



16 August 2021

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Project design: Conducting a feasibility study on the social protection sector and supporting the development of the project document for GO4IMPact – Governance for Improved Public Service Delivery – in Bangladesh

1 Background

Switzerland's priorities in development cooperation in Bangladesh are aligned with the Agenda 2030 for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the current 8th Five-Year Plan of the Government of Bangladesh, with a strong focus on promoting inclusive and sustainable growth. In Bangladesh's SDG localisation agenda, local governments play an important role in administering and delivering social safety net programmes for the poorest and most vulnerable population groups, in improving access and management of water resources, including the protection from the effects of improper solid waste management and climate change.

Switzerland remains committed to promoting the values of democratic governance in Bangladesh and continues to draw upon the successful Swiss approach of 'localising the SDGs' by working bottom-up and at establishing stronger linkages between the local and central authorities. Social safety net programmes, water management and solid waste management offer an excellent entry point for that. Under this backdrop, Switzerland has decided to formulate a 12 year programme to localise SDGs in Bangladesh, whose goal is to "contribute to strengthening local democratic governance by improving equitable basic public service provision in the water, solid waste management (SWM), and social protection sectors with emphasizing climate change adaptation and resilience". This programme will engage directly with local government institutions and citizens – women and youth, in particular - as well as with the central government, through relevant line agencies to achieve its objectives.

The programme's **vision for 2034** is delineated below:

- Citizens in rural and semi-rural Bangladesh will be more aware of their rights and will demand greater accountability and transparency in public service delivery.
- Local Government Institutions (LGIs) along with local communities will be able to jointly manage public service delivery in a democratic, effective, efficient, decentralized and citizen centric manner.
- The concept of sustainable water management and effective SWM, which respond to climate change challenges, will be owned and widely replicated by LGIs and the central government.
- An effective, efficient, non-fragmented, and better coordinated social protection system will be in place at local level to protect against risks, shocks and stresses, and at the same time reducing poverty, vulnerability and marginalization.

The end of program vision will be achieved through **three outcomes** delineated below:

- **Strengthening institutions:** LGIs and local public service providers are more effective in providing public services related to water and SWM as well as in managing social safety net programmes based on democratic principles.
- **Citizens' engagement:** Citizens at local level, in particular disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, engage more effectively with local government institutions and local public service providers, demanding for more accountable, equitable, impartial and environment friendly basic public service provision and access to public resources.
- **Collaboration:** Local government institutions, government line agencies, civil society organisations and the private sector collaborate for achieving equitable and impartial basic public service provision with an emphasis on water and SWM, social protection, and climate change adaptation and resilience.

The programme will have **specific focuses** on the below issues:

- **Local governance:** The programme will support the LGIs to improve the institutional engagement with citizens and the private sector, along the public policy cycle and work with CBOs and CSOs for

citizens' mobilisation. This in turn, will empower citizens to engage effectively with the LGIs and local public service providers, to demand access to equitable, environment friendly and quality public services in the area of water management, SWM, and social protection. This will imply enhancing the capacities, coordination, and collaboration amongst local actors through better planning, resource allocations, reporting, and monitoring.

- **Water management:** For better water management, the focus will be on reducing overuse and waste as well as pollution, under the 4 “Rs” principle which includes reducing the waste of water, reusing rainwater, re-cycling resources and restoring water safety. The programme will support the Water Resource Planning Organisation (WARPO) to further implement the recently adopted Bangladesh Water Rules (2018) and develop the necessary related secondary rules and guidelines. It will be aligned and contribute to the Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100 (BDP 2100).
- **Solid waste management:** Building capacities for SWM will not be limited to collection and treatment but will include prevention and recycling. A focus will be on mitigating the emissions of greenhouse gases and on preventing soil, water and air contamination. The programme will engage with the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change to support strengthening regulations related to SWM by LGIs.
- **Social safety net:** For Social Safety Net Programmes (SSNPs), the focus will be on improving targeting for selected GoB social protection schemes such as vulnerable group feeding, employment generation programmes for the poor and development support for special needs. To do so, the capacities of UPs and *pourashavas* and respective committees will be built to be informed about the eligibility for different schemes and improving the targeting of the schemes by developing a better information basis, and rule-based transparent selection of beneficiaries. The programme will work on building technical competencies of the corresponding line agencies, such as the Local Government Division in adapting rules, procedures and guidelines, based on bottom-up feedback. The programme will also partner with the Ministry of Social Welfare, the Ministry of Disaster Risk Reduction, and other line agencies to support improved targeting of select SSNPs, adopting different strategies as the programme progresses through each of the three phases.

The target groups are UPs and *pourashavas*, as well as GoB line ministries and agencies and local civil society organisations. The beneficiaries are the **poorest and most vulnerable groups** who will benefit from improved democratic governance and inclusive public service provision. Special attention will be given to the role and agency of women and youth. There will be an outreach to around **two million beneficiaries** from 15 districts, while concentrating specific activities in the ‘**hard-to-reach**’ areas, as categorised in Bangladesh’s Delta Plan 2100. Ultimately, by improving public services delivery, the programme will indirectly benefit the whole population of the country.

Context of Social Protection in Bangladesh

The Government of Bangladesh (GoB)’s commitments to the SDGs and the UN Social Protection Floor Initiative of 2008 has led to comprehensive measures to scale up social protection initiatives by formulating the National Social Security Strategy (NSSS) in 2015. Nevertheless, despite its rapid socioeconomic ascent, poor and vulnerable groups together still constitute 42.9% of the population, being 70 million individuals. This figure does not yet account for the additional 25 million Bangladeshi, who are at risk of falling back into poverty due to the socio-economic consequences of Covid-19. One of the major reasons for this alarming figure is Bangladesh’s weak social protection system that is riddled with gaps:

- The lack of democratic and accountable governance;
- Bangladesh’s Social Security Programmes (SSPs) are characterized by high targeting errors and poor delivery;
- Bangladesh’s social protection system is complex and poorly governed due to lacking capacity of relevant line ministries and departments to lead, coordinate and integrate reforms as articulated in the NSSS;
- The information management system is very weak due to the lack of a common registry system, which poses challenges to provide efficient shock responsive social protection;
- The urban social protection system in Bangladesh is very weak compared to the rural system, which became clearly visible during the Covid-19 pandemic.

2 Objectives of the assignment

Under this new long-term programme on promoting democratic local governance practices through localising SDGs in Bangladesh (GO4IMPact), the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC) would like to conduct three feasibility studies on water management, social protection and solid waste management with similar guiding questions in six areas (see below). A project document (ProDoc) will be developed on the basis of these three feasibility studies.

These terms of reference have been developed for the **function of consultant**, who will be responsible to conduct the **feasibility study on social protection** and to support the development and writing of the overall **ProDoc on GO4IMPact**, following SDC's guidelines and templates. The feasibility study should assess the practicality and viability of the social protection component for Local Government Institutions (LGIs) in Bangladesh. The study shall look at the role of rural and urban LGIs, line agencies of the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) and civil society as "drivers of change" for social protection in Bangladesh. The feasibility study must reflect its programmatic ambition of GO4IMPact (to avoid fragmentation of activities and create linkages among the three sectors) and its vision to be reactive to local dynamics, facing challenges and seizing opportunities.

3 Scope of the assignment

The feasibility study will identify aspects that will help to develop the 'Social Protection' component under the programmatic ambition of GO4IMPact. The feasibility study will build upon the respective Political Economy Analysis conducted by SDC. The study should answer the following questions:

1. Results and lessons learned
 - What results and lessons learnt on Social Protection and local governance (successes, approaches / methodologies / instruments, partnerships / form of cooperation and coordination) does Switzerland have in Bangladesh GO4IMPact can build upon?
 - How can existing SDC programmes and activities, that tackle social protection as well as local governance and private sector engagement, be integrated into GO4IMPact?
 - What did other development partners (DPs) do in the social protection sector, are doing and will be doing that relate with the objectives of Go4IMPact? What lessons can be learnt from other DPs interventions on social protection GO4IMPact will focus on?
 - What international good practices exist on social protection sector that GO4IMPact could consider to build upon?
2. Context
 - Where are the gaps concerning legal frameworks, structures, policies, processes, practices, and resources in the social protection sector? In which areas is technical assistance needed?
 - Who are the relevant stakeholders of Social Protection at local, intermediary, and national levels? Who among them are the drivers and restrainers of change which GO4IMPact aims to promote? What are their explicit and implicit interests and what power do they have to support or obstruct the objectives of GO4IMPact (building upon existing studies and assessments done by SDC)?
 - What are the challenges and opportunities in the Social Protection sector and democratic local governance as a whole?
3. Strategic orientation
 - Based on the current status of Social Protection in Bangladesh, what can be the Swiss value addition in the sector and how? Where does SDC have a comparative advantage, e.g. in terms of expertise/know-how, methodologies or success? What are the gaps that can be filled by SDC?
 - What will be the realistic objectives for the first phase (3/4 years) and for the whole project duration (10/12 years) in the Social Protection sector and in regard to the interlinked objective of supporting democratic local governance?
 - Which of the objectives are easy (low hanging fruits), more difficult, difficult to achieve? Which of the objectives will have lasting impact and which may be challenged with changes in government etc.?
 - What interventions should GO4IMPact concentrate on to achieve its objectives – in the first phase and for the whole project duration? How will these interventions / activity lines

contribute to the objectives (Theory of Change) and programmatic ambition of GO4IMPact?

- Who should be the target group/s of the Social Protection component and its different interventions? What geographical areas should the project focus on considering the selection criteria mentioned in the SDC approved Entry Proposal (EP)?
4. Implementation strategy
 - What intervention approach/methodology/instruments should be chosen to implement the component on social protection? How can the existing country system (government) be used at local, intermediary, and national level?
 - What other partners should project work with at different level to achieve its objectives? What should be the form of cooperation with these partners?
 - What measures need to be taken to ensure the sustainability of the results of the project and the scalability?
 - What are the data available in similar projects in the sector as far as cost-efficiency / cost-benefits analysis is concerned?
 5. Organization, management and administration
 - What could be the organizational structure and steering mechanism of the project?
 6. Risk analysis
 - What are the risks associated with the Social Protection sector in Bangladesh (validate and expand on the risk analysis included in the EP)?

The main purpose of the feasibility study is to inform the formulation and design of GO4IMPact. To do so and in order to reflect the programmatic ambition of GO4IMPact, the study must build on specific lessons learned and best practices from current and past projects and programmes on social protection and local governance; and result in concrete, practical and well documented recommendations.

In more specific terms, the objective is to uncover, describe and analyse:

- The current coordination mechanisms regarding social protection within the GoB's ministries and departments;
- The GoB's/LGI's readiness and capacity to manage, implement and monitor social protection programmes, to obtain an evidence based assessment of success and failures in the field of social protection, and to improve targeting and monitoring of social protection schemes;
- The level/scope of citizen participation to demand for a solid social protection system;
- The regulatory environment including government regulations, policies, budget and strategic plans concerning social protection;
- The key actors within the government, NGOs/CSOs and private sector and determine their potential impact including possible beneficial linkages and partnerships;
- The donor landscape and coordination mechanism in social protection and possible entry points for SDC.

Based on the outcomes of the feasibility study, the consultant will assist the lead leader in developing the overall ProDoc for GO4IMPact as per SDC's guidelines. The ProDoc should include following sections:

1. Context
 - Background
 - Coherence with SDGs
 - Coherence with the strategic priorities of the Embassy of Switzerland in Bangladesh
 - Coherence with priorities of the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) and definition of their ownership, alignment with their national development goals
 - Relevance and rationale of the intervention
2. Project description
 - Intervention logic, impact hypothesis, Theory of Change (ToC)
 - Implementing strategy and implementation modalities
 - Outcomes and outputs
 - Cross-cutting themes: Gender, Leave No One Behind
 - Stakeholder assessment, including their role, interest and influence

- Target groups to be described including their reasons for marginalization, gender segregation, outreach and geographic coverage
 - Risk analysis and management
 - Operational planning with timeframe
 - Sustainability and exit strategy
3. Organization, management and administration
 - Project setup and organizational chart
 - Cooperation and steering
 - Necessary implementation agreements with relevant stakeholders
 - Networks
 - Cost-benefit / cost-efficiency analysis of each sector and the overall programme
 4. Financial management
 - Overall budget
 - Resource mobilization strategy
 5. Monitoring and evaluation
 - LogFrame
 - Plan for the collection of baseline data

4 Methodology of the study

The conduction of the feasibility study and the elaboration of the GO4IMPact ProDoc will incorporate the methodologies mentioned below, however, the consultant/s may propose any other methods and techniques in the inception report.

Documents review: The consultants will review relevant documents from the various sources to find out the new strategies in consultation with relevant stakeholders;

Key Documents: Swiss Country Programme Document (BCP 2022-25), GO4IMPact Entry Proposal, GoB Vision, Five Years Plan and sectoral policies, laws, rules and regulations, Political Economy Analyses, feasibility studies, end of project/phase reports etc.

Stakeholder interviews: The consultant/s will meet with programme officers at the Embassy of Switzerland, potential experts at SDC HQ, staff of the existing projects, development partners, members of CSOs/NGOs as well as local and national government institutions, relevant line ministries, and the private sector, as deemed necessary.

In order to ensure coherence and synergies while avoiding duplications amongst the three sectors, regular meetings and exchanges amongst the three hired consultants will be key.

5 Deliverables

The assignment consists of a feasibility study on the Social Protection component, together with a continued support the development of the overall ProDoc for GO4IMPact. This assignment is planned from September to December 2021, having the following interim outputs:

- Participation in a kick-off meeting with the Embassy of Switzerland to discuss expectations and present the planned approach of the assignment (week 1);
- A detailed work plan, which highlights the key milestones and deliverables, including the methodology and processes to be undertaken (week 1);
- An inception report to be presented and discussed with the SDC team after completion of the desk study, presenting issues to be addressed during the feasibility study (week 2);
- A note on the political economic analysis of Social Protection in Bangladesh and a detailed PowerPoint presentation followed by a discussion with the SDC team. This will include findings, observations and potential strategic entry points (week 6);
- A validation workshop (physical / virtual) with relevant key stakeholders including CSOs, NGOs, think tanks, Government and private sector (week 6);

- Participation in a debriefing session with the SDC team at the end of the mission(s) to present and discuss the findings, conclusions, recommendations and the overall ProDoc structure (week 7);
- A final feasibility study report on social protection in Bangladesh as specified in chapters 2 and 3: The report should be a maximum of 20 pages (A4, normal margin, Arial 11, single space), including a 2-page plain summary. All relevant information, including a detailed cost-benefit analysis and its methodology and data sourcing, should be annexed (week 7);
- Support to the team leader in finalizing and submitting the ProDoc for GO4IMPact as per SDC guidelines (weeks 8 and 9).

6 Timeline and budget

The assignment will be for a total of up to (a) 32 days for the feasibility study and (b) 4 days for developing the ProDoc for GO4IMPact. The input days will be utilized as per following plan:

Process and deliverables	Number of days
Feasibility study	
Briefing	1
Document review	3
Inception Report	3
Stakeholders consultations in Dhaka/virtual consultation	4
Field visits and meeting with target groups/virtual consultation	4
Writing the draft feasibility study	10
Brainstorming session on the feasibility study	1
Finalization of the feasibility study	4
Travel	2
Total	32 days
Supporting ProDoc	
Brainstorming session on the draft ProDoc	2
Support the team leader with the finalization of the ProDoc	2
Debriefing	1
Total	5 days

The consultant will be contracted to SDC and the fees will be defined as per SDC norms and criteria. In addition, he/she will be paid the daily flat rate for accommodation and for transport costs. The consultant is expected to settle his/her own accommodation bills and airfare, to be reimbursed upon presentation of the original bills only. Details of the budget will be part of these Terms of Reference, based on final agreements between SDC and the consultants. The consultants will be reportable to SDC and all reports and documents prepared during the assignment will be treated as the property of SDC. The reports and or documents or any part, therefore, cannot be sold, used /shared and reproduced in any manner without prior approval by SDC.

7 Assistance by SDC

SDC will assist the consultants in:

- Organizing briefing, planning and debriefing discussions;
- Providing relevant written materials/documents/reports: Bangladesh Country Strategy 2017-2020, Bangladesh Cooperation Programme 2022-2025, GO4IMPact entry proposal, political economy analyses, feasibility studies, thematic strategies, Field Handbook, PCM guidelines, SDC How To Notes, as well as existing programme/project documents and their respective mid-term and end of phase reports, etc.;
- Linking with stakeholders in Bangladesh and at SDC HQ if necessary;
- Administration and logistics, including arranging of field visits.

8 Qualifications

A local / international consultant or a team of consultants will be assigned to conduct this high-profile consultancy assignment, which requires senior and professional inputs based on substantive experience and qualifications. The consultant will be invited to submit a detailed technical proposal alongside a CV, including similar previous experiences.

Minimum eligibility criteria:

- Master's Degree in social-science, development studies, public administration and/or areas relevant for the assignment;
- Demonstrated experience on conduction of feasibility studies and project design for development partners including, ToCs, result and resource frameworks and budgeting;
- Minimum 10 years of professional experience working with development organizations / projects with special reference to local and national government institutions and their agencies; and sufficient understanding on Social protection system of Bangladesh
- Previous professional experience in South Asia, preferably Bangladesh, will be a clear advantage;
- Strong analytical skills;
- Excellent command of English, Bengali an asset.

Additional qualification:

- Prior experience in designing projects and conducting feasibility studies on development project, public sector innovation/governance, or local governance;
- Previous professional experience of working on local and central governance in Bangladesh;
- Strong knowledge in conducting political economy analysis and feasibility studies.

Competencies:

- Demonstrates commitment to mission, vision and values of the Embassy of Switzerland;
- Strong analytical and time management skills;
- Ability to work in a challenging and complex environment;
- Independent and flexible;
- Excellent communication skills;
- Creative and result-oriented.

Leadership and self-management:

- Has demonstrable leadership skill;
- Focuses on results;
- Demonstrates openness to change;
- Remains calm, in control and good humoured even under pressure;
- Responds positively to critical feedback and differing points of view.