

# STRATEGY TO CREATE JOB OPPORTUNITIES IN LESS-DEVELOPED COUNTRIES CASE STUDY OF AFGHANISTAN AND BANGLADESH

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## Abstract

*The problem of unemployment in less developed countries has been arduous challenge and carnage of life. The main objective of this research study is to find the factors for generating employment opportunities in less developed countries and to formulate effective strategy on the basis of those factors that could be implemented to overcome the problem of unemployment. This research is conducted through collecting secondary data. The secondary data has been collected from the books of development economics, World Bank, UNDP, IMF publications and various research articles. The conclusion is drawn from the above research studies that effective strategies for reducing unemployment should properly be formulated, implemented and evaluated which will help people prospering their live under growing economic conditions and globalization will ever experience an example of global apartment where poor will become no poorer and less developed countries will be parallel to developed countries.*

**Keywords:** *Less developed, Developed, Unemployment, Strategy*

## Introduction:

World is facing today three major challenges and opportunities including; globalization, the effects of advances in technology and deregulation. To survive in present information age, less developed countries are required to circumvent stone-age practices and must accelerate economic growth on suggested paths of development. Different less developed nations of the world experience culmination

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of technology and augmenting collaborative attitude of developed world that increase the gap between rich and poor.

Development is the process of improving the quality of all human lives and capabilities by raising people's levels of living, self-esteem and freedom (Michael and Smith, 2002). Under-developed nations of the world intend to deplete problems of their people but dearth availability of resources and slow movement of their economic vehicles restrict them. The living inhabitants in those less developed nations dreamt to prosper their lives and want to change fate of their mother lands to get entry in development and being parallel to developed nations. Least developed nations could not ensure adequate employment opportunities which result poor levels of living and bound people to survive at basic subsistence level.

It is very difficult to understand unemployment in less developed countries (LDC's) without having bird's eye view on how it is different from that in the west. The unemployed in LDC's are hardly baffled by extreme poverty and low standards of living. The high magnitude of unemployment in LDC's represents a vast majority of underutilization of human capital, who are educated youths, settled in urban societies become a potential source of social turmoil and political destabilization. However in West, the situation is entirely different reflecting structural changes and advanced methods of human and technological resource mobilizations. Due to rapid industrialization, internal and international migrations to urban areas and technical progress provide abundance of employment opportunities to labors which ultimately increases labor demand. Economists believe that rapid industrialization would drive the slow pace of LDC's to faster result oriented latitudes of employment, growth and development which is difficult in real practices (Wayne, 2012).

It is an open economy that trades goods and services as well as the financial assets with the rest of the world. As countries have openness

to exchange with the rest of world, it is positive sign of emerging and developing economies so their degree of financial integration with other countries of the world tends to increase (Peter, 2011). The World Trade Organization (WTO, 2001) gives flexible and less restrictive international trade environment to LDC's, highlighted features of this less restricted environment are: provisions aimed at increasing trade opportunities through market access; provisions required WTO members to safeguard the interests of LDC's; provisions allowing flexibility to least developed nations in rules and disciplines governing trade measures; provisions allowing longer transitional periods and provisions of technical assistance. The provision of these benefits grants them privileges and opportunities to prosper their economies. WTO's trade related technical assistance lies in sustaining human and institutional capacity in less developed countries (World Trade Organization, 2001).

### **Research Objectives**

1. The main objective of this research is to find the factors for generating employment opportunities in less developed countries.
2. Another objective is to formulate effective strategy on the basis of those factors that could be implemented in less developed countries to overcome their problem of unemployment.

### **Research Methodology**

This research is conducted through collecting secondary data. Secondary data has been collected from the book on development economics by Michael P. Todaro, World Bank publications on less developed countries, United Nations Development Program publications on Human Development Index, IMF's publications on economy of china and various research articles related to developed,

developing and less developed economies. Using convenience sampling method, two less developed countries i.e Afghanistan and Bangladesh have been selected for case study.

### **Developed, Developing and Less Developed Economies**

*Developed Economies:* Business dictionary defines Development Economies as:

An economy enjoying sustained economic growth and security. Some of the highlighted features of developed economy are low birth rate and higher life expectancy, high levels of literacy and a well trained workforce and the export of high value work goods. High gross domestic product is also a great measure of developed economy.

Developed economies are adhering to transition of economic development. Among most highlighted features of developed economies is related to shift of labor out of the agriculture sector to the manufacturing and service enterprises. The purpose of this transformation is very limited growth of agriculture sector which could not absorb surplus labor in the face of growing population levels (Schultz and Strauss, 2008).

Developed nations of the world enjoy highest per capita incomes which sustain lives of their people at high standards of living. The United Nations Development Program latest report on human development index showed the index of top ranking developed countries of the world in perspective of very high human development. Among them, Norway stands first in the world with life expectancy at birth is 81.5, expenditure on education 6.93% of GDP, employment to population ratio 65.5, international trade 68.18% of GDP, foreign direct investment and net inflows 1.48% of GDP, and with total population of 5.03 million. Comparatively, United States of America ranked 5<sup>th</sup> in the world with life expectancy at birth is 78.94, expenditure on education is 5.62% of GDP, employment to population ratio is 61, international trade 31.73% of GDP, foreign

direct investment and net inflows 1.31% of GDP, and with total population of 320.05 million (United Nations Development Program, 2015).

Afterwards it is important to have a glance at developed and developing countries gross domestic product's (GDP) growth in recent years. GDP growth is also a main indicator of latest growth of economies in spheres of developed and developing countries. Gross domestic product is the market value of all final goods and services produced within the boundaries of country in a year. The organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) conduct interim forecasts of GDP growth. The countries included United States of America, Japan, China, Euro area and others.



## OECD interim forecasts

### GDP growth

Per cent

	2013	2014	2015
United States	2.2	2.1	3.1
Euro area	-0.4	0.8	1.1
Japan	1.6	0.9	1.1
Germany	0.2	1.5	1.5
France	0.4	0.4	1.0
Italy	-1.8	-0.4	0.1
United Kingdom	1.8	3.1	2.8
Canada	2.0	2.3	2.7
China	7.7	7.4	7.3
India	4.7	5.7	5.9
Brazil	2.5	0.3	1.4

Note: GDP at market value adjusted for working days. For Germany and India, this measure may differ from national headline measures.

7

**Table 1: This data is retrieved from: [www.oecd.org/eco/outlook/Interim-Assessment-Handout-Sep-2014.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/eco/outlook/Interim-Assessment-Handout-Sep-2014.pdf)**

The above interim forecast of GDP growth generates a question in mind that why is China growing so fast?

IMF research team conducted survey, studied facts and ground realities of growth sources in China. They found that increase in the country's stock of capital assets, such as new factories, manufacturing machinery and communication system as well as increase in the productivity of Chinese workers was a driving force behind the economic boom (International Monetary Fund, 2004).

China being the largest trading nation, second biggest economy and the third biggest investor of the world at present. Albeit these achievements, China is still a developing country with a large population and low per capita GDP. The standard settled by World Bank, there were 200 million Chinese people still living below poverty line in 2013 (Yaou, 2014).

### *Developing Economies*

According to Oxford dictionary, a developing country is a poorly agricultural country that is seeking to become more advanced economically and socially. The most important structural features of developing countries are:

- Lower per capita income
- Low levels of human capital
- Higher population growth rates
- Predominance of agriculture and low levels of industrialization
- Low level of urbanization but rapid rural to urban migration
- Dominance of informal sector
- Less developed labor, financial and other markets

China is the fastest growing economy in the world. Its Human

Development Index showed life expectancy at birth 75.33, employment to population ratio 72.2, international trade 58.71% of GDP, foreign direct investment and net inflows 3.03% of GDP, and with a total population of 1385.57 million (United Nations Development Program, 2015).

***Less developed Economies:*** The United Nations Development Policy and Analysis Division (DESA) studied less developed Economies as given below:

Less developed Economies are called poor economic countries which undergo structural impediments to consistent development. These obstacles are narrated as low level of growth in human capital and high level of structural economic susceptibility. The appropriate method for measuring of national income is GNI per capita. The GNI per capita shows the income status of a country. The committee for policy development (CDP) uses GNI measurement expressed in US dollars. In this measurement method, currencies of country are converted into American dollars by using the Atlas method of World Bank (in calculating GNI in US dollars, World Bank uses Atlas method instead of Simple Exchange rate). The standard for addition is based on three years average of the level of GNI per capita, which the World Bank used to classify low income countries (United Nations Development Program, 2015).

Human Assets Index (HAI) is a measure of structural impediment. To know the level of human capital development, human assets index provides necessary information. There are four indicators of its measurement; two are health and nutrition outcomes and two are related to education.

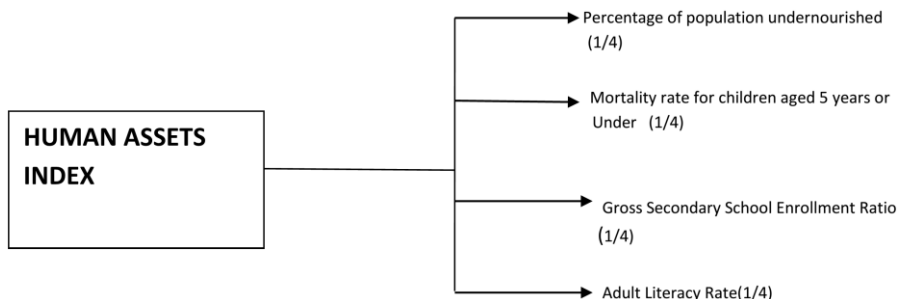


Table2: This data is retrieved from:

[http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/policy/cdp/lcd/lcd\\_criteria.shtml](http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/policy/cdp/lcd/lcd_criteria.shtml)

Related to HAI indicators in a table presented above, each variable is converted into index numbers and then Re-scaled to remove significant outliers. Each variable bear same credence in the computation of Human Assets Index. It is therefore resulted HAI the simple average of its four components. The Human Assets Index inception for incorporation is measured by the index number subsequent to the upper quartile in the division of results for the reference group of all less developed and other developing countries under evaluation. Countries with HAI values lower than the threshold meet the HAI criteria to be part of less developed countries (United Nations, 2014).

Economic vulnerability is another major obstacle to development. It determines the level of risk due to that exogenous shock and its impact on that country. The economic vulnerability index comprised of different standards that are classified into two extensive categories; exposure index and a shock index.

The exposure index includes size sub index (population), location sub index (remoteness), economic structure sub index (Merchandise export concentration and share of agriculture, forestry and fisheries), and environment sub index (share of population in low elevated coastal zones). The shock index includes trade shock sub index



(instability of exports of goods and services) and natural shock sub index (victims of natural disasters and instability of agricultural production) (United Nations, 2014).

Population size is another state finds out that a country is qualifying for status of less developed countries or not. In 1991, the committee for development policy proclaimed that states having population more than 75 million should not be eligible for addition in the category of less developed nations (United Nations, 2014).

### **Causes of Unemployment in Less developed Economies**

To have a more pragmatic view of main causes in less developed countries, two countries from continent of Asia like Afghanistan and Bangladesh are taken into account. Let's discuss the main causes of unemployment in these two countries:

#### ***Main reasons of unemployment in Afghanistan***

The National centre for policy research conducted study to highlight major reasons of unemployment in Afghanistan. The reasons are given below:

Afghanistan is an under-developed economy with a population of more than 31 million people and almost 36% people living below poverty line. Unemployment has been a great economic problem for the government of Afghanistan. Due to slow and volatile gross domestic product, low rate of investment, lack of government support of private sector, high population growth rate, repatriation of millions of migrants, lack of security, limited access to education, quality of education are the highlighted factors contribute to increase unemployment rate in the country (National Center for Policy Research, 2013).

The literacy rate which is very essential for reducing unemployment in Afghanistan is unfortunately 36%. Out of this rate, 32% is of males and only 13% is of females which result very low supply of effective

human capital to the job market. In connection to unemployment there are certain internal and external factors that also affect. The internal factors that affect the labor market are: Extensive supply of labor force, unavailability of skilled labor, low salary in government institutions, nepotism and unemployment in women. The external factors are large availability of external workforce belong to neighbor countries, and very less foreign direct investment (National Center for Policy Research, 2013).

### *Main reasons of unemployment in Bangladesh*

Bangladesh is another less developed economy, a densely populated country comprised of approximately 159 million people. Almost 32% people are living below poverty line. High rate of unemployment in Bangladesh is observed in agriculture sector as compared to manufacturing and services sector. In agriculture, peasants suffer disguised unemployment as for one season they become employed, for other they remain unemployed which pose a great challenge for the government to shift them in other sectors. Rapidly increasing population and scarce availability of resources put the families of villages below subsistence level. Rapid advancement in technology also made the farmers unemployed as patterns of cropping and harvesting land are done through machineries (Raisul, 2014).

In manufacturing sector of Bangladesh economy, slow growth, corruption, poor infrastructure, insufficient power supplies and slow implementation of economic reforms rarely encourage foreign investors to invest in the country. This scenario of manufacturing sector contributes to unemployment in Bangladesh. Services sector is also experiencing very slow growth in response to very rapid supply of new workforce in the market. For a massive labor force of 73 million, new jobs could not be offered.

It induces competent and educated youth of Bangladesh flying abroad to avail attractive career opportunities. As a result, Bangladesh economy lost talented youth due to unavailability of jobs

(Raisul, 2014).

### **Remedies for Reducing Unemployment in Less Developed Economies**

On the basis of reviewing major reasons of unemployment in less developed economies like Afghanistan and Bangladesh discussed above, following are the remedies to reduce unemployment:

Afghanistan economy has largely been affected by war and very less foreign direct investment. In the year 2013, GDP was recorded at about \$45.3 billion and the GDP per capita is \$1,100. The Afghan economy has grown 10% in last decade due to infusion of foreign aid and remittances from Afghan expats. This positive change in economy is the outcome of development in transportation system and agricultural production. The country is also famous in producing pomegranates, a major source of Afghan agricultural economy. Pomegranates fruit is major crop in most of the provinces like Kandhar, Helmand, Wardak, Ghazni, Paktia, Farah, Kapisa and Balkh. This crop has employed thousands of people and is a major source of livelihood for them. It is also a barely credible fact that 11% of the Afghan economy depends on production and sale of opium despite efforts have been made to eradicate this crop by government of Afghanistan as well as international community. Afghanistan is also known as world's largest producer of opium (Wikipedia, 2014).

One of the main drivers for current economic recovery is the return of over 5 million expatriates. These skilled and educated youth brought with them entrepreneurial ideas and wealth creating skills to start new businesses and boost the country's economy. As they establish new businesses which result in creating new employment opportunities and problem of unemployment might be reduced. Government of Afghanistan is developing economic ties with neighboring and other regional countries in the project so called New Silk Road trade project. The Silk Road is a series of trade and cultural transmission routes connecting east and west by linking traders,

merchants and others. Being a member country of SAARC, ECO and OIC, Afghanistan has many possibilities to enhance trade relations with countries coming in the South Asian Region (Wikipedia, 2014).

The economy of Bangladesh is also witnessing rapid growth in the world. In exports, Bangladesh is making records in selling products abroad including textile, seafood, fish as well as jute. It has experienced dramatic increase in foreign direct investment and to make it more attractive in future, government of Bangladesh also setup export processing zones. According to Food and Agriculture organization statistical data, Bangladesh is fifth producer of fisheries, fourth largest producer of rice, eleventh largest producer of potato, ninth largest producer of mango, second largest producer of Jute and eleventh largest producer of tea. In industry sector, garment industry of Bangladesh is major contribution to export earnings. In last few years ship building industry in Bangladesh is showing significant growth.

### *The Significance of FDI in Economic Development of Afghanistan & Bangladesh*

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) has been important source of economic development in Afghanistan. FDI influences the economic growth by filling the gap of saving-investment, trade, increasing productivity and employment opportunities, introduction of advances technology, increase in government revenues and managerial innovations. However the poor infrastructure and imbalance security situation creates a problem for foreign investors to invest in Afghanistan but new silk route provides maximum avenues to invest in Afghanistan (Muhammad, 2009).

Above research indicates that as FDI increases in Afghanistan, Economy will prosper which is a positive sign of creating more employment opportunities. FDI through silk route may attract member countries of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) as well as member countries of Organization

of Islamic Conference (OIC) to invest in construction sector. The construction sector in Afghanistan is growing rapidly and the embassy of Afghanistan in US mentioned that it contributes 10% of GDP in the country.

In case of Bangladesh, FDI plays an important role too in the economic development of country. During 1980's the FDI in Bangladesh was very low and it was just focusing on banking and few other sectors. Since 1996, FDI in Bangladesh started increasing because of the favorable supportive policies of government for foreign investment. In 1996, the FDI stood at 231.61 million US Dollars then it was significantly rose to 1086 million US Dollars in 2008 and then it declined to 913.32 million US Dollars in 2010. FDI helps the country in building up the infrastructure, creating more employment opportunities, enhancing skills of workforce in the host country through transferring technological knowledge and helping in managing the domestic economy and country's participation in the global economy (Afsana, 2012).

It witnessed significance of foreign direct investment in Bangladesh economy. Foreign direct investment not only contributes in generating employment opportunities but also promote domestic workforce in acquiring knowledge and adapting technology. FDI also help in increasing foreign remittance through which Bangladesh economy will achieve exchange rate stability and that investment will further support in export promotion through which balance of payment and trade will become favorable.

### *The Significance of Entrepreneurship in Creating Employment opportunities:*

Entrepreneurship is the process of starting new business with creativity and innovation. Some entrepreneurial developments in Afghanistan during past years witnessed significance of future. Zarang family based in Herat, Afghanistan began the business of Zarang Motorcycle Company by importing motorcycles before

starting their own operations. Due to lack of technical manufacturing capacity, one member of that family went to China, made a movie of whole assembly process, returned to Afghanistan and trained selected group of mechanics. Subsequently the company grew from 15 employees in 2005 to 200 employees in 2010 with diversification of business too. The Zarang motorcycle company had eight regional branches across the country (Cusack and Malmstorm, 2010).

Another entrepreneurial event highlights significance of Entrepreneurship in creating employment opportunities is Zalmey Afghan group. In 1996, Haji Zalmay Stanakzai started a construction company with 25 thousand dollars from his personal savings and acquiring seed capital from his friend. The company's portfolio included construction of roads, bridges, retaining walls and schools. Eventually company's revenue grew rapidly and was reported 650,000 dollars with 230 employees (Cusack & Malmstorm, 2010).

Therefore entrepreneurship in Afghanistan provides new avenues of economic development and employment opportunities at small, medium and large scale enterprises. Government of Afghanistan should provide secure and healthy environment to domestic and foreign entrepreneurs to start entrepreneurial businesses which result in new employment opportunities and economic development.

In case of Bangladesh, entrepreneurship witnessed to be the need of time for employment opportunities and economic development through small and medium scale enterprises. Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC), an NGO in Bangladesh, recorded problems of few entrepreneurial minds. A young entrepreneur, Ruma Akhter, first introduced to BRAC as a participant of social and financial empowerment of adolescents in which she learnt many social issues. Afterwards she had shown her interest to become a beautician then family of Ruma permitted her to go for two weeks beauty skill course in Savar. After completion of training course, Ruma took loan from BRAC up to 3000 Bangladesh Taka (USD 38) to

buy necessary equipment for Beauty parlor. Now she is working in her home and earning TK 1500-3000 (USD 19-38) for each bride she prepares. So Ruma proves to be role model for all the teen age young girls in Bangladesh (Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee, 2014).

This idea is also promoting women home based industry and dire need of micro financing for the youth of Bangladesh. Ruma not only become self-employed but she is trainer for all young girls who are willing to start their professional life and want to support their families financially, with small borrowing they can earn their livelihood and this SME development in the new shape of entrepreneurship can contribute to GDP growth and economic development of a country.

#### ***The role of Micro Financing in Creating Employment Opportunities in Afghanistan and Bangladesh:***

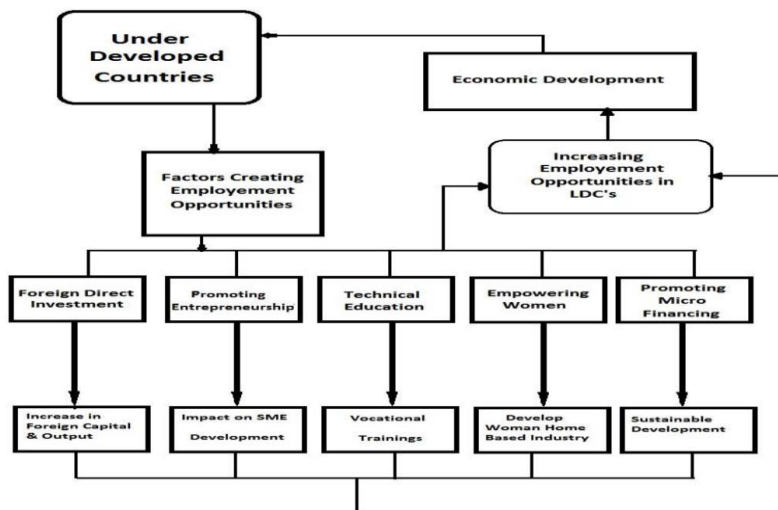
In case of Afghanistan, decades of war devastated country's economy and infrastructure, increase illiteracy and high poverty distress people hard. Due to security concerns, micro financing is highly affected and lack of skilled people is another barrier to run the programs. Micro financing is facing other challenges of sparsely populated rural areas and religious concerns for people not to borrow loan that involves repayment with interest. If you collect views of villagers, they want money to start small scale businesses to prosper their lives. Women have been ignorant part from micro financing schemes due to rigid religious attitudes of Islamist Taliban. In face of these challenges, still women are bold enough to promote their lives through professional development. Safia, 32, borrowed loan for starting small scale business of Stara beauty parlor. When she acquired loan and started business successfully, said, "I am mother of 02 children, now I am able to make an independent future (Michelle, 2010).

It refers that people of Afghanistan are empowered, willing, courageous and bold enough to improve their living standards and earn livelihood through self-started small scale businesses. Micro financing is pivotal in the present era Afghanistan to make people employed and to prosper their lives with sustainable development.

In Bangladesh, micro finance was initiated in 1970's to promote self-employment in people as well as to develop small scale businesses in rural Bangladesh plus this program intend to improve economic and social status of women. Females took active part in borrowing micro finance loans, the ratio was 65% in 1980's which rose to 95% by 1995. In this connection many NGO's came forward and started granting micro finance loans including Bangladesh rural advancement committee, association for social advancement and others (Sarahat and Sifat, 2012).

Above study reflects dire need of expanding micro financing projects in Bangladesh, which will make people self-employed, developed and it will develop economy of Bangladesh that will ultimately led the country to enter in phase of developing countries.

### Model for Creating Employment Opportunities in Less Developed Countries:





### **Strategy for Creating Employment Opportunities in Less Developed Countries:**

On the basis of above research findings and Model, following strategy may be implemented in less developed countries:

Rampant unemployment in less developed countries may be overcome if their governments pay heed to their internal problems like law and order, maintaining peace and harmony, providing basic infrastructure facilities to the foreign investors, ensuring free, fair and transparent mechanism of promoting trade, developing meaningful relationships with regional economic blocks and focusing on consistent growth in GDP and poverty eradication.

These achievements are feasible by making business climate amicable paving ways for enhanced foreign direct investment, entrepreneurship, employment opportunities exerting positive impact on small and medium enterprises development. Promoting vocational training centers through which youth will develop their technical skills, empowering women especially in Muslim countries like Afghanistan where extremist religious groups have posed as a barrier in their personal and professional development. Promoting microfinance schemes lead to increasing employment opportunities and prospering lives of people. Resultantly, this will bring about economic standard of countries elevated to developed nations.

### **Conclusion**

On the basis of above analysis it is concluded that less developed countries can improve their economic positions by effective and efficient utilization of scarce resources. Increasing employment opportunities for people of countries reflect growth and development of their economies which not only benefit the masses but also have multiplier effect of strengthening government to serve their people in better way. The factors identified and studied have direct and significant impact on increasing employment opportunities in less

developed countries. Afghanistan and Bangladesh economies have abundance of skilled human capital who possess higher qualifications, technical skills, entrepreneurial abilities and managerial skills but they need financial support to capitalize their earned skills. Therefore governments of less developed countries like Afghanistan and Bangladesh need to reinvigorate their economic policies and strategies which will provide multiple opportunities for natives of both countries to stay and work in home countries instead of going abroad. The effective formulation, implementation and evaluation of their strategy to create job opportunities will lead them parallel in status to developing and developed countries.

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