

B-SkillFUL Project Mid Term Review (MTR) 2018

Terms of Reference

1. Project Background

B-SkillFUL (Building Skills for Unemployed and Underemployed Labour) is a 4 years project (from 1 November, 2015 to 31 October, 2019). Funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), the project targets to improve the wellbeing of poor and disadvantaged men and women in 5 districts in Bangladesh by increasing their access to the labour market and income, while safeguarding their fundamental rights at work.

The project hinges on the impact hypothesis that *if demand driven skills trainings and employment support are provided to poor and disadvantaged groups, the beneficiaries will be absorbed by the private sector (through wage or self-employment), which will result in improved wellbeing.*

The project objective is to train 20'000 poor and disadvantaged persons in different occupations of whom 70% should be placed in self/wage employment and able to earn at least BDT 5'000/month (cash in hand), within 6 months of completion of training.

The impact of the project will be the improved well-being of poor and disadvantaged men and women by improving access to the labour market and increasing the income of at least 14,000 (70% of 20,000) beneficiaries while safeguarding their fundamental and principle rights at work.

Achieving the objective implies outcomes on 3 levels – at the primary beneficiaries, i.e. the poor and disadvantaged, private enterprises and the informal sector skills councils. This is further detailed below:

- 1. Poor and disadvantaged men and women have gainful¹ wage/self-employment.**
- 2. Private sector enterprises and Training Service Providers (TSPs) in 5 districts provide workplace-based training, while respecting the fundamental labour rights of the trainees and graduates**
- 3. Informal private enterprises and graduates are aware about labour rights and obligations.**

2. Major objectives of the MTR

The objectives and outcomes defined in the project document of Building Skills for Unemployed and Underemployed Labour (B-SkillFUL) project forms the basis of this review. In addition to looking at the results achieved by the project since November 2015, ***it is expected that the Mid Term Review (MTR) will also be forward-looking and not only look at the remaining years of the project, but also at areas that may have to be adjusted/aligned with the new Cooperation Strategy of SDC².***

The objectives of the MTR are to:

- a) Assess progress towards the project objectives (effectiveness) in the context of national skills development priorities of Bangladesh;
- b) Assess whether the project B-SkillFUL may have to be adapted after the end of Phase 1 in 2019, to align it with the strategic direction of SDC (and the new Income and

¹ Gainful wage/self-employment implies that the beneficiary will earn at least BDT 5'000/month cash in hand, for a minimum of 6 months.

² SDC will embark on the Swiss Cooperation Strategy from 2018. As such, it will be clarified during the briefing meeting whether the target group for the project will remain the same or if it will change.

Economic Governance Results Framework) and keeping in mind the national priorities (7th 5-Year plan, Perspective Plan), related SDGs, etc.;

- c) Formulate recommendations for the remaining years of the project (including which recommendations should be prioritized) and how the project may have to be adapted for the next phase.

3. Specific Objectives

The MTR will focus more specifically on the following questions/issues/areas:

A. Effectiveness and relevancy of the project:

1. Achievements against performance indicators, annual plan targets and mid-term benchmarks: to what extent is the project on track to achieve its phase end target?
2. Which outcomes (intended and unintended) have been achieved and what impact has become visible? What progress the project has made in contributing to relevant policy and/or practice change of different stakeholders?
3. Which expected outcomes are lagging behind, and why?
4. Which of the achieved outcomes are showing signs of sustainability? What factors should be further considered to ensure sustainability of the outcomes? What are the resource requirements to take additional activities, if necessary?
5. Quality and appropriateness of the outcomes in relation to national priorities with regards to skills development and addressing poor and disadvantaged groups.
6. Relevance of project activities in light of the policy developments, Swisscontact's mandate and strategic issues.
7. What lessons can be learned about the effectiveness of the intervention strategies used in order to achieve the desired outcomes?
8. Evaluate how the project interacts with other TVET-related projects in Bangladesh in order to avoid overlaps and contradictions; and to come up with recommendations on how to improve synergies.
9. Assess how the project applies the results based payment system in the project and recommend how the mechanism may be made more effective or leaner.
10. Assess specifically the effectiveness of the B-SkillFUL partnership with the Informal Sector Industry Skills Council (IS-ISC) and the sustainability of results on improving working conditions in the informal sector.
11. Review the input-output ratio of the B-SkillFUL Project – for this particular aspect the inputs from SDC as well as EU will have to be taken into consideration.

B. Future phase of B-SkillFUL in alignment with SDC's Cooperation Strategy 2018 – 21

1. Review the Cooperation Strategy 2018 – 21 of SDC and the Results Framework of the Income and Economic Governance (IEG) Domain and consider whether the B-SkillFUL project, in its future phase may be aligned to the expected results of this new domain.
2. Particularly, the following areas (but not limited to) may be assessed in relation to the IEG Domain: target group (i.e. poor and disadvantaged) and geographical target of the project (rural versus urban), occupations (traditionally female trades versus more diverse occupations) informal vs. formal sector engagement, engagement of private TSPs³ (and types of TSPs).
3. Recommendations on how to strengthen the effectiveness and sustainability of B-SkillFUL's work on working conditions in the informal sector.

4. Review process, Methodology, Administration and Timeframe

The timeframe for the MTR mission is from 13 January – 06 February 2018 (26 days).

³ This also includes TSPs run by NGOs.

The detailed program of the review will be worked out and finalized by the MTR team. The review team will share its plan with B-SkillFUL and SDC prior to finalization.

The methodology of the MTR may include, but is not limited to:

- Desk study of relevant Bangladesh context as well as stock taking of ongoing initiatives in Bangladesh and other countries with a similar development context.
- While in Bangladesh, meetings may include the following:
 - SDC, EU, Swisscontact, B-SkillFUL, other sub-contractors (such as IS-ISC, BWCCI, NASCIB)
 - Government (such as National Skills Development Council, Bangladesh Technical Education Board (BTEB) and Directorate of Technical Education (DTE), etc.)
 - Focus group discussions with project beneficiaries who are self/wage employed, gainfully employed, undertaking class-room based/on-the-job training, unemployed, families of beneficiaries, employers.

Training service providers (TSPs)

Activities	Date
Recruitment of consultants, contract negotiation	12 October 2017– 31 December 2017
Submission of documents by B-SkillFUL, finalization of stakeholder Meeting schedule and MTR Schedule	05 January 2017
Arrival of consultants	13 January 2018
Briefing Meeting: Introduction to the assignment with SDC and B-SkillFUL	14 January 2018
Meetings with Swisscontact and the project staff, orientation to the project	14 - 15 January 2018
Meeting with GoB, other development partners, sub-contractors in Dhaka (such as Informal Sector Industry Skills Council)	16 – 17 January 2018
Field visit to B-SkillFUL’s partners and TSPs (3 - 4 districts)	18 – 25 January 2018
Report writing/reflection and analysis	26 - 27 January 2018
Debriefing: Discussion (and presentation) of initial impressions/recommendations (with SDC, EU, B-SkillFUL and Swisscontact)	28 January 2018
Consultant leaves Dhaka	28 January 2018
Drafting of report	29 January – 4 February 2018
Sharing draft report	5 February 2018
Finalize report	06 February 2018

Of these 26 days, at least 14 days will be in Bangladesh for the international consultant. B-SkillFUL will assist the consultants with:

- Providing relevant written materials/documents/reports for preparation of the Evaluation, including the revised project document, logframe, budget, initial project documents of SDC and logframe, EU project document (including logframe and

budget), Training Implementation Guideline, Gender and Diversity Strategy and Guideline, CPC Guideline, Concept Notes on MRM Guidelines, MRM Components as well as any other documents that may be required for meeting the objectives of the MTR.

- Providing necessary logistic support, including supporting the consultants to arrange accommodation, transport, meetings, translation/interpretation, etc.
- Making necessary contacts with stakeholders and field visits
- Attending the briefing and debriefing discussions at SDC

SDC's norms and criteria will apply for consultant's fees and is reimbursable.

5. Team composition and coordination

The review team will comprise of 1 international consultant. The successful applicant will have excellent command over English language. S/he must have knowledge and expertise about working in developing countries and exposure to NGO programs and modalities particularly experience of evaluating/assessing networks and coalitions. Experience of working in Bangladesh/ South Asia will be an added qualification.

The team will include the following:

- An international expert who specializes in skills development and private sector development, preferably holding an advanced degree, with at least 7 years of (combined) experience working in these fields and with experiences in other Asian countries (of similar context)/Bangladesh.

6. Outputs

- A briefing and debriefing session with the SDC Team and Swisscontact/B-SkillFUL at the beginning and end of the evaluation to present and discuss the findings and recommendations
- An evaluation report of not more than 20 pages (excluding annexes) including an executive summary of no more than one page.