

Term of Reference (ToR)

Conducting baseline study and collecting additional quantitative and qualitative information for B-SkillFUL Phase II LogFrame indicators

Background

B-SkillFUL Phase II is a skills and enterprise development programme, funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) 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.

After a successful completion of Phase I, B-SkillFUL Phase II commenced operations from September 2020 with the aim to improve productivity and competitiveness of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and create better jobs in the furniture making, light engineering and leather goods manufacturing sectors across six districts in Bogura, Dhaka, Gazipur, Kishoreganj, Nilphamari and Rangpur.

Recognising the importance of domestic economic recovery, in the COVID-19 scenario, B-SkillFUL Phase II will offer customised solutions to SMEs to improve technical and management capabilities, modernise production methods, diversify products and services, expand into new markets and ensure safe and decent working conditions for workers. The solutions will be designed to address specific constraints identified through detailed analyses at the sector and SME levels.

The programme will also create opportunities for coaching, mentoring, and providing advisory services to SMEs through Business Development Service (BDS) providers. These services include business planning, human resource development, product design, production improvements, inventory control, marketing, and finance. BDS providers will gain access and opportunities to engage with SMEs in peri-urban and rural areas and expand their clientele beyond the major cities.

The two major intervention areas of the programmes are

- a) workplace-based training, coaching and mentoring services for unskilled, semi-skilled and skilled workers and management staff at SMEs and
- b) specialised BDS targeting production methods and working conditions in SMEs.

The programme goals are as follows.

- At least 12'000 workers and 1'000 management staff at SMEs have improved their employability and performances at workplaces and
- At least 800 SMEs have increased productivity and efficiency, and improved working conditions

The inception period of B-SkillFUL Phase II programme is from September 2020 to the end of February 2021.

During the inception period, the programme will collect and analyse primary baseline data, and other relevant quantitative and qualitative information against the LogFrame indicators. The B-SkillFUL Phase II programme will develop its monitoring and results measurement (MRM) guideline within the inception period as well. Moreover, during the inception, the existing LogFrame indicators are to be further substantiated, particularly in terms of ensuring that they can be reasonably measured and reported with available data sources and accurately reflect the progress towards the programme's goals, outcomes and outputs. If there are any recommendations for changes to the LogFrame indicators, this must be made before March 2021.

This ToR has been developed to seek services of a consultant or a consultancy firm with expertise in MRM. The details are elaborated in the following sections.

Objective

The purpose of the assignment is to conduct a baseline study that clearly defines and measures the LogFrame indicators of B-SkillFUL Phase II. The baseline study will cover indicators collected in all three sectors, in specific clusters, of six districts covered by the programme. The baseline data will be used to track progress against the indicators, throughout the B-SkillFUL Phase II programme. The selected consultancy firm will also gather additional quantitative and qualitative information in order to further substantiate the B-SkillFUL Phase II LogFrame indicators.

Approach and Methodology

The baseline data and other relevant information will be collected from primary sources but can be compared and triangulated with secondary data, if available. The baseline study will be conducted by the selected consultant/consultancy firm in coordination with the programme team, and with an MRM backstopper, who will be contracted separately by the programme. The MRM backstopper will work in close coordination with the B-SkillFUL Phase II team and the consultant/consultancy firm selected for the assignment elaborated in this ToR. The backstopper will develop an MRM guideline, validate the LogFrame indicators and develop frameworks for baseline data collection and impact assessments.

It is important to note that the enterprises and trainees that would be participating in the programme activities, in the future, have not yet been selected by the programme (and will not be selected immediately). So, this baseline study cannot exclusively cover the future beneficiaries of the programme. As a result, this baseline study will gather and measure the average values against the relevant indicators in the three sectors of the programme, limited within specific clusters in the six districts.

In future, during impact assessment of interventions, the programme will collect data from enterprises and trainees that participated in programme activities for both before-intervention and after-intervention scenarios and triangulate the before-intervention data with information gathered in this baseline study.

For primary research and data collection, the consultant/firm will interact and communicate with SMEs, workers, BDS providers, business associations, Government of Bangladesh representatives, etc. The scope and method of the primary research will be determined in consultation between the B-SkillFUL team, the programme's MRM backstopper, and the recruited consultant/firm. The MRM backstopper will also provide a framework for the baseline study.

Tasks and responsibilities of consultant/consultancy firm

1. Understand the ToR, clarify and confirm related details with the B-SkillFUL team;
2. Review and understand the background documents shared by the B-SkillFUL team;
3. Work in close collaboration with the B-SkillFUL Phase II programme team and the MRM backstopper of the programme;
4. Submit workplan/timeline (including travel plan) for the study;
5. Finalise the workplan in consultation with the B-SkillFUL team;
6. Conduct approximately a total of 150 interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) of stakeholders/potential beneficiaries/potential partners/experts in the three sectors and six districts as designated by the B-SkillFUL Phase II programme team;
7. In close consultation with the B-SkillFUL Phase II programme team and the MRM backstopper of the programme, design relevant data collection tools such as surveys, interviews, FGDs, and/or KIIs, as required;
8. Ensure that data collected is accurate, meaningful, and realistic by providing the details of the interviewees (including phone numbers, time, date, and places of interview and FGDs);
9. Collect baseline values based on existing indicators as well as proposed indicators (from MRM guideline and framework for baseline study provided by the programme's MRM backstopper);
10. Gather necessary research data and information, related (but not restricted) to Annex 1, for the programme to get useful information for its specific tasks related to reviewing and/or revising the LogFrame indicators, if required);
11. Sharing the main findings with the B-SkillFUL team (draft report and presentation); and
12. Submitting the final report based on feedback from the B-SkillFUL team.

Role of Swisscontact (B-SkillFUL Programme Team)

1. Share background documents with consultants;
2. Provide all relevant programme related information;
3. Support consultant(s) to identify stakeholders, beneficiaries, partners etc.;
4. Approve the workplan;
5. Approve the FGD participants'/KII/interviewees' lists;
6. Assist in arranging FGDs/KIIs/any other research approach, as per the approved workplan;
7. Support the consultant(s) in conducting field activities and conduct quality checks on the FGDs, KIIs and interviews, by attending the sessions;

8. Approve data collection tools and the guidelines;
9. Provide feedback on the findings of primary and secondary research data;
10. Review findings of FGDs, KIIs and interviews;
11. Review the draft report and provide feedback;
12. Approve the final report; and
13. Provide backstopping support, guideline, and frameworks, in collaboration with the MRM backstopper.

Team composition and required profile of research consultancy firm/consultant(s)

Team composition

Sl.	Specialist Category	Level of Effort	Tentative required dates of availability
1	Lead MRM specialist	20 days	Between 01 January 2021 to 28 February 2021
2	Enumerators	to be determined later during the approval of the study plan	Between January and February 2021

Expected profile of the lead MRM specialist/consultant

- a) Minimum of 7 years of relevant MRM experience with strong expertise in quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis;
- b) Previous experience in conducting similar consultancy assignments;
- c) Demonstrated understanding of the three sectors of the programme will be an advantage;
- d) Understanding of SME development and BDS context in Bangladesh;
- e) Ability to demonstrate established access to clusters of SMEs in light engineering, furniture and leather goods sectors would be an added advantage;
- f) Excellent analytical, research, writing (English) and facilitation/coordination skills; and
- g) If an individual consultant and not a research consultancy firm is applying to undertake this assignment, then the consultant must be able to mobilise a team of enumerators on short notice.

Expected profile of the research consultancy firm

- a) Previous experience of the research firm and the team members in conducting baseline and evaluation surveys of similar scale for programmes and projects in Bangladesh comparable with B-SkillFUL Phase II;

- b) Strong experience in quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis;
- c) Strong experience in training of enumerators and ensuring quality data collection;
- d) Ability to translate data collection tools, pilot these tools and share feedback for revision, if necessary;
- e) Ability to deploy the lead MRM consultant and enumerators who can work remotely and across several districts in a short notice;
- f) Proven track record of working effectively with marginalised groups, particularly women; and
- g) Ability to demonstrate established access to clusters of SMEs in light engineering, furniture and leather goods sectors.

Expected profile of the enumerators

- a) Proven track record of conducting interviews, FGDs and KIIs for collecting quantitative and qualitative information;
- b) Availability in short notice;
- c) Access to (or familiarity with) the clusters of SMEs in light engineering, furniture and leather goods sectors would be an added advantage;
- d) The enumerators should have appropriate academic qualifications in relevant field of expertise, preferably in social sciences and statistics;
- e) The enumerators should have excellent computer literacy, especially in MS Excel and other data processing software; and
- f) The enumerators must have excellent communication skills in English and Bengali.

Selection Criteria

B-SkillFUL Phase II will go for a closed tender for this assignment, circulating a request for proposal to selected research consultancy firms and consultants (altogether 4 or 5) with this ToR. The programme will select the consultant/firm based on the following criteria

Sl.	What to evaluate	Description	Point
1.	Brief Technical Proposal	<p>The technical proposal must be within 14 pages (A4, normal margin, font Arial, font size minimum 10). The proposal must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show the competency of the research consultancy firm/ consultant against the points mentioned in the previous section 	70

Sl.	What to evaluate	Description	Point
		<p>of this ToR (Team composition and required profile of research consultancy firm/consultant(s) – max 3 pages)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add CV of the lead MRM consultant and confirm her/his availability (max 4 pages) • Provide the list of similar assignments in last 6 years – (max 2 pages) • Provide lists of software, platforms etc to be used for the data collection and analysis (max 1 page) • Broad methodology for gathering information related to impact and outcome level questions elaborated in annex 1 (max 4 pages) 	
2.	Financial Proposal (Fees and charges)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rates/ fees of lead MRM consultant and enumerators • Estimate of average cost for conducting around 120 interviews (including KIIs) and 30 FGDs in the six districts of the programme in around 15 days (excluding the fees of the lead consultant) • Any other charges to be applied by the firm/consultant (e.g. service charges or overheads; can be a percentage or an amount in BDT value, depending on the charges) • Detailed budget will be proposed by the selected firm during the finalisation of study workplan (see the next section: timeline and deliverables). 	30

The technical proposals will be evaluated by B-SkillFUL Phase II programme. The financial proposals will be opened and evaluated only of the organisations scoring more than 60% in the technical proposal.

Timeline and Deliverables

The tentative timeline will spread across two months from 21 January 2021 – 28 February 2021.

The consultancy firm/lead consultant will have regular discussions with B-SkillFUL Phase II team during the course of the assignment. If necessary, minor changes in the detailed modalities of the assignment is feasible, based on mutual consensus.

Deliverables and responsibilities					
Sl.	Tasks	Research consultancy firm/lead consultant	Deliverables of the research consultancy firm/lead consultant	B-SkillFUL	Date
1.	Recruitment of consultancy firm/consultant, contract negotiation			Recruit research firm/lead consultant and share final ToR	Within 21 January 2021
2.	Briefing of assignment	Discuss the ToR with B-SkillFUL to be clear on the assignment		Discuss ToR jointly with the research firm/lead consultant	28 January 2021
3.	Finalisation of study workplan along with budget	Prepare study workplan and propose budget accordingly	Study Workplan	Review and approve workplan and budget	3 February 2021
4.	Literature review				4-12 February 2021
5.	Methodology and questionnaire development	- Finalise Methodology - Finalise questionnaire	Final questionnaire, methodology, tools and field plan	Approve methodology and questionnaire	7-12 February 2021
6.	Field research	Conduct study at field level		Provide required support	13 -23 February 2021
7.	Sharing of main findings with B-SkillFUL project staff (through presentation)	Share findings and presentation	Presentation	B-SkillFUL to provide feedback (if any)	25 February 2021
8.	Share first draft report	Prepare report	Draft report	Provide feedback	25 February 2021

9.	Final report		Final report	Approve report	the 28 February 2021

Reporting

The consultant/consultancy firm will report to Team Leader, B-SkillFUL Phase II and to any other programme staff assigned by the Team Leader,

Submission Details

Candidates/research consultancy firms receiving request for submitting proposals, if interested, should submit their proposal based on this ToR. They must put the technical and financial proposal in two different envelopes - sealed, and labelled. They may put the two envelopes inside a third envelop, labelled.

The proposal must reach the following address: Swisscontact, House 19, Road 11, Baridhara, Dhaka 1212, Bangladesh (hand delivered or by post) on or before **17th January 2021**.

Ownership

Swisscontact will have the intellectual property right of all documents prepared during the assignment. The reports and or documents or any part, therefore, cannot be sold, used, shared and reproduced in any manner without prior approval of Swisscontact.

Annex 01

The selected consultancy firm/ consultant will gather information for the following points related to the B-SkillFUL Phase II programme log-frame

Information related to impact Level Indicators for all three sectors

- a) Determine current practice among SMEs for tracking annual sales;
- b) Determine capacity and willingness among SMEs to track and share annual sales data;
- c) Determine efficient method for collecting valid annual sales data from SMEs and create relevant tools accordingly;
- d) Determine current practice among SMEs to record frequency rates of fatal and non-fatal occupation injuries;
- e) Determine capacity and willingness among SMEs to track frequency rates of fatal and non-fatal occupation injuries;
- f) Determine efficient method to collect frequency rates of fatal and non-fatal occupation injuries at SMEs;
- g) Determine efficient method to collect accident/incident rate per number of man hours worked at SMEs;
- h) Determine current practice among SMEs for tracking data on sick days per worker;
- i) Determine capacity and willingness among SMEs for tracking data on sick days per worker;
- j) Determine efficient method to collect data on sick days per worker at SMEs;
- k) Determine willingness of women workers in reporting whether they feel safe at SMEs;
- l) Highlight challenges in collecting data for impact level indicators;
- m) Evaluate relevance of impact indicators and recommend alternative indicators, if applicable;
- n) Determine architecture/framework for collecting all impact level data through MIS; and
- o) Recommend tools for validating all data collected.

Information related to outcome Level Indicators for all three sectors

- a) Clear indicators to evaluate levels of satisfaction of SMEs with the WBT (Workplace Based Training) model and develop relevant data collection tool accordingly;
- b) Determine current practice among SMEs for tracking per unit cost of production;
- c) Determine capacity and willingness among SMEs to track unit cost of production;
- d) Determine efficient method for collecting valid unit production cost data from SMEs and create relevant tools accordingly;

- e) Determine current practice among SMEs for tracking product defect rate;
- f) Determine capacity and willingness among SMEs to track product defect rate;
- g) Determine efficient method for collecting valid product defect rate data from SMEs and create relevant tools accordingly;
- h) Determine current practice among SMEs for tracking raw material wastage;
- i) Determine capacity and willingness among SMEs to track raw material wastage data;
- j) Determine efficient method for collecting valid raw material wastage data from SMEs and create relevant tools accordingly;
- k) Determine current practice among SMEs for tracking on-time product delivery data;
- l) Determine capacity and willingness among SMEs to track on-time product delivery data;
- m) Determine efficient method for collecting valid on-time product delivery data from SMEs and create relevant tools accordingly;
- n) Determine efficient method for collecting all outcome level data; and
- o) Determine architecture/framework for collecting all outcome level data through MIS.