Terms of Reference – Better Work Bangladesh Impact Assessment: Quantitative Study

Better Work is seeking a research institution to conduct a baseline quantitative study on the Bangladeshi Ready-Made Garment sector.

1. Introduction

The International Labour Organization (ILO) and the International Finance Corporation (IFC) partnered in 2006 to establish a global programme for improved labour standards in global supply chains. The objective of the Better Work Programme is to improve working conditions and promote competitiveness in the global garment industry. It does so by promoting compliance with international labour standards and national law in global supply chains as a basis for building socially responsible export strategies, and by enhancing enterprise-level economic and social performance. Since its establishment, Better Work has been committed to an evidence-based approach to programme rollout and delivery. The global programme has invested substantial time and effort into conducting research and measuring the impact of country programmes.

Better Work Bangladesh (BWB) was launched in October 2013 and will provide factory-level services, including assessments of compliance with national labour law and international standards, and advisory and training services to help factories make improvements. BWB’s core advisory services and training will place a focus on industrial relations, specifically to contribute to improved worker/management dialogue, to ensure that changes and change mechanisms are sustainable in the long term.

The objective of this assignment is to design a system to evaluate the impact of the newly established Better Work Programme in Bangladesh, building upon the existing knowledge and expertise developed by the Better Work impact assessment in other country programmes and globally in collaboration with a multidisciplinary team at Tufts University, USA.

2. Background

The textile and garment industry in Bangladesh accounts for approximately 78% of the country’s exports and employs 4 million people, most of whom are women. Despite the dramatic potential for growth and development, the Bangladeshi textile and garment sector has been subjected to increased scrutiny regarding its labour practices, especially during the course of the last year following factory fires and the Rana Plaza building collapse in April 2013. Demands to monitor and improve compliance with international labour standards and national legislation have translated into a number of initiatives from the private sector, from multi-stakeholder groups and from international organizations, including the ILO. Better Work Bangladesh constitutes a key factory level intervention to this end in the ready-made garment industry in Bangladesh.

BWB factory-level operations are expected to begin during the second half of 2014. The programme is initially envisioned as a three-year programme. It is expected that the programme will cover 100 factories in the first year of operations, with a target of 300 by the third year. It will operate in Gazipur and surrounding areas.
3. Vendor’s responsibilities

The impact assessment will explore whether improved working conditions, as driven by BWB operations, lead to changes in working conditions, workers’ wellbeing, performances of firms, as well as in broader social and human development indicators. The impact assessment will aim to answer the following questions:

- How do improved working conditions at the factory level, supported by BWB’s core services, impact on workers’ wellbeing in the workplace and in their households and communities?
- Is there a business case for improved working conditions, as driven by BWB’s core services?
- Does investing in stronger relationships between management and workers improve working conditions in factories and lead to worker productivity?
- What are the mechanisms through which social dialogue at the factory level can change these aforementioned outcomes?

Quantitative data collection over the duration of the programme will allow Better Work to demonstrate numerically the changes occurring at the factory level with regards to workers’ wellbeing and the business case for improved industrial relations and social dialogue.

A simple before-after design is suggested for this study to monitor the changes on outcome indicators brought about by BWB operations. Based on experience gathered in other country programmes and on operational constraints, Better Work is seeking for a non-experimental design for this impact assessment (i.e., a research design in which variables are not manipulated, settings are not controlled and there are no treatment and control groups introduced). The organization should therefore take this into account when devising a strategy, as this choice affects the scope of the study (especially in terms of sampling). Proposals based on randomization and experimental strategies are discouraged.

In order to collect quantitative data, it is foreseen to rely on surveys to be administered to managers, supervisors and workers on a large scale. This is based on the experience gathered by Better Work in other country programmes (see Appendix for more details), where surveys translated in respondents’ local language are administered through CAPI and ACASI methodologies on tablet computers. Worker surveys in particular are geared to low-literacy respondents and are equipped with audio support and pictograms. Template surveys from Better Work country programmes (including their translation in Bangla) will be available to the vendor for further adaptation. The organization is encouraged to consider ACASI and CAPI as possible options for survey administration, but is not limited by this choice and may propose alternatives. Surveys will be triangulated through a longitudinal qualitative study that will run in parallel to and is not part of the present assignment.

Better Work envisages that there will be three data collection periods to inform the baseline, midline and final impact assessment reports. The current contract will be of the duration of 1 year and cover the baseline survey and its report. Subject to a successful collaboration with the vendor, Better Work foresees an extension of the contract to cover a mid-line survey and a final survey with subsequent reports at the end of the project for a total duration of 3 years. Prior to baseline data collection, the survey instrument will be circulated to local stakeholders for their feedback.
**Component 1: Impact Assessment Quantitative Study Design**

Better Work is seeking an organization to prepare a design and workplan for implementing the impact assessment quantitative study. The study design should include the following:

- Proposed analytical framework to evaluate the impact of BWB over the three rounds of data collection, based on a literature review on the project and consultation with BWB management;
- Methodology for establishing sample sizes, including but not limited to workers in factories, their households and communities for off-site interviews, keeping in mind the non-experimental nature of the study;
- Survey instruments for manager, supervisor and worker surveys based on the existing templates developed in the context of the Better Work Global impact assessment in collaboration with Tufts University. Survey design should also take into account country-level available data sources, such as labour force or living standard surveys, to ensure a degree of comparability;
- Strategy for data collection, including logistics and schedule.

**Component 2: Data Collection**

Once the methodology is finalized, the organization will pilot the surveys and conduct the baseline data collection. The organization is encouraged to propose a strategy to approach factories for data collection (including all logistical aspects) and a plan to address practical challenges (e.g., timing and location of data collection, gifts for respondents, materials needed, unscheduled changes, traffic, etc.). Such strategy may also involve collaboration with partner organizations active in the RMG sector.

The organization is expected to identify lessons learned from baseline data collection and adjust the strategy in view of the mid-line and end-line data collections, coordinating with BWB and Better Work Global offices.

*Please note that while Components 1 and 3 of this assignment can be carried out from any location, Component 2 must be carried out by an organization based in Dhaka, Bangladesh.*

**Component 3: Analysis**

The concluding component of the project consists of an analysis of baseline data, testing the initial hypothesis and theory of change, and informing future programme design and implementation.

4. **ILO’s responsibilities**

BWB will be responsible for organizing consultations with national stakeholders on the impact assessment methodology and survey content. It will also ensure that the organization has full access to existing materials pertaining to BWB project design, the Better Work impact assessment methodology and survey methods (see Appendix). Regular consultations with Better Work Global will also constitute part of this.
Finally, BWB will play a role in introducing the organization to factories where data collection is going to take place. The logistics of factory visits and data collection will however be the responsibility of the organization.

5. Detailed Project Plan

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<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Task or Deliverable</th>
<th>Responsible Person(s)</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preparatory Activities</td>
<td>Consultation with donors and national stakeholders</td>
<td>BWB, BWG</td>
<td>Sep-Oct 2014</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Selection of consultants</td>
<td>BWB, BWG, Procurement</td>
<td>Dec 2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Activity 1 Impact Assessment Quantitative Study Design</td>
<td>Consultation with organization on background documents, liaison with BWB</td>
<td>BWG, BWB</td>
<td>Jan-Feb 2015</td>
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<td>• Impact assessment design in the form of a strategy document</td>
<td>Contracted institution</td>
<td>Jan 2015</td>
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<td>• Draft survey instruments based on existing surveys (both in English and Bangla)</td>
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<td>• Strategy for data collection, including logistics and draft schedule</td>
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<td>Activity 2 Data Collection</td>
<td>Preparatory materials for introduction to factories</td>
<td>BWB, BWG</td>
<td>Jan 2015</td>
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<td>Conduct surveys</td>
<td>Contracted institution</td>
<td>Feb-May 2015</td>
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<td>Provide cleaned data to BWG, BWB in the form of Excel, or a statistical package</td>
<td>Contracted institution</td>
<td>Jun 2015</td>
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<td>Activity 3 Analysis and Report Writing</td>
<td>First draft of report circulated to BWG, BWB, key stakeholders</td>
<td>Contracted institution</td>
<td>Jul 2015</td>
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<td>Present findings prior to final draft of report</td>
<td>Contracted institution</td>
<td>Aug 2015</td>
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<td>Final draft and plans for dissemination including dates for Powerpoint presentation to stakeholders</td>
<td>Contracted institution</td>
<td>Aug 2015</td>
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6. Completion Criteria

In tendering this work the service provider will propose a strategy (agreed by Better Work) with measurable deliverables for these terms of references. This will include the following, which must be approved by Better Work:

- Approved strategy document for wide circulation with national and global stakeholders;
- Draft survey instruments;
- Data collection plan and schedule (including weekly updates);
- Draft and finalized baseline report;
7. **Required Competencies**

The following skills and competences are required for this assignment:

- Extensive experience in large programme impact evaluations, in particular for ILO, UN or World Bank programmes.
- Experience on issues related to the garment sector, in particular the Bangladeshi RMG sector, workers’ rights, livelihoods and wellbeing.
- Experience in managing large scale data collections through surveys. Specific experience with surveying garment workers is highly desirable.
- Strong statistical skills.
- Personnel with excellent command of English (oral and written) and of Bangla.
- Sound writing and presentation skills, and experience in speaking to diverse audiences.

8. **Special terms and conditions**

**Confidentiality Statement and Intellectual Property of data**

All data and information received from Better Work, the ILO and the IFC for the purpose of this assignment are to be treated confidentially and are only to be used in connection with the execution of these Terms of Reference. All intellectual property rights arising from the execution of these Terms of Reference are assigned to IFC and ILO according to the grant agreement. The contents of written materials obtained and used in this assignment may not be disclosed to any third parties without the expressed advance written authorization of the IFC and ILO.

9. **Payment Plan**

The payment will be made as follows:

Payment will be made upon satisfactory completion of the deliverables and sign off by ILO Programme Manager and only on receipt of an invoice.

- First payment to be made upon contract signature 10%
- Second payment upon receipt of impact assessment design strategy document, survey and data collection plans 20% (Activity 1 & 2)
- Third payment on receipt of first draft 30% (Activity 3)
- Final payment on receipt of final draft 40% (Activity 3)

10. **Appendices**