

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Call for Mental Health Technical Expert to Strengthen Mental Health Approaches in the Garment/Footwear Sector

August 2026 – December 2026

Global, Remote Contract

BACKGROUND and CONTEXT

RISE: Reimagining Industry to Support Equality accelerates equality for low-income workers in global garment and footwear supply chains through collaboration with industry stakeholders and a firsthand understanding of workers' needs and priorities. RISE pursues its mission through three core strategies: (1) strengthening knowledge and skills for workers and managers; (2) embedding gender equality in business practice and (3) influencing industry and public policy.

There are 60million workers (approximately 65% women) in global garment, footwear and home textile sector. The daily reality for workers especially women, is shaped by persistent inequality and discrimination; limited financial inclusion, inadequate access to healthcare, violence and harassment at work and growing climate related risks. These challenges restrict workers from reaching their full economic potential and directly affect business performance and productivity.

Mental health is a critical component of worker well-being and an essential contributor to safe, productive, and resilient workplaces¹. In the garment sector, production pressures, financial insecurity, unsafe or unsupportive workplaces, and gendered responsibilities can negatively affect workers' mental health. Recent research in Bangladesh found that 69% of garment workers reported symptoms of depression and 48% reported symptoms of anxiety². Poor mental health also contributes to absenteeism, presenteeism, turnover, and reduced productivity. Globally, depression and anxiety result in an estimated 12 billion working days lost each year,³ costing the global economy US\$1 trillion annually. When working conditions are not fair and safe, women's mental health and overall wellbeing may suffer, impacting on individual productivity and, in turn, business.⁴

Although RISE programmes address some of the underlying drivers of poor mental health, they were not originally designed with the mental health needs and perspectives of workers in mind. **RISE is therefore developing a gender-responsive mental health approach tailored to the realities and needs of garment workers, considering the needs of women.**

¹ World Health Organization (2024). [Mental Health at Work Fact Sheet](#).

² Innovation (2025). [Stitched Under Stress](#)

³ World Health Organization (2024). [Mental Health at Work Fact Sheet](#).

⁴ World Economic Forum (2022). [Global Gender Gap Report 2022: Insight Report July 2022](#).

PURPOSE OF THE TERMS OF REFERENCE

The purpose of this assignment is to engage a Mental Health Technical Expert to support the development and integration of a gender responsive Mental Health component into RISE programs.

Specifically, the assignment aims to:

- Review RISE existing workplace program curricula/materials and make recommendations to strengthen activities to improve workers mental health.
- Support the design of a new Mental Health Component for RISE workplace programs, developing content and materials as required.
- Develop a Mental Health 101 for RISE and implementing partners

SCOPE OF WORK

The scope of work includes:

1. Review RISE existing Workplace Program Curricula and Materials

- Review RISE Foundations workplace program to strengthen RISE's existing curricula and materials to improve workers mental health. This could include recommendations on language, activities or case studies within the existing training.
- Develop content to address the recommendations as agreed with the RISE team.

2. Support the design of a new Mental Health Component for RISE workplace programs

- Review RISE's mapping of mental health initiatives and needs assessment with workers and managers on their mental health views, needs and priorities to make recommendations on developing an appropriate, scalable mental health component that can be integrated into RISE workplace programs
- Support the design of a new mental health component to address these needs, such as manager training to promote positive mental health in the workplace and signposting workers to appropriate support services where needed.
- Develop new content for the component and relevant accompanying materials

3. Capacity strengthening on Mental Health for RISE and implementing partners

- Develop and deliver a Mental Health 101 to build the capacity of RISE team members and implementing partners on how to communicate on mental health topics and deliver training in a appropriate way.
- Develop guidance for trainers on implementing the new Mental Health Component

DELIVERABLES

SI No.	Deliverable	Indicative Timeline
1.	Inception meeting, workplan and timeline	By 24 August 2026
2.	Review existing RISE materials and make recommendations to strengthen them from a mental health angle	By 30 September 2026
3.	Review RISE's Needs Assessment Findings and Landscape Research and make recommendations for a new, scalable	By 30 September 2026

	mental health component that can be integrated into RISE workplace programs	
4.	Develop Mental Health Program component, other content and supporting materials	By 30 November 2026
5.	Develop and deliver a Mental Health 101 to build the capacity of RISE team members and implementing partners	By 10 December 2026
6.	Develop guidance for trainers on implementing the new Mental Health Component	By 10 December 2026

TIMELINE, LEVEL OF EFFORT & BUDGET

The assignment will be implemented between August and December 2026. The estimated level of effort is 20 business days. Applicants should propose their own workplan, level of effort, and detailed budget aligned with the scope of work and deliverables. The fees will be agreed in advance and payment will be made in accordance with our shared agreement. The organization will be responsible for its own taxes and other statutory obligations.

REPORTING

The organization/consultant will report to the RISE Program Manager and work closely with the Program Associate and Country Leads. RISE Program Director will sign-off all final deliverables.

CONFIDENTIALITY & INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

The organization is expected to maintain the confidentiality of all programs related information. All data and information gathered by the organization for RISE will be the property of BSR.

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS & QUALIFICATIONS

Interested applicants/organisations should submit a brief proposal (2–3 pages) that includes:

1. Technical proposal outlining the proposed approach, workplan, and timeline.
2. Portfolio demonstrating relevant experience in mental health, worker wellbeing (or related fields), and gender equality in supply chains across South/SE Asia.
3. English language proficiency.
4. Financial proposal with a detailed budget, including daily rates.
5. Relevant work samples of comparable research, assessments, or publications.

Proposals will be evaluated based on the proposed approach, relevant experience, project management capacity, and ability to deliver high-quality outputs within the proposed timeline.

Application

Please send everything in one file to recruitment@riseequal.org and reference the RFP title 'RISE Mental Health Expert, **Your Name**' before the **24 July 2026**. For any questions or follow ups, reach out to Sreya Nath at snath@bsr.org. Only suitable candidates or organizations will be contacted for an interview on the week commencing 27th July.