliver essential packs to needy people by the Mission Provide additional funds on request subject to approval of Chairman/Board of Directors 	USD 265,000 (for 5,000 migrant workers/ USD 53 each)

Current Situation	Proposed Activity	Outcome	Timeline (Immediate/ Short Term/ Medium Term/ Long Term)	Responsibility		Strategies	Estimated Cost (USD)
				Leading Organization	Supporting Organization		
No adequate space to accommodate influx of migrant workers who lost employment due to pandemic in safe houses	1.4. Provide temporary accommodation support for migrant workers who lost employment and housing facilities	Migrant workers have access to temporary accommodation	Immediate	SLBFE/ Diplomatic Missions	MFR / Authorities of COD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grant approval to rent out temporary premises to be used as Safe Houses based on the requirement of the Mission Grant approval to provide food and medicines as requested by the Mission 	USD 20,000
Migrant workers residing in host countries have an increased disease risk due to excessive exposure as a result of having to work in high risk conditions without adequate personal protective equipment, and excessive exposure at the community	1.5. Provide immediate medical assistance for migrants	Migrant workers benefit from increased access to quality health care services	Immediate	SLBFE/ Diplomatic Missions	MFR/ Authorities of COD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate approval to the Missions Provide protective equipment to Migrant Workers by Mission 	USD 300,000 (for 20,000 migrant workers/ USD 15)

Current Situation	Proposed Activity	Outcome	Timeline (Immediate/ Short Term/ Medium Term/ Long Term)	Responsibility		Strategies	Estimated Cost (USD)
<p>Non-payment of wages, retention of travel documents by employers, mobility restrictions would essentially place the domestic workers in a position where they may be unable to leave employer or to even seek help</p>	<p>1.6. Establish a mechanism with employers/ host country authorities to ensure migrant workers employment related grievances including current job contracts are continued and that the migrant workers receive their wages and entitlements.</p>	<p>Wages and entitlements are paid and incidence of physical and emotional abuse is reduced</p>	<p>Immediate</p>	<p>SLBFE/ Diplomatic Missions / LFEAs</p>	<p>MFR / International organizations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install and publish 24/7 hotlines • Deploy additional staff • Receive complaints through social media • Communicate with host country authorities on regular basis 	<p>No cost</p>

Current Situation	Proposed Activity	Outcome	Timeline (Immediate/ Short Term/ Medium Term/ Long Term)	Responsibility		Strategies	Estimated Cost (USD)
				Leading Org.	Supporting Org.		
Lack of information on the official websites to guide migrant workers on the assistance provided by the diplomatic missions and other entities	1.7. Develop and disseminate accurate, reliable and timely information to migrant workers through the official website and social media accounts of the MFR, MSD, E&L and SLBFE	Migrant workers benefit from accurate and timely information shared on the official websites	Immediate	SLBFE/ MSD, E&L / MFR	Diplomatic Missions / International Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide WHO developed information and reliable information through host country authorities to be shared among migrant workers • Share instructive videos and leaflets among migrant workers • Request Missions to share information with the SLBFE social media page when information and posts are shared on their pages • Assign an officer of the Publicity Division of the SLBFE to be alert on Mission web-sites and social media accounts to update information on SLBFE social media page and also to update officials of the 24 hour call center accordingly for the benefit of general public • Assign an officer of the IT Division of SLBFE update the SLBFE official website according to information given by Publicity Division/SLBFE 	No cost

Current Situation	Proposed Activity	Outcome	Timeline (Immediate/ Short Term/ Medium Term/ Long Term)	Responsibility		Strategies	Estimated Cost (USD)
				Leading Org.	Supporting Org.		
It is likely that the migrant workers have contracted the virus, but fear of deportation could prevent them from accessing medical care	1.8. Assist migrant workers who are infected by the virus to access information on seeking medical care	Migrant workers benefit from increased access to quality health care services	Immediate	SLBFE/ Diplomatic Missions	MFR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtain information from each Mission on the existing mechanism adopted Issue guidelines for Missions that have not established such mechanisms Disseminate relevant information by the Missions through appropriate communication channels 	USD 100,000
Lack of whole-of-government approach to assist migrant workers	1.9. Establish an inter-agency mechanism with participation of all relevant national authorities and other stakeholders to support /coordinate assistance for migrant workers in the affected countries of destination	Dialog and community cohesion fostered through enhanced interactions between the CoD and the diplomatic missions	Immediate	SLBFE/ MSD, E&L	Diplomatic Missions / MFR / Employment Agencies of CoD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtain information from each Mission on existing mechanisms Request Missions that have not established such a mechanism to create a mechanism (such as requesting focal points in the Foreign Ministry/Labour Ministry/Health Ministry of CoD) 	No cost

Current Situation	Proposed Activity	Outcome	Timeline (Immediate/ Short Term/ Medium Term/ Long Term)	Responsibility		Strategies	Estimated Cost (USD)
				Leading Org.	Supporting Org.		
Inability to practice physical distancing and other preventive methods during the COVID period and beyond	1.10. Establish a mechanism with employers/ host country authorities to ensure migrant workers are provided decent and healthy living conditions and that they can exercise physical distancing and other preventive methods	GoSL introduces a mechanism to ensure the Sri Lankan migrant workers are protected in the CoD	Immediate/Short term/ Medium term	SLBFE/ Diplomatic Missions	MFR / Employment Agencies of CoD / International Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtain information from each Mission on existing mechanisms Request Missions that have not established such a mechanism so far to identify relevant stakeholders and educate them accordingly Report the relevant authorities in case of non-compliance to the health guidelines 	No cost

Current Situation	Proposed Activity	Outcome	Timeline (Immediate/ Short Term/ Medium Term/ Long Term)	Responsibility		Strategies	Estimated Cost (USD)
				Leading Org.	Supporting Org.		
Non-functioning of formal channels to transfer remittances during the pandemic	1.11. Introduce and promote digital remittance pay-in and pay-out networks	GoSL has the capacity to facilitate digital remittance and migrants benefit using low cost channels to transfer	Medium term/Long term	SLBFE / MSD,E&L / Diplomatic Missions / Central Bank of Sri Lanka / Mobile Service providers / local banks	MFR/ International Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify issues and parties involved Communicate issues for their attention Find solutions by joint efforts 	USD 5,000

2. Measures to be taken to repatriate the migrant workers to Sri Lanka

Following the COVID-19 pandemic, large number of employers are compelled to downsize their operations or close down businesses, resulting in pay cuts and lay-off of workers. In the absence of a socio-economic safety net, migrant workers are forced to return to their country of origin. This in turn, has affected the households and the families left behind, including the migrant workers as they seek assistance on their visas and accommodation.

Further, countries such as Kuwait and Lebanon have declared an amnesty period for migrants, whereby allowing those undocumented or those who have overstayed their visas to register and leave the country without any penalties or bans on re-admission. Similarly, many countries have requested the migrant workers who cannot self-sustain, to return to their home countries. It is believed that low and semi-skilled migrant workers and migrant workers in the informal economy are some of the worst hit by the pandemic, as they would have to encounter financial hardships and social stigma upon their return.

Note: The following assumptions were made when calculating the estimated costs:

- 10,000 migrant workers are seeking assistance to be repatriated to Sri Lanka

Current Situation	Activities	Outcome	Timeline (Immediate/ Short Term/ Medium Term/ Long Term)	Responsibility		Strategies	Estimated Cost (USD)
				Leading Org.	Supporting Org.		
There are requests from the Sri Lankan migrant workers including those undocumented, for return assistance.	2.1. Assisto expedite issuance of travel documents for return and extension / renewal of passports of migrant workers wishing to remain in the CoD	Government of Sri Lanka facilitates the safe return of Sri Lankan migrants who are willing to be repatriated	Immediate	Diplomatic Missions / Sri Lanka Immigration	MFR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist migrant workers to complete formalities • Assist Consular Sections of the Missions to expedite the process 	No cost

Current Situation	Activities	Outcome	Timeline (Immediate/ Short Term/ Medium Term/ Long Term)		Responsibility		Strategies	Estimated Cost (USD)
			Leading Org.	Supporting Org.				
<p>A number of migrants have reported that they either found themselves without employment and/or have not been paid their dues due to the lockdown.</p> <p>Irregular migrants have indicated that they are no longer able to find daily paid jobs. Thus, willing to be repatriated to reunite with their family members</p>	<p>2.2. Assist to expedite obtaining exit clearances, especially for undocumented/overstayed migrant workers and also to receive of unpaid wages and other dues with the assistance of Authorities of CoD (e.g. social security claims, insurance claims, compensation etc.).</p>		Immediate	SLBFE/ Diplomatic Missions /	MFR		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish communication with the focal points of the relevant authorities Assist migrant workers to comply with required formalities Request authorities concerned to waive off penalties applicable for overstay Assist migrant workers to find source of funds to settle overstay fines (if authorities do not waive off such fines) Coordinate with relevant authorities with regard to unpaid wages and other dues 	USD 10,000

Current Situation	Activities	Outcome	Timeline (Immediate/ Short Term/ Medium Term/ Long Term)	Responsibility		Strategies	Estimated Cost (USD)
				Leading Org.	Supporting Org.		
	2.3. Facilitate repatriation to Sri Lanka (including assistance with transportation to the airport, air travel and personal belongings /luggage)		Immediate /short term	Presidential Task Force ⁶ / SLBFE & MSD, E & L / Diplomatic Missions / Sri Lanka Customs	MFR / International Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate details of flight arrangements to those who wish to return to Sri Lanka Deploy staff and vehicles as appropriate (including transportation of personal belongings) Assist needy migrant workers to purchase air tickets and for other travel arrangements Provide financial assistance to distressed migrant workers to purchase air tickets 	Tickets USD 1,250,000 (500 USD 2,500 tickets – financial assistance for air tickets will be considered under very special circumstances)
	2.4. Conduct pre-departure medical screening/assessment if facilities are available, and provide personal protection gear and sanitary items		Immediate	SLBFE /Diplomatic Missions &	MFR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify approved institutions and procedures with regard to conducting medical screening (including PCR Test) Request authorities concerned to provide medical screening (including PCR Test) free of charge If there is a cost involvement for medical screening, provide financial assistance to distressed migrant workers Assist the rest of migrant workers to obtain those facilities at their costs 	USD 150,000 (For 10,000 migrant workers /15 USD)

⁶Note: Presidential Task Force or relevant Ministry / Department in the event the Task Force is dissolved at the time of implementation of the Plan

Current Situation	Activities	Outcome	Timeline (Immediate/ Short Term/ Medium Term/ Long Term)	Responsibility		Strategies	Estimated Cost (USD)
				Leading Org.	Supporting Org.		
	2.5. Provide airport assistance in coordination with the country of departure		Immediate /medium	Diplomatic Missions /SLBFE	MFR/ International Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate with relevant authorities to obtain approval to provide departure assistance to Sri Lankan migrant workers Deploy staff to extend assistance 	USD 5,000

3. Measures to be taken at the point of entry and on immediate post-arrival

Government of Sri Lanka closed all international airports on 19th March 2020 until further notice, to prevent the spread of COVID-19. So far, the Government has repatriated selected groups of migrants from countries including China, Australia, India, Nepal, Pakistan and the United Kingdom, and it is believed that a considerable number of migrant workers will be repatriated in the time to come. Thus, special repatriation programmes should be formulated to ensure that the repatriation remains consistent with the ongoing quarantine process.

Note: The following assumptions were made when calculating the estimated costs:

- 10,000 migrant workers are willing to be repatriated to Sri Lanka

Current Situation	Proposed Activity	Outcome	Timeline	Responsibility		Strategies	Estimated Cost (USD)
				Leading Org.	Supporting Org.		
3.1 Point of Entry							
Second wave of the transmission of the virus from returnees is high and would pose risks to staff working at points of entry and to the country in general	3.1.1. Conduct COVID-19 testing and medical screening on all migrant workers upon arrival	GoSL introduces measures to reduce the risk of transmission through early detection	Immediate	Presidential Task Force ⁷ / Ministry of Health	AASL/ SLBFE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make use of the existing arrangement of the Government • If necessary obtain assistance from Ministry of Health for the same 	PCR test – 32 USD per person Total 320,000 USD for 10,000 tests

⁷Note: Presidential Task Force or relevant Ministry / Department in the event the Task Force is dissolved at the time of implementation of the Plan

Current Situation	Proposed Activity	Outcome	Timeline	Responsibility		Strategies	Estimated Cost (USD)
				Leading Org.	Supporting Org.		
	3.1.2. Provide food, refreshment, clothing etc. upon arrival	Basic needs are satisfied upon arrival whilst assisting in the preparation for the quarantine process	Immediate	Presidential Task Force ⁸ / SLBFE	International Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply existing mechanism of the Government If needed, arrange service by the SLBFE through suppliers approved by the Airport authorities 	Food (Meal) –3 USD per person total 30,000 USD Refreshment- (Juice / Tea Coffee) –1 USD per person 10,000 USD Clothing – Essentials as per requirement, 12 USD per person for 2,500 persons- 30, 000 USD in total

⁸Note: Presidential Task Force or relevant Ministry / Department in the event the Task Force is dissolved at the time of implementation of the Plan

Current Situation	Proposed Activity	Outcome	Timeline	Responsibility		Strategies	Estimated Cost (USD)
				Leading Org.	Supporting Org.		
	3.1.3 Provide reception assistance in coordination with relevant authorities (for luggage and other personal belongings)		Immediate	Presidential Task Force / SLBFE & MSD, E & L		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply existing mechanism of the Government If necessary staff will be deployed by the SLBFE Airport Division Submit a request to the Ministry of Finance through the line Ministry seeking waiving off demurrages imposed on luggage 	Transport cost – USD20,000 (USD 50 per baggage of 25 persons) Cost of PPE for Staff and Returnees – USD 20,000
	3.1.4 Provide transportation assistance to the quarantine centres	Migrant workers are facilitated to the quarantine centers	Immediate	Presidential Task Force	SLBFE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply existing mechanism of the Government If necessary vehicles will be arranged by the SLBFE 	Transportation cost-25,000 USD Vehicles (Buses) – Sanitization Equipment – PPE equipment(to be used at Quarantine centers – USD 20,000

Current Situation	Proposed Activity	Outcome	Timeline	Responsibility		Strategies	Estimated Cost (USD)
				Leading Org.	Supporting Org.		
3.2 Immediate Post Arrival							
Existing quarantine facilities in Sri Lanka are already accommodating a significant number of Sri Lankans. Available resources to accommodate a large number of returning migrant workers are not sufficient	3.2.1 Provide post arrival counselling assistance if required	Migrant workers benefit through psychosocial assistance	Immediate	Presidential Task Force ⁹ / SLBFE	International Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply existing mechanism of the Government Arrange counsellors through international Organizations, NGOs, Ministry of Women Affairs and DS Offices by the SLBFE with concurrence of Management of Quarantine Centers (Discussions to be held with relevant parties and obtain contact points and possible means of assistance) 	Cost – USD 25 per session and for 50 sessions- USD 1,250 PPE for Counselor and Migrant –USD 5,000 Logistics - USD 500
	3.2.2 Establish and manage quarantine centres for returnee migrant workers with support of relevant national authorities, UN and International Organizations	GoSL introduces measures to ensure safety and protection of the returned migrant workers	Immediate	Presidential Task Force / SLBFE	International Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply existing mechanism of the Government Arrange Ratnapura, Hali-Ela and Tangalle SLBFE Centers during the first phase if necessary in consultation with Health Authorities and other connected Government entities Arrange second phase at Mathugama Center, Dambulla Center and Kataragama Circuit Bungalow Outsource premises under Third phase 	USD 3,500,000 (For 10,000 migrant workers/ 350 USD)

⁹Note: Presidential Task Force or relevant Ministry / Department in the event the Task Force is dissolved at the time of implementation of the Plan

Current Situation	Proposed Activity	Outcome	Timeline	Responsibility		Strategies	Estimated Cost (USD)
				Leading Org.	Supporting Org.		
With the return of a large number of migrant workers and as a result of limited resources available at quarantine centers, it is crucial to promote self/home quarantine upon return. In order to ensure adherence to the guidelines for self/home quarantine, the most effective real time solution would be to introduce the relevant technologies to the health and security authorities	3.2.3 Develop technology-based solution to assist home quarantine compliance and enhanced health surveillance of returned migrants	GoSL ensures that returnees are briefed on physical distancing, home quarantine and other general health regulations	Immediate	Presidential Task Force ¹⁰ /SLBFE	International Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify relevant service providers through Sri Lanka Invertors Commission or any other service providers (self-quarantine people monitoring system / Health Monitoring Watch) Purchase through procurement process Monitor through PHIs Discuss with mobile service providers to provide SIM cards so that telecommunication is facilitated between migrant workers and PHIs, and if required by DOs 	Mobile facilities – USD 5,000 Internet facilities –USD 5,000 Mobile / other devices to maintain correspondence – USD 5,000

¹⁰Note: Presidential Task Force or relevant Ministry / Department in the event the Task Force is dissolved at the time of implementation of the Plan

Current Situation	Proposed Activity	Outcome	Timeline	Responsibility		Strategies	Estimated Cost (USD)
				Leading Org.	Supporting Org.		
At present, COVID-19 related epidemiological information is effectively being disseminated through a number of mediums and platforms. However, it is important to provide information specific to the case of returning migrant workers	3.2.4 Disseminate information in all languages to cover large migrant groups to address language barriers on protection, access to healthcare, stigma, self-quarantine within the country		Short term/ Medium term	Presidential Task Force/ SLBFE / MSD, E & L	International Organizations/ Civil Societies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request guidelines from the Ministry of Health Prepare leaflets with the concurrence of the Ministry of Health Disseminate information through social media accounts and official web-sites Educate DOs and provide information through DSS 	USD 5,000
Returning migrant workers may not have the necessary means of transportation to reach home, with heavy luggage, from the quarantine centres.	3.2.5 Provide transport facilities for returning migrant workers to go to their respective homes from quarantine centres	Migrant workers benefit from obtaining their basic necessities as they integrate to the society	Immediate	Presidential Task Force ¹¹ / SLBFE	International Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply the existing mechanism of the Government Arrange transport facilities by the SLBFE if necessary 	Transportation cost -USD 25,000 20,000 (USD 50 per baggage of 25 persons)

¹¹Note: Presidential Task Force or relevant Ministry / Department in the event the Task Force is dissolved at the time of implementation of the Plan

Current Situation	Proposed Activity	Outcome	Timeline	Responsibility		Strategies	Estimated Cost (USD)
				Leading Org.	Supporting Org.		
Quarantine centres are located all over the country and these returning migrant workers may not be placed in a quarantine center which is close to his/her residence. Under ongoing movement restrictions in the country it is crucial to provide these migrants with transport from quarantine facilities to their residences							
	3.2.6 Update the database which can be utilized to record physical and health condition as well as the location details (Can be utilized to contact migrants post quarantine)		Immediate	Ministry of Health / SLBFE/ MSD, E & L		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare forms and hand over to quarantine centers for distribution amongst returnees (migrant workers) Collect information at the quarantine centers and feed data into the IT system 	No cost

4. Measures required with regard to Reintegration

General Context

With a predicted global recession associated with COVID-19, affecting businesses, manufacturing, industries and in various other low skilled and semi-skilled sectors, employers in countries of destination will be compelled to take drastic measures related to downsizing operations, termination of employment, pay-cuts, or business closures altogether. With Amnesties being declared in several Middle Eastern countries, many undocumented migrants have sought assistance to return to Sri Lanka. Migrant workers (With both regular and irregular migratory status) who opt to return, will require immediate, medium and long-term interventions to recover from the socio-economic impact.

Already the effects of COVID-19 are witnessed in Sri Lanka. Many Sri Lankan migrant workers who are employed in the Middle East, Italy and South Korea, have already experienced job losses. Lack of livelihood options will have negative impacts on returnees, pushing them and their families into further vulnerability. Such vulnerability can easily be exploited by traffickers for their own personal gain, capitalizing on the widespread human, material, social and economic losses.

Against this backdrop, migrant specific and targeted interventions contributing to their socio-economic recovery of returnees are of utmost importance. A wide array of interventions is needed for their basic needs, livelihood assistance, psychosocial support and other specialized services/assistance. Reintegration is considered sustainable when returnees have reached levels of economic self-sufficiency, social stability within their communities, and psychosocial well-being that allow them to cope with (re)migration drivers. The GoSL duly recognizes the contribution made by migrant workers and will facilitate their return and reintegration with opportunities for skill transfer, productive employment and sustainable re-integration.

Note: The following assumptions were made when calculating the estimated costs:

100 vulnerable individuals would require shelter assistance

Current Situation	Proposed Activity	Outcome	Timeline	Responsibility		Estimated Cost(USD)
		Leading Org.	Supporting Org.			
<p>Migrant returnees specially those who are in vulnerable situations and do not wish to return to their villages or communities due to precarious incidents experienced at countries of destination, may require temporary accommodation or shelter assistance upon return</p>	<p>4.1. Provide shelter assistance for the most vulnerable, especially the women returnees with children</p>	<p>Vulnerable returnees avail the services such as shelter/ temporary accommodation through institutionalized mechanisms</p>	<p>Immediate / short term</p>	<p>SLBFE/ Department of Probation and Child Care / Ministry of Women and Child Affairs</p>	<p>International Organizations/ Civil Societies</p>	<p>USD 106 per month per adult person X 3 months X 100 vulnerable individuals – USD 31,800 (Additionally, USD 53 per month per each child accompanied by the parent) USD 15,300 {3 months X100 children)</p>
				<p>Identify and establish links with suitable shelters owned by the Government and Non-Government institutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer such returnees to selected shelters and inform details of those workers to the Department of Probation and Child Care and Child Protection Authority Extend further assistance if needed 		

Current Situation	Proposed Activity	Outcome	Timeline	Responsibility		Strategies	Estimated Cost(USD)
				Leading Org.	Supporting Org.		
<p>Many migrants return to Sri Lanka due to economic losses or rapidly evolving situation and risks associated with COVID-19. Returnees may opt to re-migrate for employment once the situation is improved and the environment is conducive for work in destination countries. Details of such aspirant migrants can be collected through Foreign Employment Development Officers (FEDO) attached to divisional and district secretariats for informed decision and policy making.</p>	<p>4.2. Collect data from the returnee migrant workers on their future aspirations and options and update the existing database accordingly</p>	<p>GoSL formulates policies and makes informed decisions based on an evidence based assessment of re-migration aspirations, trends related to labour migration</p>	<p>Medium term</p>	<p>MSD, E & L / SLBFE</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collect information through DOs and Provincial Offices of the SLBFE Enter the details into the IT system 	<p>USD 15,000</p>

Current Situation	Proposed Activity	Outcome	Timeline	Responsibility		Strategies	Estimated Cost (USD)
				Leading Org.	Supporting Org.		
<p>Returnees who have experienced job losses or who are already in indebtedness will require support to sustain their livelihoods.</p> <p>Further, migrant returnees suffering from elevated levels of stress/anxiety/distress caused as a result of economic losses, hardships and stigma, would require access to psychosocial support services.</p>	<p>4.3. Introduce sustainable reintegration measures to migrant workers, in particular in economic, social and psychosocial domains</p>	<p>GoSL implement concrete actions for the socio-economic recovery of returnee migrants and their families</p>	<p>Short term/ Medium</p>	<p>SLBFE MSD, E & L</p>	<p>International organizations/ Civil Societies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Filter details collected at quarantine centers, and through DOs and Provincial Offices of SLBFE Link details filtered with existing re-integration programmes and to create new programmes Provide counseling and psychosocial assistance free of charge by district and divisional level local govt. offices, NGOs, International Organizations for needy returnees 	<p>Economic re-integration package –USD 500 per vulnerable returnee x 2,500vulnerable returnees –USD 1,250,000 (assumed that all are not needed of this assistance)</p> <p>Counselling psychosocial assistance can be provided free of charge by district and divisional level local govt. offices, NGOs, charities, International Organizations</p>

Current Situation	Proposed Activity	Outcome	Timeline		Responsibility		Strategies	Estimated Cost (USD)
			Leading Org.	Supporting Org.				
<p>Returnees with low income and vulnerabilities will require immediate livelihood support to sustain during the initial 3-5 months. Relief packages and provision for immediate livelihood support become necessary. Documentation assistance may also be required by returnees. (NIC, relevant certificates from GramaNiladhari, divisional and district offices etc.)</p>	<p>4.4. Provide livelihood guidance and re-documentation</p>	<p>Returnee migrants have access to basic support services to address their immediate needs</p>	<p>SLBFE / MSD, E & L</p>	<p>International organizations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss with Banks and DSs to plan and implement programmes (e.g. arrange loans through banks/ facilitate to obtain membership and benefits of Samurdhi scheme) Provide information and assistance to establish grass-root level cooperative banks of migrant workers with the participation of returnees and those who are working abroad to support savings and investments 	<p>Documentation support can be provided by govt. authorities at no cost.</p>		

Current Situation	Proposed Activity	Outcome	Timeline	Responsibility		Strategies	Estimated Cost (USD)
				Leading Org.	Supporting Org.		
<p>Migrant returnees and their families suffering from anxiety and distress caused as a result of economic losses, hardships and stigma, would require access to counselling and psychosocial support services. Special services will be required by the most vulnerable categories such as victims of human trafficking who have undergone physical, psychological and sexual abuse.</p>	<p>4.5. Provide psychosocial support to the returnee migrants and their families which include most vulnerable groups such as elderly, differently abled, children, survivors of human trafficking and women to overcome abuse</p>	<p>Migrant communities are provided an enabling environment to overcome social barriers through psychosocial support and reduced stigma.</p>	<p>Short term</p>	<p>SLBFE / MSD, E & L / Ministry of Social Empowerment / Ministry of Women and Child Affairs</p>	<p>International organizations/ Civil Societies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss with district and divisional level local govt. offices, NGOs, International Organizations and provide continuous counselling and psychosocial assistance free of charge 	<p>General counselling and psychosocial assistance can be provided free of charge. USD 3,700 to assist special cases</p>

Current Situation	Proposed Activity	Outcome	Timeline	Responsibility		Strategies	Estimated Cost (USD)
				Leading Org.	Supporting Org.		
SLBFE maintains a Welfare Fund and has separate welfare schemes for returnees and their families such as low interest loan schemes, financial grants for self-employment, programmes to support migrants' children. Allocations under this scheme can be enhanced considering the current public health emergency situation.	4.6. Provide social welfare and relief packages through the SLBFE Welfare program	Migrant returnees avail themselves of provisions assured in insurance and social security schemes.	Short term / Medium term	SLBFE / MSD, E & L		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen the existing mechanisms (e.g. self-employment grant of Rs. 50,000 /providing school equipment for children/ low interest housing loan schemes through BoC, NSB and State Mortgage Bank) Discuss with banks such as Rural Development Bank to provide soft loans 	USD100,000

Current Situation	Proposed Activity	Outcome	Timeline	Responsibility		Strategies	Estimated Cost (USD)
				Leading Org.	Supporting Org.		
<p>Returnee migrants may need assistance with regard to grievance redressal with employers, to claim compensation and other entitlements. Due to the current situation many are likely to return without their wages and other entitlements. Special redressal mechanisms will be required to adjudicate these cases in an effective and expeditious manner.</p>	<p>4.7. Strengthen the existing grievance handling, compensation and recovery of entitlements mechanism</p>	<p>Migrant returnees gain access to effective and expeditious grievance handling mechanisms offered by the GoSL</p>	<p>Short term / Medium term</p>	<p>SLBFE/ Diplomatic Missions</p>	<p>MFR / International Organizations</p>	<p>Extend the facilities to returnees to lodge complaints online and convey them the progress via SMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>Services can be provided free of charge by the SLBFE, MFR</p>

Current Situation	Proposed Activity	Outcome	Timeline	Responsibility		Strategies	Estimated Cost (USD)
				Leading Org.	Supporting Org.		
<p>Many migrants are indebted prior to embarking on migration journeys. Premature termination of contracts will create specific vulnerabilities for migrants who will be unable to meet their debt repayment commitments.</p>	<p>4.8. Facilitate and support rescheduling debt repayment associated with migration journeys</p>	<p>Migrants are able to meet their debt repayment commitments. Economic and social vulnerabilities are reduced</p>	<p>Short term / Medium term</p>	<p>SLBFE / Ministry of Finance</p>	<p>Local banks and financial institutions</p>	<p>Discuss with relevant banks and arrange customized schemes</p>	<p>No cost</p>

Current Situation	Proposed Activity	Outcome	Timeline	Responsibility		Strategies	Estimated Cost (USD)
				Leading Org.	Supporting Org.		
<p>The Ministry of Skills Development and associated bodies such as Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission (TVEC), National Apprenticeship and Industrial Training Authority (NAITA) play an important role to enhance the skills of aspirant migrant workers. Based on the labour market assessments in destination countries returnees/aspirant migrant workers can be guided to enhance their skills and re-employability.</p>	<p>4.9. Recognize and certify skills of the returnee migrant workers to match the labour demand for skilled labour in Sri Lanka</p>	<p>Migrant returnees gain access to decent employment opportunities with upgraded skills.</p>	<p>Medium term/ Long term</p>	<p>SLBFE / MSD, E & L / TVEC / Department of Manpower and Employment</p>	<p>International Organizations/ Employers' Federation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify opportunities available in the market and skill gaps Identify those who need RPL Refer identified candidates to the relevant Vocational Training Institutes for necessary training 	<p>No cost</p>
	<p>4.10. Establish a mechanism for local job placement for returnee workers not willing to re-migrate</p>	<p>Local employers recognize skills and accept/support returnee migrant workers</p>	<p>Short term / Medium term</p>	<p>SLBFE / MSD, E & L, Dep. of Manpower and Emp.</p>	<p>International Organizations/ Employers' and workers' organizations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Filter data from the collected information on returnees who do not wish to re-migrate and inquire on assistance needed for job placement to create a database for the same Discuss with the Department of Manpower and Employment and other relevant organizations on possible local employment opportunities Register employers who are willing to hire returnees (obtain expression of interest) 	<p>USD 1000</p>

Current Situation	Proposed Activity	Outcome	Timeline	Responsibility		Strategies	Estimated Cost (USD)
				Leading Org.	Supporting Org.		
<p>Further, Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) mechanism will enable the migrant returnees to convert skills, knowledge and experience gained into nationally recognized qualifications</p>							

Current Situation	Proposed Activity	Outcome	Timeline	Responsibility		Strategies	Estimated Cost (USD)
				Leading Org.	Supporting Org.		
Given the influx of migrants returning to country, there will be a need to create jobs and employment and to reduce pressure on unemployment	4.11. Facilitate jobs and employment creation for migrants through targeted entrepreneurship programs	Returnee migrants who are motivated to start up self-employment are able to engage in sustainable entrepreneurship activities	Medium term/ long term	SLBFE / MSD, E & L/ Banks / Industrial Development Board/ Export Development Board	International organizations/ Civil Societies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement programmes through SLBFE Provincial Offices under Senior Managers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> create returnee migrant networks (e.g. migrant workers' cooperative establishments) provide technical expertise and information on creating their own business such as restaurants /cleaning services/ caregiver services/ retail shops/small scale productions (similar to one assisted through the Uva Provincial Office named "Helabojun" where returnees cook meals to sell in the restaurant and vegetables are also purchased by them through returnee vendors) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> educate on procedures to follow to obtain business registration and setting up a business create business profiles and marketing strategies to reach out to clients provide assistance to create regional business channels (buying and selling through inter-region returnee networks) 	USD 10,000

5. Measures to be taken to support (re)migration

General Context

During recovery phase of the COVID-19 pandemic of migration for employment is expected. When economies start to grow, overseas labour markets will create employment opportunities for migrant workers. As a result, migrant workers who returned due to COVID-19 as well as other potential migrant workers are likely to pursue (re)migration for employment. When returned migrant workers pursue (re)migration, they may consider employment under their previous employers or pursue employment under a new employer. In both of these instances, especially low skilled workers, will require assistance to connect and negotiate with employers. Licensed Foreign Employment Agents (LFEAs) can play a crucial role in identifying and negotiating with employers in countries of destination making to avoid migrant workers being victims of unethical recruitment practices.

Due to the increased demand for migrant workers globally and the willingness of more and more people to pursue foreign employment, competition in overseas labour markets will automatically increase calling for targeted interventions on skills development and qualifications recognition to make Sri Lankan migrant workers more competitive. Similar to migrant workers nationals belonging to the workforce in destination countries are at the risk of losing jobs due to COVID-19. Therefore, during the recovery phase, destination countries will promote employment of nationals as a way of reducing unemployment within the country.

Current Situation	Proposed Activity	Outcome	Timeline	Responsibility		Strategies	Estimated Cost (USD)
				Leading Org.	Supporting Org.		
<p>Around 25 million jobs could be lost worldwide as a result of COVID-19.¹² More than 17,000¹³ Sri Lankan migrant workers are expected to return to Sri Lanka as a result of job losses</p>	<p>5.1 Conduct an evidence-based comprehensive post COVID-19 labour demand assessment of incountries of destination</p>	<p>Government of Sri Lanka has the capacity to facilitate (re)migration of returned migrant workers</p>	<p>Medium term/ Long term</p>	<p>SLBFE/ MSD,E&L/ Diplomatic Missions</p>	<p>MFR/ International Organizations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop guidelines to prepare market intelligence reports Issue instructions to the Diplomatic Missions, Licensed Foreign Employment agencies, Foreign Recruitment Agencies & other appropriate institutes overseas to provide market intelligence reports on regular basis. (e.g. Diplomatic officers seek assistance of Chambers of Commerce, Employers Associations, Trade and Commerce Divisions of Foreign Ministries and other Ministries, and such other entities overseas to obtain information) 	<p>USD 50,000</p>

¹² COVID-19: Protecting workers in the workplace: www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS_738742/lang-en/index.htm

¹³ Over 27,000 Sri Lankans express willingness to return: Foreign Ministry www.dailymirror.lk/print/front_page/Over-27-000-Sri-Lankans-express-willingness-to-return-Foreign-Ministry/2020-07-15

Current Situation	Proposed Activity	Outcome	Timeline	Responsibility		Strategies	Estimated Cost (USD)
				Leading Org.	Supporting Org.		
	5.2 Establish a placement strategy to facilitate deployment of the migrant workers to new employers with the assistance of the host country authorities		Medium term/ Long term	SLBFE/ Diplomatic Missions	MFR / LFEAS / Employment Agencies of CoD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate recruitment through Licensed Foreign Employment Agents Link Foreign Agents and employers through Diplomatic Missions to facilitate recruitment 	USD 10,000
	5.3 Establish a mechanism to re-deploy the migrant workers to the same employer, if requested by the migrant worker with assistance of host country recruitment agencies / employers		Medium term/ Long term	SLBFE/ Diplomatic Missions	MFR / LFEAS / Employment Agencies of CoD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish the web-portal and invite those who wish to re-migrate to register with the web-portal Educate interested migrant workers through Development Officers and Provincial Offices of the SLBFE to register with the web-portal If interested migrant workers are unable to register themselves, provide assistance through the SLBFE branch offices Provide assistance to returnees through Provincial Offices and Diplomatic Missions for re-employment 	USD 10,000

Current Situation	Proposed Activity	Outcome	Timeline	Responsibility		Strategies	Estimated Cost (USD)
				Leading Org.	Supporting Org.		
<p>Government of Sri Lanka has multiple bodies engaged in the skills development of the workforce.</p> <p>Institutions such as the Tertiary Vocational and Education Commission (TVEC) are involved in developing policies and programmes to cater to the evolving requirements and demands of all sectors in the labour market.</p>	<p>5.4 Promote mechanisms such as Recognition of Prior Learning to give opportunities to returning migrant workers to have their acquired skills and work experiences to be formally acknowledged for better skilled positions</p>		<p>Medium term/ Long term</p>	<p>SLBFE / MSD, E &L/ TVEC</p>	<p>International Organizations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite returnees to SLBFE Branch Offices for briefing and assessment with the support of TVEC. • Facilitate returnees for RPL 	<p>15,000 [10,000 (cost of a national-level refresher training) + 5,000 (information campaign)]</p>
	<p>5.5 Enhance skills of the Sri Lankan labour migrants to better meet foreign market demands for skilled jobs</p>		<p>Long term</p>	<p>SLBFE / MSD, E &L/ TVEC</p>	<p>International Organizations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify needy persons and provide skill upgraded training courses for returnees through Vocational Training Institutes approved by TVEC 	<p>USD 30,000 [15,000 (literature review and develop a programme for skills development based on the labour market assessment in 5.1) + 10,000 (ToT) + 5,000 (information campaign)]</p>

Current Situation	Proposed Activity	Outcome	Timeline	Responsibility		Strategies	Estimated Cost (USD)
				Leading Org.	Supporting Org.		
<p>Sri Lanka has a mechanism for the recognition of qualifications, Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), that can be used for qualifications recognition of returning migrant workers due to COVID-19. This mechanism was reviewed, and pilot tested among 200 returnee construction workers in 2017.</p> <p>Government of Sri Lanka, relevant United Nations agencies, civil society organizations and formal and informal migrant worker networks have a number of ongoing awareness raising efforts promoting and educating about safe, orderly and regular migration and prevent irregular migration.</p>	<p>5.6 Raise awareness among the general public on fair and ethical recruitment and safe and regular migration and the risks of irregular migration and human trafficking in line with existing awareness programmes</p>	<p>Potential migrant workers are informed about safe, orderly and regular migration</p>	<p>Short term/ Medium term/ Long term</p>	<p>SLBFE / MSD, E & L</p>	<p>International Organizations / Civil Societies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct programmes through Mass Media / Social Media awareness Conduct awareness programmes (for general public at regional level, public officers, Licensed Foreign Employment Agents etc) 	<p>USD 10,000</p>

Current Situation	Proposed Activity	Outcome	Timeline	Leading Org.	Responsibility Supporting Org.	Strategies	Estimated Cost (USD)
<p>Post-COVID-19 irregular migration means of appealing with the envisaged influx of migrant workers wanting to (re)migrate and their socio-economic vulnerabilities.</p> <p>Hence it is crucial to strengthen existing awareness raising efforts of all relevant stakeholders by investing in complementary awareness raising interventions.</p>	<p>5.7 Facilitate through state banks an extension on the loan repayment of the migrant workers</p>		Short term	SLBFE/ Banks		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtain information from returnees who need extensions for loan repayment Discuss with the relevant Banks and facilitate returnees to forward their request to the bank 	No cost

Current Situation	Proposed Activity	Outcome	Timeline	Responsibility		Strategies	Estimated Cost (USD)
				Leading Org.	Supporting Org.		
Due to COVID-19 related movement restrictions and the closure of all airports in Sri Lanka, foreign employment has come to a halt. As a result, the business continuity of LFEAs has been adversely affected.	5.8 Provide financial assistance and a grace period for repayment of loans recruitment agents	Licensed Foreign Employment Agents have access to means of finance for business continuity and incentives to encourage employment promotion	Medium term	SLBFE/ Central Bank	Banks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtain information from licensees who seek financial assistance / grace period for the repayment of outstanding loans Discuss with relevant banks and facilitate to receive grace periods and further financial assistance 	No cost
	5.9 Exempt foreign employment businesses from income tax holidays for a specific period		Medium term	SLBFE / MSD, E & L/ Ministry of Finance		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare a proposal and submit to the line Ministry for concurrence Refer the approved proposal by the line Ministry to the Ministry of Finance Arrange tax holidays through Ministry of Finance/Commissioner General of Inland Revenue 	No cost
	5.10 Conduct SLBFE-led employment promotional programmes overseas for traditional and new markets with the participation of the LFEAs			Long term	SLBFE / Diplomatic Missions	MFR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the relevant Countries / Markets Select qualified Licensed Foreign Employment Agents and issue them the guidelines for preparation Plan and organize employment promotional programmes with the assistance of Sri Lanka Diplomatic Missions Prepare required employment promotional materials

Current Situation	Proposed Activity	Outcome	Timeline	Responsibility		Strategies	Estimated Cost (USD)
				Leading Org.	Supporting Org.		
	5.11 Introduce financial and non-financial performance-based incentives for LFEAs		Long term	SLBFE		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare appropriate schemes along with budgets • Obtain necessary approvals • Call for applications and select qualified LFEAs for benefits 	USD 100,000
	5.12 Provide assistance to LFEAs for employment promotion		Long term	SLBFE		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare criteria and obtain necessary approvals to provide financial / non-financial assistance to conduct Local and Overseas job fairs. • Call for proposals • Evaluate and offer assistance 	USD 100,000
	5.13 Introduce import duty concessions for LFEAs based on the foreign exchange earnings		Long term	SLBFE / MSD, E &L/ Ministry of Finance		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare a proposal and submit to the line Ministry for concurrence • Refer the approved proposal by the line Ministry to the Ministry of Finance • Arrange duty concessions through Ministry of Finance/Sri Lanka Customs 	No cost

Current Situation	Proposed Activity	Outcome	Timeline	Responsibility		Strategies	Estimated Cost (USD)
				Leading Org.	Supporting Org.		
Due to COVID-19, remittance inflows to Sri Lanka is expected to reduce significantly. During the recovery phase, it is crucial to encourage foreign employment by rewarding migrant workers for their contribution to the Sri Lankan economy.	5.14 Increase the duty-free allowance to USD 5,000 for those who return to the country after completion of two terms of two years or more and USD 2,500 for those who complete one term of two years	Government of Sri Lanka introduces appropriate measures to reward migrant workers in recognition of their contributions to the economy and encourage safe, orderly and regular migration	Long term	SLBFE / MSD, E &L/ Ministry of Finance		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare a proposal and submit to the line Ministry for concurrence Refer the approved proposal by the line Ministry to the Ministry of Finance Arrange duty free allowance through Ministry of Finance/Sri Lanka Customs 	No cost
	5.15 Introduce a loan scheme for migrant workers to meet cost of recruitment at a concessionary interest rate through banking system			Medium term	SLBFE / MSD, E &L/ Ministry of Finance		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss with both private and public banks and arrange appropriate loan schemes at concessionary rates Publish details of such schemes for information of prospective migrant workers through Mass Media and Social Media

Current Situation	Proposed Activity	Outcome	Timeline	Responsibility		Strategies	Estimated Cost (USD)
				Leading Org.	Supporting Org.		
Disaster preparedness needs to be strengthened in order to be able to allow institutions to quickly identify and support Sri Lankan migrant workers currently abroad.	5.16 Collect lessons learned from the COVID-19 response in order to revise existing disaster response procedures and renegotiate BLAs/MOUs with countries of destination	The Government of Sri Lanka increases its disaster preparedness plans and is able to provide immediate and needed support to its citizens worldwide.	Long term	SLBFE / MSD, E & L / MFR	International Organizations / Banks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collect information of local and overseas stakeholders' on lessons learned Identify gaps in the current MoUs/BLAs and disaster response procedures Discuss with the line Ministry and other relevant stakeholders on amendments to MoUs/BLAs Forward the same to MFR through line Ministry Conduct bilateral discussions with relevant counterpart through Missions and look into the possibility to enter into new MoUs/Agreements subsequent to agreeing on proposed revisions 	USD 3,000 for report drafting and validation

NOTE:

Short Term= 1-6 months

Medium Term= 7-12 months

Long Term= More than 1 year

Estimated Cost (Summary):

The Relevant Stage	Estimated Cost (USD)
1. Measures required at the Country of Destination (CoD)	690,000
2. Measures to be taken to repatriate the migrant workers to Sri Lanka	1,415,000
3. Measures to be taken at the point of entry and on immediate post-arrival	4,046,750
4. Measures required with regard to Reintegration	1,426,800
5. Measures to be taken to support (re)migration	1,078,000
Total Estimated Cost	8,656,550

The entire estimated cost will not be a burden to the GOSL/ SLBFE since there will be contributions from migrant workers (e.g. for air tickets etc.), international organizations and donors.

Abbreviations:

LFEAs- Licensed Foreign Employment Agencies in Sri Lanka

COD- Country of Destination

MSD, E & L- Ministry of Skills Development, Employment & Labour Relations

Diplomatic Missions- Sri Lanka Diplomatic Missions

AASL- Airport & Aviation Services Ltd.

MFR- Ministry of Foreign Relations

Members of the Working Groups:

Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (SLBFE)

1. Mr. D.D.P. Senanayake, Additional General Manager (Corporate Affairs), SLBFE
2. Ms. KisholiPerera, Additional General Manager (Local Affairs), SLBFE
3. Mr. K.L.H.K. Wijeratne, Deputy General Manager (Foreign Relations), SLBFE
4. Mr. M.R.C.B. Ekanayake, Deputy General Manager (Planning and Research), SLBFE

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

1. Ms. AmrithaMuttiahMalawikankanamge, Project Coordinator, IOM
2. Ms. DevmiDampella, Project Coordinator, IOM
3. Ms. Minoli P. Don, National Programme Officer, IOM
4. Mr. ShanthaKulasekara, Head-Migration Governance, IOM

International Labour Organization (ILO)

1. Mr. Jesse Mertens, Technical Officer, ILO
2. Ms. Thilini Fernando, National Project Coordinator, ILO