

Terms Of Reference (Tor) For the Follow-Up Assessment of Environmental and Social Compliance in RMG Factories for Progress (Promoting Green Growth In The RMG Sector Through Skills) Project

Introduction

The Promoting Green Growth in the Ready-Made Garments Sector through Skills (PROGRESS) is a project funded by the Embassy of Sweden and the Embassy of Switzerland in Bangladesh and implemented by Swisscontact. The project supports RMG factories to advance in green transition by building their resilience and competitiveness through a market-driven approach.

The project has three main areas of work. **Component 1: Skills and Productivity** improves the technical skills and productivity of RMG workers. With support from the project, Consultancy Service Providers (CSPs)¹ develop the skills of workers in areas such as low-performance improvement, zero-defect operation and women's leadership, making them more competent and productive. The project also supports factories developing an in-house training system to ensure the sustainability of these initiatives.

Component 2: Environmental and Social Compliance supports factories in their decarbonisation journey. CSPs assess factories' carbon emissions at baseline and help them develop tailored pathways towards net-zero emissions, while promoting sustainability reporting, resource efficiency, water and chemical management, and improved social compliance and workplace safety. **Component 3: Local Capacity Development** strengthens the local advisory service market by building the capacity of Local Technical Consultancy Providers (LTCPs) and by supporting academic institutions to develop a pipeline of sustainability professionals for the sector.

To date, the project has worked in over 150 factories, whereby more than 90 factories have been supported under the ESG component.

In 2025, PROGRESS commissioned an independent assessment of environmental and social compliance in its partner factories. Under that assignment, an ESG compliance scoring methodology was developed and applied in 12 partner factories in Dhaka, Gazipur, Savar and Chattogram. The assessment established factory-level Environmental and Social scores for the baseline and for the 2025 status.

PROGRESS now seeks to repeat the assessment in the same factories, to measure change since the 2025 assessment, as well as in a representative additional factories, and to determine whether the improvements recorded have been sustained. The 2025 scores will serve as the comparison point for this round, and the baseline will be retained so that results can be presented as a trend across three points in time.

Objectives

- To generate quantifiable Environmental and Social scores for each factory by applying the scoring methodology developed in the 2025 assessment and suggest improvements if any, and to compare them with the 2022 baseline and 2025 scores.
- To determine the current level of awareness, understanding and commitment of factory management and workers towards achieving and maintaining ES compliance, and how this has changed since 2025.
- To assess the sustainability of ES practices and investments recorded in 2025, including the status of measures that were planned or under implementation at that time.

¹ Consultancy service providers (CSPs) are reputed national/international commercial consultancy firms that have certain expertise to implement interventions in partner factories for PROGRESS. They have legal, technical and financially binding contracts with the project. Beyond project, then are expected to provide similar services to the factories in exchange of service fees.

- To develop actionable recommendations for the ESG component in future.

Methodological Basis

The Service Provider **is not expected to develop a new ESG index or scoring methodology**. It will apply the methodology developed and used in the 2025 assessment, which is the property of Swisscontact; minor improvements will be made in consultation with PROGRESS team. The bidding firm must suggest a sampling strategy that represents an appropriate level of significance.

Upon signing the contract, PROGRESS will share the Scoring Code Book, data collection tools, 2025 scoring sheets and datasets, and the 2025 report. The core elements of the methodology are summarised below; the Scoring Code Book is the binding reference.

Element	Specification (as applied in 2025)
Reference frameworks	Tools aligned with Higg FEM 4.0 (environment), SMETA / ETI Base Code and amfori BSCI (social) and GRI (disclosure).
Environmental KPI areas	Energy management; climate action and GHG management; water and wastewater; chemical management; solid waste and circularity; environmental management system (EMS).
Social KPI areas	Occupational health and safety (OHS); grievance mechanisms; gender equity.
Management KII modules	Sustainability, governance and management; environment management; social management; investment.
Worker survey KPIs	OHS awareness and culture; grievance mechanism effectiveness; gender equity and safety; worker environmental engagement.
Scoring scale	1–10 maturity scale in five bands (Non-existent, Basic Compliance, Systematic, Proactive, Leadership). Odd scores denote Entry level and even scores Established level within each band.
KPI score triangulation	Management KII 60%, facility data 20%, worker FGD 20%.
Facility data	Progressive improvement against each factory's own 2022 baseline using fixed formulas for lower-is-better and higher-is-better indicators; no industry benchmark.
Worker survey	Used for awareness and participation analysis, disaggregated by sex; not included in the KPI score.
Quality rules	Rule of conservatism (lower score where evidence is ambiguous or between levels); written justification for every score linked to a quote, example or metric; consistent Entry vs Established logic across factories.

To preserve comparability with the 2025 results, the following conditions apply:

- Tools, KPI definitions, scoring rules and weights will be applied without change. Corrections of errors or ambiguities identified in the tools must be agreed in writing with the PROGRESS MRM team and documented in the inception note.
- Additional questions may be added only to capture change since 2025 or the status of earlier investments. They must not alter core items and will be analysed separately from the KPI scores.
- The respondent mix per factory (KII roles, FGD composition and size, worker survey sample) will follow the 2025 approach. In 2025 this comprised 45 KIIs, 20 FGDs with 160 workers and 231 worker surveys across 12 factories; the Service Provider will match or exceed this coverage.

- Where a 2025 respondent is no longer available, a respondent holding an equivalent role will be interviewed and this will be recorded.
- If PROGRESS adds factories not covered in 2025, the 2022 baseline for those factories will be reconstructed using the recall-bias safeguards described in the 2025 report.

Details Of the Tasks

- Review the 2025 report, Scoring Code Book, tools and datasets, and submit a brief inception note confirming the application of the methodology, any agreed corrections, the factory list, sample plan and field schedule.
- Translate and pre-test the tools where needed, and orient enumerators and facilitators on the scoring logic to ensure consistency with 2025.
- Conduct at least one KIIs with factory management, and appropriate number of FGDs with workers and individual worker surveys in the selected Tier 2 and Tier 3 factories and collect facility data on the environmental and social indicators in the Scoring Code Book. This must relate to the significance level of sampling suggested by the prospective vendor.
- Analyse the types and scale of investments made by factories since 2025 to implement ES compliance measures, and the underlying motivations (buyer requirements, regulatory pressure, cost savings or internal commitment).
- Assess the nature, scalability and sustainability of ES initiatives, particularly those linked to PROGRESS support, including whether practices recorded in 2025 have been maintained, strengthened or discontinued.
- Calculate individual and average Environmental and Social scores using the 2025 scoring framework and compare the results with the 2022 baseline and 2025 scores to identify changes and trends attributable to PROGRESS support.

Geographic Location

The assessment locations will cover Dhaka, Gazipur, Narayanganj, Chattogram districts.

Duration Of the Study

The study will be conducted over a period of three months, from October 2026 to December 2026.

Deliverables

- Inception note.
- Cleaned datasets, completed scoring sheets and transcripts or notes of KIIs and FGDs
- Draft report
- Final report, incorporating PROGRESS feedback

Technical Proposal Requirements

As the methodology is fixed, the technical proposal should focus on how it will be applied. It should include:

- Understanding of the assignment
- Detailed sampling plan
- Work plan, field schedule and quality assurance measures for consistent scoring
- Team composition, with relevant experience in RMG environmental and social compliance and in frameworks such as Higg FEM, SMETA and amfori BSCI

- Relevant organisational experience in similar assignments

Reporting And Coordination

The Service Provider will report directly to the PROGRESS Team Leader and work in close coordination with the PROGRESS MRM team, providing regular updates. Any deviation from the 2025 methodology requires prior written approval from the PROGRESS MRM team.

Selection Criteria

Based on the proposals submitted, firms will be evaluated first on their technical proposal. Firms scoring more than 50% in their technical proposal will be shortlisted for presentation and evaluation of financial proposals. The following criteria will be applied in evaluating the proposals:

SL.	Criteria	Score
1.	Technical Proposal	70%
1.1	Understanding of the assignment	10%
1.2	Methodology	20%
1.3	Proposed sampling strategy and workplan	30%
1.4	Resource persons' profile & Experience of similar work/service undertaken	10%
2.	Presentation on the proposals	10%
3.	Financial proposal	20%

Required Documents from the CSP

All bidding consultant/ consultancy firms are required to submit the following:

- A technical proposal elaborating the understanding of the assignment, proposed methodology, assessment tools, timeline (activity plan), key staff profiles, roles, and individual time to be spent on the assignment
- A separate financial proposal setting out a detailed budget for the assignment (in BDT).
- A summary of relevant services provided during the last 3 years.
- CVs of the key personnel who will be involved in the assignment.
- A list of the existing clientele of the organisation.
- It is mandatory for the bidding organisations to submit documentary evidence demonstrating their legal, taxation, and financial status. This includes:
 - A certificate of incorporation (for individual companies, a trade license), Registration-related documents (trade license, registration with any government entities/NGO bureau registration).
 - An organisational organogram of key personnel, inclusive of the names of such personnel.
 - Tax Identification Number (TIN).
 - Business Identification Number (BIN).
 - Latest PSR (Proof of Submission of the Return).
 - A signed statement testifying that all information contained within the proposal is correct and true.

Ownership And Confidentiality

Swisscontact owns the intellectual property rights of the documents and materials prepared under this assignment and of the 2025 methodology, tools and data shared with the Service Provider. These, or any part of them, cannot be sold, used, shared, presented or reproduced in any manner without prior approval of Swisscontact. Factory-level data will be treated as confidential.

Submission Details

Interested applicants must submit their proposals via email to bd.progress@swisscontact.org by 03 November 2026. The email subject line must state: **“Follow-Up Assessment of Environmental and Social Compliance in RMG Factories”**. In addition to the email submission, a hard copy of the technical and financial proposal separately should be delivered to the following address by the same deadline:

Swisscontact Bangladesh Office

House 28, Road 43, Gulshan-2, Dhaka 1212, Bangladesh

Late or incomplete submissions will not be considered. Swisscontact reserves the right to accept or reject any application, in part or full, or cancel the entire procurement process without assigning any reason whatsoever. Submission of an application does not guarantee the award of the contract.