Terms of Reference

for

Consultancy on Capacity Building of Design Professionals for Sustainability Report Design

1. BACKGROUND

Swisscontact, the Swiss Foundation for Technical Cooperation, headquartered in Zurich, was established in 1959 by the Swiss private sector and academia to promote sustainable development cooperation. Swisscontact advances economic, social, and ecological progress by enabling people to successfully integrate into local commercial life. It creates opportunities for individuals to improve their living conditions through their own efforts. With a focus on systemic interventions in the private sector, Swisscontact strengthens local and global value chains. Across its projects, the organisation expands access to professional training, fosters local entrepreneurship, connects people to financial service providers, and promotes efficient resource use—all to generate employment and income opportunities.

As part of its efforts in Bangladesh, Swisscontact implements the **Promoting Green Growth in the Ready-Made Garments Sector Through Skills (PROGRESS) project** with support from the Embassy of Sweden and the Embassy of Switzerland in Dhaka. PROGRESS is a programme that promotes green growth across the RMG supply chain.

2. RATIONALE

Global buyers, brands and regulators increasingly expect suppliers to disclose their environmental, social and governance (ESG) performance. Frameworks such as the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) and the European Sustainability Reporting Standards (ESRS) are driving these expectations, and the demand for sustainability disclosure is growing across industries, including Bangladesh's ready-made garment (RMG) sector.

In response, an increasing number of RMG factories are preparing sustainability reports to strengthen transparency and demonstrate their ESG performance. However, while report content is often completed on time, publication is frequently delayed during the design stage. Factories require professionally designed, buyer-facing reports that present complex sustainability information in a clear, engaging and credible manner.

This challenge stems from a gap in the market. ESG consultants typically possess expertise in sustainability reporting standards and disclosure requirements but often lack the specialised design capabilities needed to transform technical content into publication-ready reports. At the same time, most graphic designers and creative agencies have limited familiarity with ESG frameworks, sustainability disclosures and data visualisation requirements. As a result, factories struggle to identify service providers who can effectively bridge both sustainability and design expertise.

PROGRESS has observed this constraint directly through its support to factories developing sustainability reports. In several cases, report publication has been significantly delayed because suitable design support was unavailable. As sustainability reporting requirements continue to expand across supply chains, demand for ESG-informed design services is expected to increase further. Without a dedicated market offer that combines sustainability reporting knowledge with professional design expertise, completed reports may remain unpublished or fall short of stakeholder expectations, reducing the value of investments made in report development and limiting the credibility of sector-wide ESG disclosure.

PROGRESS therefore seeks to engage a qualified Consultancy Service Provider (CSP) to train a pool of design professionals in sustainability report design. PROGRESS also envisions that CSP will adopt this training as a core business offering and continue and expand it beyond the project's support.

3. OBJECTIVES

The overall objective of this assignment is to build a pool of design professionals in Bangladesh who can design credible, professional sustainability reports aligned with global reporting standards. Specifically, the CSP will:

a. Design and deliver a structured, practical training programme in sustainability report design for a single batch of participants.
b. Equip participants to work with ESG consultants and factories, from content brief to final publication, using real report cases.
c. Certify participants and strengthen their business development skills so that they can offer this service commercially.
d. Establish the training as a sustainable business line of the CSP, which continues after the assignment.

4. SCOPE OF WORK

The selected CSP will carry out the following activities.

a) **Participant Outreach, Selection, and Baseline Assessment**

- Reach out to potential participants, including freelance designers, design studios and agencies, and in-house designers of ESG consultancies and corporates.
- Propose the number of participants and the selection criteria in the technical proposal and select participants in consultation with PROGRESS.
- Assess participants' existing design skills, tools, and knowledge of sustainability reporting.
- Form participant groups for the practical component.

b) **Curriculum and Training Materials**

- Design a modular training curriculum covering, at a minimum: Audience specific sustainability reporting fundamentals (GRI, ESRS, materiality, report structure and content flow); report architecture and visual storytelling; brand-aligned visual identity; layout and typography; data visualisation and infographics; accessibility and readability; print and digital formats (including interactive PDF and web); design tools and production workflows; and effective, accurate visual communication of ESG performance.
- Include working with ESG consultants and factory teams: briefs, content handover, review cycles, and version control.
- Include business development: service packaging and pricing, client acquisition, proposals and contracts, and project management.
- Develop presentations, participant handbooks, templates, exercises, and assessment tools, in English and Bangla as appropriate.
- Share all curriculum and materials with PROGRESS for review and approval before delivery.

c) **Delivery of Training**

- Deliver interactive, learning-by-doing sessions in Dhaka.
- Conduct pre- and post-training assessments to measure skill gains.
- Keep attendance records, sex-disaggregated participant data, and session reports.

Train participants to use design software for laying out sustainability reports, covering templates, typography, colour, charts, and data visuals. The CSP must specify in its proposal which software it will use and justify the choice.

d) **Practice Session on Real Cases**
- Bring actual sustainability report cases, with the consent of the owners, for participants to work on in groups.
- Guide each group to finalise the report design using design software during the training process.
- Review group outputs and provide structured feedback against agreed quality criteria.

e) **Certification and Business Development Support**
- Award certificates to participants who meet the attendance and performance requirements set out in the approved curriculum.
- Equip participants with business development knowledge and a portfolio of practical work.
- Connect certified participants with ESG consultants, factories, brands, and other potential clients, where possible.

f) **Sustainability of the Training Business**
- Develop a business plan for continuing and expanding the training after the assignment, including target segments, pricing, and delivery model.
- Hand over all curriculum, materials, and tools to CSP's own training portfolio, with PROGRESS retaining the right to use them for non-commercial use.

5. TARGET PARTICIPANTS

- Freelance designers, design studios and agencies, in-house designers of ESG consultancies and corporates, and other professionals involved in report design.
- A single batch. The CSP will propose the number of participants along with formation of group for practical work.
- Women's participation of **at least 50%** is recommended.

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SELECTED CSP

a) Monitoring and reporting on training progress, participant performance, and practicum outcomes.
b) Assign a communication focal point for PROGRESS and a data monitoring focal point responsible for sharing and interpreting data as required.
c) Follow a cost-sharing model. The CSP will collect a portion of the training fee from participants, which will be adjusted against the CSP's consultancy fee. The fee structure and the proposed contribution ratio must be clearly stated in the technical and financial proposal.
d) Women's representation in the CSP team is highly recommended.
e) Share reports, case studies, photographs, and other communication materials as required by PROGRESS.
f) Communicate and collaborate with other ESG stakeholders as relevant.
g) Be adaptive in-service delivery, in response to participant needs and project direction.

7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PROGRESS

a) Conduct regular activity reviews and provide strategic direction and constructive feedback.
b) Review and approve the training curriculum, materials, and tools before delivery.
c) Review the deliverables and reports submitted by CSP.
d) Help with linkages to factories, ESG consultants, and other stakeholders, where appropriate.

8. DELIVERABLES

SL	Deliverables	Required Days after Contract Signing (to be proposed by the consultant)
i.	Inception Report with detailed work plan, methodology, participant selection criteria, and outreach plan	
ii.	Participant Selection and Baseline Assessment Report	
iii.	Training Curriculum, Training Materials, and Assessment Tools (English and Bangla as appropriate)	
iv.	Training Completion Report, including attendance, sex-disaggregated data, and pre- and post-assessment results	
v.	Finalised sustainability report designs produced through the practicum (per group), with feedback records	
vi.	Certificates issued and participant business development pack	
vii.	Business Plan for the continued training offer	
viii.	Final Assignment Report, including lessons learned and recommendations	

The deliverables are not exhaustive and may change based on discussion with the consultant. The selected CSP will be responsible for submitting deliverables according to the finalized contract.

9. REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS OF THE CSP

The CSP may be an individual, a firm, or a consortium. It must demonstrate:

a) Knowledge of sustainability reporting standards and frameworks, such as GRI and ESRS.
b) Proven experience in designing sustainability, ESG, or annual reports, supported by published samples.
c) Experience in designing and delivering professional training.
d) A team combining ESG reporting knowledge and design expertise. In a consortium, the lead member and the role of each member must be clearly stated.

10. REQUIRED DOCUMENTS FOR THE CSP

All bidding consultants or consultancy firms must submit the following:

a) A technical proposal setting out understanding of the assignment, proposed methodology, training approach, number of participants, assessment tools, timeline (activity plan), key staff profiles, roles, and individual time to be spent on the assignment.

b) A separate financial proposal with a detailed budget for the assignment (in BDT), including the proposed participant fee and contribution ratio.
c) A summary of relevant services provided during the last 3 years, especially sustainability report design, sustainability reporting advisory, and training.
d) Samples of sustainability or ESG reports designed by the CSP or key personnel.
e) CVs of key personnel who will be involved in the assignment.
f) A list of the organisation's existing clients.

Documentary evidence of legal, taxation, and financial status (mandatory), including:

a) A certificate of incorporation (for individual companies, a trade licence) and registration-related documents (trade licence, registration with any government entities, or NGO Affairs Bureau registration).
b) An organisational organogram of key personnel, including their names.
c) Tax Identification Number (TIN).
d) Business Identification Number (BIN).
e) Latest PSR (Proof of Submission of Return).
f) A signed statement confirming that all information in the proposal is correct and true.

11. Selection Criteria

PROGRESS will select the consultant based on the following criteria:

SL	**What to evaluate**	**Points**
1	Technical Proposal	60
2	Financial Proposal	20
3	Presentation (Only with initially shortlisted applicants)	20

12. GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION

The training will be conducted in Dhaka.

13. DURATION OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The assignment will run from 1 January 2027 to 30 June 2027.

14. SUBMISSION DETAILS

Interested applicants must submit their proposals by email to bd.progress@swisscontact.org by 26 November 2026. The email subject line must read: **"Consultancy on Capacity Building of Design Professionals for Sustainability Report Design".** 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 to cancel the entire procurement process without giving any reason. Submission of an application does not guarantee award of the contract.

15. REPORTING

The selected applicant will work closely with the PROGRESS team and report directly to the PROGRESS Team Leader. The applicant is also expected to maintain clear communication with team members, so that project tasks are completed on time and in line with strategic objectives.