



B-SkillFUL Phase II

Domain of intervention:	Income and Economic Development
Implementation period:	01.09.2020 – 31.08.2024
Implementing partner:	Swisscontact
SDC contribution:	CHF 9 million
Modality:	Mandate

General description

B-SkillFUL Phase II is a skills and enterprise development programme which contributes to Switzerland's overall goal in Bangladesh, to bring about a more equitable society that enjoys inclusive and sustainable growth, aligned with the 2030 Agenda of the United Nations.

After a successful completion of Phase I, B-SkillFUL Phase II will aim to improve productivity and competitiveness of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and create better jobs in the furniture making, light engineering and leather goods manufacturing sectors across six districts in Bogura, Dhaka, Gazipur, Kishoreganj, Nilphamari and Rangpur.

Recognising the importance of domestic economic recovery, in the COVID-19 context, B-SkillFUL Phase II offers customised solutions to SMEs to improve technical and management capabilities, modernise production methods, diversify products and services, expand into new markets and ensure safe and decent working conditions for workers. The programme also creates opportunities for coaching, mentoring, and providing advisory services to SMEs through Business Development Service (BDS) providers. These services include business planning, human resource development, product design, production improvements, inventory control, marketing, and finance.

Objectives

B-SkillFUL Phase II will promote decent employment and create income opportunities for poor and disadvantaged men and women in Bangladesh, through increased productivity and growth of small and medium size enterprises and workplace-based training of workers, in selected growth sectors and locations.

Lines of action / components

The two major intervention areas include:

- workplace-based training, coaching and mentoring services for unskilled, semi-skilled and skilled workers and management staff at SMEs; and
- specialised BDS targeting production methods and working conditions in SMEs.

Intended impact in terms of systemic change

By coupling skills development with enterprises development, through provision of better business development services to enhance competitiveness, the SMEs will grow and absorb more workers, addressing the core challenge of employment creation to address youth un- and underemployment, which has become even more pertinent in the current COVID-19 crisis. In parallel, the BDS providers can gain access and opportunities to engage with the SMEs in peri-urban and rural areas and expand their clientele beyond the major cities.

Programme Targets:

By 2024, B-SkillFUL Phase II will ensure:

- At least 12'000 workers and 1'000 management staff at SMEs have improved their employability and performances at workplaces; and
- At least 800 SMEs have increased productivity and efficiency, and improved working conditions.