

Terms of Reference

for consultant(s)/firm to conduct
market assessment for
Labour Market Intermediation Facility (LMIF)

1. Background

B-SkillFUL Programme Phase II is a four-year (2020 – 2024) skills and enterprise development programme, supported by the Embassy of Switzerland in Bangladesh, and implemented by Swisscontact. It contributes to Switzerland’s overall goal in Bangladesh, which is to bring about a more equitable society that enjoys inclusive and sustainable growth, aligned with the 2030 Agenda of the United Nations. The programme aims to improve productivity and competitiveness of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and create better jobs by promoting Business Development Services (BDS) to at least 800 MSMEs and Workplace Based Training (WBT) to at least 13,000 new and existing workers. The programme is also promoting improved working conditions, gender equity, social inclusion, and more environmentally sustainable practices among participating MSMEs.

The two major intervention areas of the programme are:

- a. WBT, coaching and mentoring services for unskilled, semi-skilled and skilled workers and management staff at MSMEs; and
- b. Specialised BDS targeting production methods and working conditions in MSMEs.

During the inception phase, sector assessment reports underscored the fact that no formal Labour Market Intermediation Facility (LMIF) is available in any of the targeted districts. Assessment of the furniture making sector reveals that 97.7% MSME owners recruit workers through the personal networks and references. Besides, 93% and 83% respondents of leather goods and light engineering sector assessments respectively opined that recruiting skilled workers is a major challenge for them. It has also been identified that MSMEs do not have connection with training centres to get skilled workers and most of the business associations or chambers of commerce do not play any significant role in this regard. Contrary to the fact that the proportion of women workforce in Bangladesh is half that of men,¹ medium-sized leather goods and furniture-making enterprises expressed interest to engage more skilled women workers in their enterprises as women workers are considered more attentive to work than men workers².

Against this backdrop, it is important to create sector-wise LMIF model(s) which will be demand-driven and adaptive to the sectoral characteristics. Thus, the market assessment will identify the needs and challenges in hiring within MSMEs, analyse current service delivery

¹ According to Bangladesh Labour Force Survey, the women labour force is 20 million where men labour force is 43.6 million. GoB, Labour Force Survey Bangladesh 2016-17, Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, Ministry of Planning.

² Key informant interviews with MSME entrepreneurs in Bhairab and Bogura for Labour Rights and Decent Work Strategy development.

capacities, and provide recommendations for piloting different LMIF modalities for each programme sectors. Based on the market assessment, the LMIF model(s) will be established, tested and scaled up. B-SkillFUL Programme will carry out the market assessment to determine the most effective model(s), which are also commercially viable, to connect skilled workers to MSME owners (i.e., employers) incorporating existing systems or proposing new systems, or both, to implement the LMIF platform. Thus, LMIF will be an useful instrument assisting low-income individuals to access jobs while facilitating the hiring process for interested employers.

2. Objectives

In order to make labour market information available for workers and employers of targeted sectors, B-SkillFUL Programme is seeking to commission a detailed market assessment for LMIF. The assessment will help to explore the potentials of different LMIF models and assess feasibility of piloting LMIF services in the targeted districts. The study will do so by:

- consulting with relevant stakeholders, including but not limited to tech-based companies, human resource (HR) firms, job sites and apps such as bdjobs.com and Kormo Jobs, business associations, local and national newspapers, training institutes and assessors;
- researching on:
 - o any prior studies or related assessments;
 - o any similar products, services, or systems that exist in the market;
 - o local, regional, and global practices that may be applicable to the selected areas of this study;
- conducting surveys and interviews in both demand and supply sides of the market;
- gathering any other data and information that will help in designing market responsive and sustainable LMIF model(s); and
- proposing and validating effective LMIF model(s) for the different sectors and if deemed necessary, for the different regions.

Subsequently, the programme will design, and pilot solution(s) based on the findings of the assessment, attempt to find the product-market fit, and, subject to market response, help identify the business model fit of the solution(s). Thus, the objective of the assignment is to determine sector-wise LMIF model(s), identify the opportunities and challenges when implementing the model(s), and assess feasibility and commercial viability of the proposed model(s).

The specific objective of this assignment is to conduct a detailed assessment to:

- Identify existing systems of labour market intermediation in the selected regions for the different sectors;
- Understand possible roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders including TVET institutions, WBT and BDS providers, local business associations, local agents and retail shops to introduce LMIF;
- Identify the market dynamics affecting the labour market intermediation system(s):
 - o The market attractiveness of this service in the different sectors and regions;

- The demand dynamics for both B2B³ and B2C⁴ customers [the most favourable long-term demographics and relevant spending propensities; etc.];
- The supply scenarios of modern vs. traditional channels, online channels, specialist vs. generalist distributors [understanding of the distribution channels; the most influential and relevant channels; etc.]
- Propose sector specific potential LMIF model(s), catering to the selected geographical locations, including but not limited to:
 - The market positioning and its competitive advantages or vulnerabilities;
 - The marketing message aligned with customers' needs, accounting for different buyer behaviours, and satisfying a strong demand;
 - The pricing strategies;
 - The distribution strategies;
- Identify partners who are willing to own and operate⁵ the LMIF;
- Propose viable commercial and revenue model(s) for LMIF;
- Identify business and economic benefits for relevant stakeholders;
- Assess possible opportunities, risks, and challenges; and
- Provide sufficient justification [quantitative and qualitative] for the sustainability and future scale-up of the model(s).

Building on the findings of the assessment, B-SkillFUL will engage with a private sector service provider(s) to develop and pilot an LMIF solution.

3. Scope of work

- i) The consultant(s)/firm shall assess the acceptance and practicability of LMIF amongst the end users (target beneficiaries), who are:
 - a) Men and women looking for a blue-collar jobs, with a basic education or training levels (at least 5 years of schooling/ vocational/ workplace-based training);
 - b) Training institutions providing informal/ non-formal skills training; and
 - c) Employers offering blue-collar jobs in the targeted sectors.
- ii) If 3(i) is positive, the consultant(s)/firm shall explore interested partners i.e., Information Communication and Technology (ICT) companies, job sites, or start-up ventures, who are willing to own and operate the LMIF. Jointly with them the consultant(s)/firm shall:
 - a) Clarify the technical feasibility of the proposed model(s). This will also include looking at the practical aspects of information collection and dissemination from/ to the end users, maintaining an updated database of job seekers and employers, data security, strategies for billing users for the services, etc., linking with other existing systems or new systems in development;
 - b) Clarify the financial sustainability of the model(s) in terms of revenue generation through, but not limited to, use of the web portal, registration fees, subscription fees paid by employers etc.; and
 - c) Validate proposed model(s) through an [interactive] workshop with B-SkillFUL Programme and relevant stakeholders, including but not necessarily limited to

³ B2B: Business-to-business (B2B), also called B-to-B, is a form of transaction between businesses, such as one involving a manufacturer and wholesaler, or a wholesaler and a retailer

⁴ B2C: The term business-to-consumer (B2C) refers to the process of selling products and services directly between a business and consumers who are the end-users of its products or services

⁵ B-SkillFUL programme/ Swisscontact will not be the owner or operator of the system.

MSMEs, WBT and BDS providers, ICT experts, business associations, and workers.

4. Proposed Methodology

The market assessment should utilise both quantitative and qualitative data from primary and secondary sources. Primary data should be collected from programme's targeted districts using different data collection instrument [such as structured questionnaires, checklists, interview guidelines etc., as deemed relevant] and appropriate sampling techniques, as and when required. Hence, selected consultant(s)/firm needs to build on the available information and then conduct in-depth market assessment in consultation with the programme team and other stakeholders, i.e., early adopter MSMEs, WBT and BDS providers, associations, ICT firms.

The data collection process may entail consumer and supplier surveys, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with relevant stakeholders. Questionnaires, interview guidelines, and checklists for FGDs and KIIs will be developed through the review of secondary literature and B-SkillFUL Programme documents, including key performance indicators related to LMIF. The Bangla version of the questionnaires should be developed for relevant stakeholders. The selected consultant(s)/firm will submit a workplan and develop questionnaires for data collection.

The data collection process may include but not be limited to aforementioned tools. Based on collected data and subsequent analysis, the consultant(s)/firm should propose effective LMIF model(s). A single LMIF model may not fit all three sectors across targeted districts, therefore, it would be prudent to propose the LMIF model(s) considering specific location and cluster. The fundamental goal of the proposed model(s) will be to exhibit economic gains for employers and job seekers, and to ensure their active participation leading to increased breadth and depth of jobs advertised as well as registered jobseekers. The LMIF model(s) should offer strengthening and efficiency measures for existing intermediation services by ensuring employers' participation, linking workplace-based training systems and workers' assessment, computerised job banks, etc. At the same time, the market assessment should also focus on commercial viability and implementation opportunities and challenges of proposed sector wise LMIF model(s). The proposed LMIF model(s) will be reviewed and approved by the programme team and validated by experts, users, and other relevant stakeholders.

5. Tasks for the Selected Consultant(s)/ Firm⁶

- a) Review relevant background documents;
- b) Submit detailed workplan;
- c) Develop and submit data collection tools and methodology;
- d) Develop a detailed route plan and data-collection plan, as and where relevant;
- e) Conduct enumerator training upon approval from the programme staff;
- f) Specify existing LMIF providers and their products, especially in programme's working districts;
- g) Identify the LMIF needs and gaps in leather goods, light engineering, and furniture making sectors in the targeted locations;
- h) Identify the LMIF market attractiveness and market opportunities in the aforementioned sectors and areas;

⁶ B-SkillFUL reserves the right to provide feedback on each of the tasks which the consultant must address

- i) Propose market responsive LMIF models that solves the existing market gaps and capitalises on opportunities, can reach the customers cost-effectively, and is a service that the users (employers and workers alike) are willing to pay for;
- j) Explore the possible areas of collaboration with tech-based companies, HR firms, business associations, local newspapers, retailer shops, training institute, workplace-based training providers, NGOs, and other relevant market actors;
- k) Prepare and arrange for the LMIF model(s) validation workshop, which will be organised by B-SkillFUL team;
- l) Prepare master database with all responses and information;
- m) Submit draft report highlighting LMIF model(s), market positioning of LMIF model(s) for the different sectors and geographical areas, possible areas for further improvement and what market dynamics prevented those from being included in the model(s), and recommendation based on the findings;
- n) Submit final report.

6. Role and Responsibilities of B-SkillFUL Programme

- a) Share background documents (relevant for this assignment);
- b) Approve the detail workplan and methodology (including field plans, where relevant);
- c) Approve the data collection tools;
- d) Support consultant(s)/firm in conducting field level activities;
- e) Monitor overall study, as and when deemed necessary;
- f) Provide feedback to the findings of primary and secondary research data;
- g) Facilitate collaboration and coordination among the consultant(s)/firm, programme team, stakeholders, beneficiaries, and the funder;
- h) Review and share feedback to draft report and proposed model(s); and
- i) Approve the final report.

7. Deliverables⁷

#	Deliverables	Due Date (To be proposed by the consultant(s)/firm)
i.	Detailed market assessment plan and methodology	
ii.	Sectoral and regional variation matrix (accounting for but not limited to cultural or traditional norms and sensitivities, main supply routes, industry-specific singularities, etc.)	
iii.	Market opportunity matrix	
iv.	Supplier (BDS provider) capacity evaluation matrix	
v.	Presentation highlighting key findings of the report for the validation workshop	
vi.	Report on the validation workshop (findings, recommendations, event management, feedback of participants, etc.)	
vii.	Draft report for review and feedback from B-SkillFUL Programme (the report should include proposed LMIF model(s), key findings, analysis and implication of findings, recommendations)	
viii.	Presentation highlighting key features of the report	

⁷ The deliverables are not exhaustive and can change over discussion with consultant(s)/firm.

#	Deliverables	Due Date (To be proposed by the consultant(s)/firm)
ix.	Final report	
x.	Data sets (master database) of quantitative data	
xi.	Transcriptions/ write-ups of qualitative data collected	
xii.	Filled up questionnaires of respondents	

8. Reporting

The consultant(s)/ firm will work closely with the Senior Manager– Partnership and Strategy and report to the Team Leader of the programme.

9. Required Profile of the Consultant(s)/Firm

Preference will be given to those consultant(s)/firm who:

- i) Have proven track record of collaborative work experience with various associations, tech-based companies, training institute, HR firms, national and local level business association, NGOs, and INGOs;
- ii) Have access to a wide network of ICT companies and the telecommunication sector in Bangladesh; and
- iii) Are familiar with similar information systems already in operation catering to the similar target group that B-SkillFUL programme wants to reach;
- iv) Prior experience of working in the selected sectors (furniture-making, leather goods, and light engineering) will be an added advantage.

Consultant(s)/firm can be a single qualified person, a group of qualified persons, or a consortium. However, B-SkillFUL will establish the contract only with one single entity.

10. Selection Criteria

B-SkillFUL will select the consultant(s)/ firm based on the following criteria:

Sl#	What to evaluate	Description	Points
1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. CV of the experts/consultants b. A brief proposal with (Arial 11 point, single spacing, no more than 15 pages) outline the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Understanding of the ToR ii. Summaries of the firm's/ consultant(s)/ experts' previous experiences that would be useful for this assignment iii. Brief outline of how the consultant(s)/ firm will accomplish the tasks listed in the ToR iv. Approach to the assessment of the technical and financial feasibility of LMIF v. Approach (Tools, Techniques, and Systems) to the development of the database system and its business model 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Fit for purpose and track record of similar assignments To be evaluated as per professional experience against the requirements b. Merit of the brief proposal 	70

	vi. Suggested types of organisations, parties, stakeholders to be contacted for the development and maintenance of the LMIF vii. Tools and techniques to be applied to reach/inform the various target groups		
2	Financial Proposal	Financial proposals must be submitted in terms of Bangladeshi Taka (BDT) including VAT	20
3	Relevant report(s) (at least one report must be provided)	Report(s) of similar assignment	10
4	Availability	Consultant(s)/firm must be available during the period from December 2021 to June 2022	(Essential criteria)

11. COVID-19 pandemic consideration

It is important that, while developing work plans, the consultant(s)/firm will take into account the impact of COVID-19 pandemic. The selected consultant/firm must take all measures to ensure health and safety issues i.e. wear mask, use hand sanitiser and maintain social distance.

12. Duration of the Assignment

The assignment will be completed and delivered in no more than 45 person days within the period from December 2021 through April 2022.

13. Ownership

Swisscontact will own the intellectual property rights of the documents and materials prepared under this assignment. The report(s) or documents or any part, therefore, cannot be sold, used, shared, presented or reproduced in any manner without prior approval of Swisscontact.

14. Submission Details

Both hard and soft copies of the proposal(s) must be submitted to the following address: For soft copy : bd.bskillful@swisscontact.org and for hard copy : **Swisscontact Bangladesh, B-SkillFUL Programme Phase II, House 28, Road 43, Gulshan 2, Dhaka 1212** by 18 December 2021 addressing to Mr. Shohidul Alam, Manager-Business Administration, B-SkillFUL Programme Phase II. Please mention “**Market Assessment for LMIF**” in the email subject line or on top of the envelop.