



YEARS OF  
**SWISSCONTACT  
IN BANGLADESH**

TRANSFORMING LIVES & MARKETS FOR THE BETTER





# As we commemorate 25 years of Swisscontact in Bangladesh, we would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to our valued partners and collaborators.

Since 2000, we have implemented diverse projects, in collaboration with the private sector, the government and people of Bangladesh, playing a catalytic role to the economic growth and inclusive development of Bangladesh. It is thanks to our partners and collaborators, over the years our portfolio has expanded across sectors such as agriculture, ready-made garments, light engineering, health, water and sanitation, financial inclusion, and microinsurance.

In partnership with local and global businesses, public agencies, and communities, we have enhanced skills, fostered entrepreneurship, promoted decent work, and advanced green growth and climate resilience.

Our efforts have particularly supported marginalised communities, including farmers, women, and youth, while driving local economic development and building resilience against climate challenges. Our market-driven innovations have helped government and business entities deliver accessible services to underserved populations.

Once again, these achievements are a testament to the unwavering commitment of our partners, donors, and stakeholders, whose collaboration ensures the sustainability and scalability of our lasting impact. Looking ahead, we are confident that strengthening these partnerships will further advance Bangladesh's growth and address evolving development priorities.

**Thank you for being an integral part of this journey. Together, let us continue to innovate, collaborate, and build a future that leaves no one behind.**

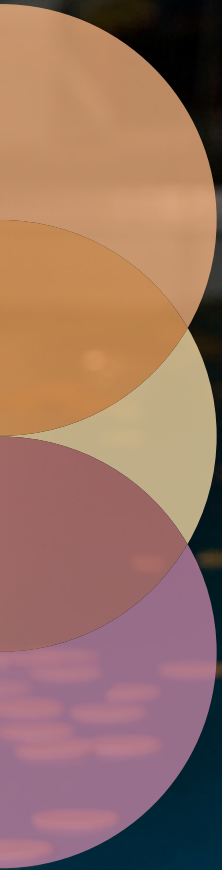
**Mujibul (Cezanne) Hasan**  
Country Director, Bangladesh



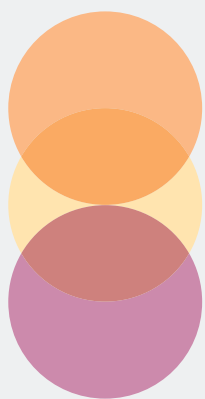
**ORGANISATIONAL PROFILE**  
SWISSCONTACT BANGLADESH



*We create opportunities*



**Swisscontact is an independent non-profit development organisation established in 1959 by representatives of the Swiss private sector and civil society.**



Collaboration with the private sector is in our DNA. We unleash the potential of private initiative to foster sustainable development and shared prosperity in developing and emerging economies.





# With a decentralised system, Swisscontact is headquartered in Zurich, and active in 41 countries worldwide.

**1,400+**

Employees (Mostly Local)

**130+**

Projects



**Swisscontact began its journey in Bangladesh in 1979, with a continued presence since the early 2000s.**

Currently, we have numerous projects across 52 districts, partnering with 32 private and 20 public sector organisations.





## History

# 25 years of market systems impact in Bangladesh



1959

'Swiss Foundation for Technical Cooperation' (renamed as Swisscontact in 1971) was founded in Zurich to enable the Swiss private sector to contribute to the economic development of developing countries.

1979

Swisscontact supports the establishment of Bangladesh Industrial Technical Assistance Center (BITAC).

2000

Officially launches operations in Bangladesh with the Business Development Services Programme (BDSP).

2002 - 2008

Pioneers Market Systems Development in Bangladesh through Katalyst Phase 1, driving enterprise development and agricultural productivity in rural areas.

2009 - 2014

Establishes its Bangladesh Country Office, expanding into skills development, healthcare, and ready-made garments (RMG).

2015 - 2025

Deepens impact in agriculture, healthcare, and RMG sectors, while diversifying expertise in new areas, such as financial inclusion, trade facilitation, climate change mitigation and adaptation with support from new and existing donors.

# Our work focuses on private sector-led, sustainable economic development and improved quality of life for all in developing and emerging countries.

A key focus is to strengthen the skills of individuals and foster the competitiveness of businesses, spanning across sectors including:



## Sustainable Agriculture

Swisscontact has been driving sustainable agriculture in Bangladesh through projects like Katalyst, M4C, and BMMDP. Collaborating with key partners including the Department of Agriculture Extension, Department of Fisheries, input companies, traders, microfinance institutes, and insurance companies, Swisscontact has improved farmers' access to quality inputs, enhanced production practices, facilitated market linkages, and developed financial products like microloans and insurance. These interventions have significantly boosted agricultural productivity and farmers' incomes, fostering a resilient agricultural ecosystem.



## Climate Action & Resilience

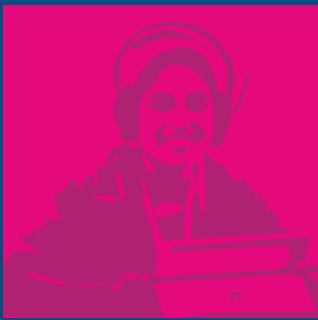
Swisscontact contributes to climate change action and resilience through projects like GO4IMPact, BMMDP, M4C, PROGRESS, InSPIRE and CALL. By collaborating with key partners such as rural development agencies, private sector stakeholders, government bodies, and local communities, Swisscontact has introduced climate-sensitive microinsurance products, promoted climate-resilient agricultural practices, encouraged environmentally responsible approaches in the RMG sector and aims to make the integrated water resource management and solid waste management system more climate resilient.



## Trade Facilitation & Promotion

Swisscontact continues to make notable contributions in trade facilitation through the DBLP and InSPIRE projects. By engaging extensively with government agencies, private sector stakeholders, agents' associations, banks, mobile financial service providers, and logistics companies, Swisscontact worked to identify key challenges and implement solutions to enhance trade efficiency. The Katalyst project also made substantial contributions to trade facilitation. In its second phase, Katalyst shifted its focus to the nationwide trade of commodities, goods and services, fostering a competitive and inclusive trade ecosystem that supported economic growth across Bangladesh.





## Enterprise Development

Swisscontact has been instrumental in advancing enterprise development through impactful initiatives such as B-SkillFUL, H2O, and Shujola. These projects have engaged with a diverse range of stakeholders, including medium, small, and micro enterprises, as well as local communities, technology companies, RMG factories, and TVET institutions. Through these collaborations, Swisscontact has provided targeted support to enhance productivity, promote innovation, and improve the competitiveness of enterprises.



## Skills Development

Swisscontact has played a pivotal role in advancing skills development in Bangladesh through initiatives like SDP, B-SkillFUL, Uttoron, SUDOKKHO, PROGRESS, and BYETS. Working across key employment-generating sectors, including RMG, ICT, construction and light engineering, Swisscontact collaborates with TVET institutes, employers, and government bodies to develop curricula, provide training, and facilitate internships, apprenticeships, and job placements. These interventions have enhanced the skills, employability, and incomes of youth, women, and disadvantaged populations, driving productivity, career progression, and job security in Bangladesh's evolving labour market.



## Health

Swisscontact Bangladesh has been addressing challenges in the availability of primary healthcare services and skilled healthcare professionals in rural areas through the ASTHA project, which started in 2011. As a result of the project's efforts, the Community Paramedic Training Programme is now an established professional training offered by private training institutes and governed by the Bangladesh Nursing and Midwifery Council under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. The training not only qualifies graduates to offer much-needed primary healthcare in underserved regions but also enhances employment opportunities for the youth.



## Financial Inclusion

Swisscontact has significantly advanced financial inclusion through initiatives like the Sarathi project, which focused on integrating workers in the RMG sector into formal financial systems. Financial inclusion was also a component of the M4C project, which enhanced access to financial services for underprivileged communities in the northern char regions by introducing agent banking. In these endeavors, Swisscontact collaborated with a diverse range of stakeholders, including banks, non-banking financial institutions, fintech organisations, and RMG factories; fostering a robust and inclusive financial ecosystem.

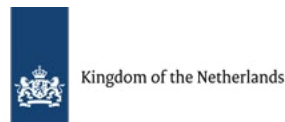




## Valued Partners

**Our collaboration with private sector partners play a pivotal role in driving and co-investing in these initiatives, thereby ensuring their sustainability and commercial viability beyond our support.**

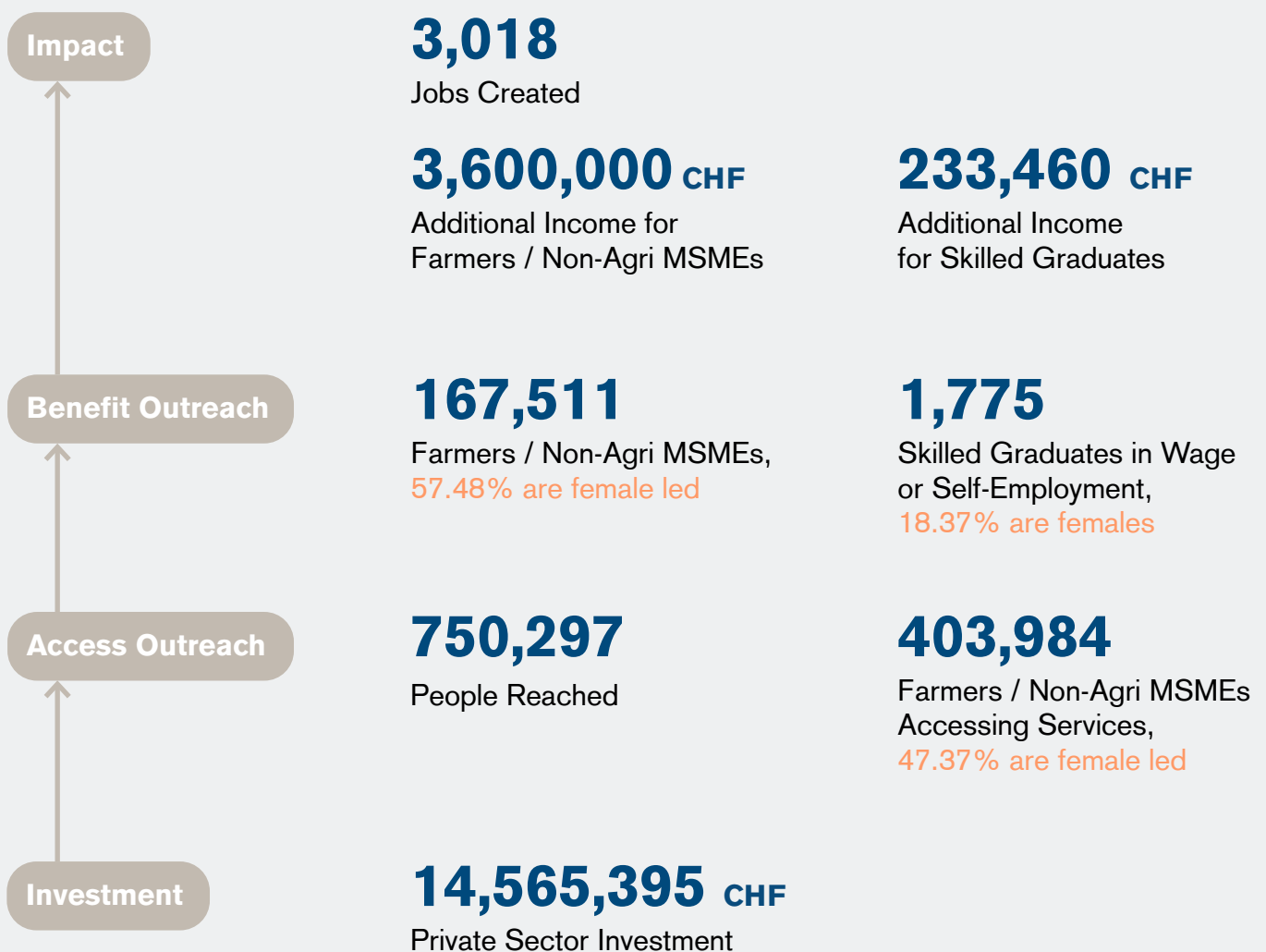
We have a rich experience of working with bilateral donors, the government and the private sector in Bangladesh. Our development partners include:







## Transformation in Bangladesh (2023)





Click to visit  
project page.

## Projects

### **Building Youth Employability through Skills (BYETS)**

Timeline: 2022 - 2026

Empowers Bangladeshi youth with technical and employability skills by facilitating market-driven training delivered by training service providers and employers.





Click to visit  
project page.



Improves access to quality primary healthcare services in rural areas by developing and empowering skilled Community Paramedics.

### Projects

## Achieving Sustainability Towards Healthcare Access (ASTHA)

Timeline: 2023 - 2026





Click to visit  
project page.

## Projects

# Promoting Green Growth In The Ready-Made Garments Sector Through Skills (PROGRESS)

Timeline: 2022 - 2026

Core focus in helping RMG workers have better job security and increased income due to improved skills and productivity. As well as aiding Tier-2, Tier-3 RMG factories gain improved productivity, as well as environmental and social compliance.



Click to visit  
project page.



Addresses critical facets of education, skill development and employment, community health and welfare, environmental resilience, and cooperative sustainability through effective partnerships and innovation.

## Projects

# Sustainable and Meaningful Intervention for Livelihood Enrichment (SMILE)

Timeline: 2023 - 2028





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project page.

## Projects

# Local Economic Development (PRABRIDDI)

Timeline: 2020 - 2025

This local economic development (LED) initiative empowers municipalities and local businesses by promoting a collaborative approach to determining key activities that stimulate business growth and co-creating sub-projects.





Click to visit  
project page.



Core focus to contribute in strengthening local democracy and improving equitable climate-resilient, yet basic public service provision in the water and solid waste management sectors.

### Projects

## Supporting Local Democratic Governance and Climate Resilient Public Service Provision in Bangladesh (GO4IMPACT)

Timeline: 2023 - 2027





Click to visit project page.

## Projects

### **Bangladesh Microinsurance Market Development Programme (BMMDP)**

Timeline: 2017 - 2027

Supports micro and small farming enterprises to improve resilience through using climate-sensitive microinsurance products and services. Hence contributing to food security and inclusive economic growth of Bangladesh.





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Swisscontact

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