

Aga Khan Foundation, Afghanistan

Job Opportunities

Position Title	: Short Term Assignment for (Social Mobilization and Shura Competency Framework Development)
Duty Station	: Kabul with travel to at least two regions
Announcing Date	: Oct 01 st , 2019
Closing Date	: Oct 14 th , 2019
Vacancy No	: CS/KBL/10/19/089

The Aga Khan Foundation (AKF) is a non-denominational international development agency established in 1967 by His Highness the Aga Khan. Its mission is to develop and promote creative solutions to problems that impede social development, primarily in Asia and East Africa. Created as a private, non-profit foundation under Swiss law, it has branches and independent affiliates in 19 countries.

AKF seeks to provide sustainable solutions to long-term problems of poverty, hunger, illiteracy, and ill health. In Afghanistan, AKF works with rural communities in mountainous, remote or resource poor areas to improve quality of life in the areas of natural resource management, market development, governance, education and health.

The Aga Khan Foundation, Afghanistan (AKF (Afg)) is an agency of the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN), a group of international, private, non-denominational development agencies working to improve living conditions and opportunities for people in some of the poorest parts of the developing world. The Network's organizations have individual mandates that range from the fields of health and education to architecture, rural development and promotion of private-sector enterprise and institutions that seek to empower communities and individuals, usually in disadvantaged circumstances, to improve living conditions and opportunities.

Rationale

Quality and relevant education is one of the main goals of the Afghanistan National Education Strategic Plan III (NESP III). In partnerships with its development partners, Ministry of Education (MoE) has undertaken a variety of initiatives to provide quality and relevant education programs to children. Firstly, teacher standards and competencies are developed. Teacher professional development programs as well as teacher credentialing and certification follow the teacher standards and competencies. Under the curriculum reform program, MoE is developing students' subject-specific standards per grade-level and life skills competencies. These two standardization initiatives will certainly contribute to the quality education programming in Afghanistan.

The Directorate of Social Mobilization and Shura (DSMS), a department within the structure of the Deputy Minister for General Education (DMGE), is a key body of the MoE responsible for mobilizing Social Mobilization and Shura (SMSs) to engage in and support school level improvements. SMSs have an extensive ToR developed by the MoE and are tasked with everything from planning and carrying out school improvements to peacebuilding and monitoring as well as social audits. However, school shuras are at varying degrees of effectiveness, with some more functional than others. Addressing these inequalities, AQLC will strengthen their capacity, especially increasing women's meaningful participation in school shuras so they can provide quality and timely support to school level improvements and to foster support within communities for girls' education.

DSMS has a professional cadre of nine specialists nationally, a total of 86 provincial staff for all provinces, and no staff at the district level. The current reality at the district level where our Consortium Members will work is that the competencies and functions of the DSMS are carried out by GDAS staff. DSMS has plans to hire social mobilizers at the district level or potentially to transfer those

GDAS staff who are taking on this social mobilizer role. Our Consortium Members will work with the appropriate MoE staff in place.

A standard competency framework for DSMS officials working at all levels is required to ensure greater clarity around roles and responsibilities and to monitor capacity building progress. Additionally, professional capacity development program to train the DSMS officials are paramount.

Background and context

In Afghanistan, enrolment, attendance rates, and learning outcomes remain low, especially for girls, children living in remote areas, and children with disabilities. Last year, the primary school attendance fell for the first time since 2002.¹ According to the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF),² only 42% of school-aged children (aged 5-14) are enrolled in school, leaving an estimated 3.7 million children out of school, of which 2.2 million are girls. The reasons for non-attendance in education are multi-faceted, related not only to issues of access and quality of education, but also to wider socio-economic factors. On the supply side, the following institutional, organizational and individual challenges and needs exist: low capacity of teachers and school administrators; lack of relevant capacity to supervise and provide tailored targeted support to teachers at the district and village levels due to lack of a competency framework, standardized training materials, observation tools, guiding manuals, etc.; insufficient number and qualification level of social mobilizers; lack of school infrastructure, especially in girls' schools (only 16% of schools are girls' schools); distance to schools (no more than two out of five rural households live within a two km radius³); shortage of teachers, especially female teachers (34% of teachers are women); lack of quality learning materials; lack of efficiency in spending development budget, and corruption.⁴ On the demand side, the challenges are: limited awareness of education's value, particularly for girls (Steps Towards Afghan Girls' Educational Success (STAGES) II project, Baseline); and traditional practices that limit inclusion, such as early marriages.⁵ In the past, efforts of the government and donors were overwhelmingly directed at improving access, but the low quality of education is increasingly recognized as a problem. Of particular concern is the disparity in quality in learning opportunities between rural and urban areas.

The Afghanistan Quality Learning (AQL) is a four-year (2019-2022) project that focuses on improving the quality and relevance of education in rural areas in Afghanistan by supporting interventions at school, district, provincial and national levels to strengthen academic supervision, promote the professional development of teachers and improve learning environments. It is funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and implemented by the Afghanistan Quality Learning Consortium. The Consortium is led by the Aga Khan Foundation Afghanistan, with Save the Children and CARE Afghanistan as Consortium Members. The overall goal (impact) of the project is that all girls and boys in the project target geographies benefit from quality learning in a conducive environment. The goal will be achieved through two inter-linked outcomes: Outcome 1) Communities contribute to improved (inclusive, equitable, and safe) learning environments in support of quality education and relevant learning outcomes; and, Outcome 2) Educational institutions, especially Academic Supervision, at the national and sub-national levels, provide better services to enhance school performance, quality, and relevancy of learning and equity.

¹ "Global Initiative on Out-of-School Children All Children in School and Learning - Afghanistan Country Study (2018)", UNICEF.

² UNICEF data 2016. <https://www.unicef.org/afghanistan/education>.

³ Afghanistan Education for All 2015 National Review, p.12.

⁴ NESP III states that the Ministry of Education estimates that up to 42'000 Tashkeel teacher positions would have to be added to ensure the grade-specific student/teacher ratio. However, no new teacher positions have been approved in the national budget since 2012.

⁵ Across the country, girls continue to marry young. Around 17% marry before their 15th birthdays; this causes school dropouts (ALCS 2017).

The project adopts a holistic and comprehensive approach to improving the quality of education: on the one hand, it develops the capacities of the Government of Afghanistan's Ministry of Education institutions at national and sub-national levels to assist teachers and principals to provide better, relevant, and meaningful quality education; on the other hand, the project also mobilizes communities to improve school environments, enhance transparency and address access, protection/safety, inclusion, and equity concerns. In doing so, it supports the implementation of the Ministry of Education's National Education Strategic Plan III by contributing to its intermediate outcomes of strengthened supervision and community engagement.

Objective

The objective of this consultancy is to develop a comprehensive competency-based professional development program for Afghanistan MoE's social mobilizers at all levels (National, Provincial and District) through 1) development of the Social Mobilization Competency Framework, 2) a comprehensive needs assessment of the social mobilizers, and 3) supporting the development of a standard professional development program for social mobilizers on the basis of defined competencies and identified gaps in the needs assessment.

The specific objectives of this consultancy are to:

- Lead the development and finalization of the Social Mobilization Competency Framework using a consultative, participatory approach, and working in close coordination with the MoE's DSMS and AQLC teams;
- Lead a comprehensive needs assessment of DSMS staff working at the national, provincial and district levels to identify capacity gaps on the basis of defined competencies; and
- Provide technical support for the development of standardized training packages targeting social mobilizers based on the developed competencies.

Main Duties and Responsibilities

The consultant will directly lead all the technical activities under this consultancy. The major responsibilities are listed below. They include but are not limited to:

General:

- Conduct desk review of the existing MoE, AQLC partners and other development partners' relevant documents and tools, especially Social Mobilization Strategy, School Management Shura (SMS) roles and responsibilities (developed under STAGES project), and Community Development Council (CDC) guidelines;
- Conduct literature review of best practices around social mobilization models and systems regionally and globally;
- Study the details of the Education Quality Reform in Afghanistan (EQRA), Afghan Children Read (ACR), Steps Towards Afghan Girls' Educational Success (STAGES II), and any other relevant large-scale education projects being implemented in Afghanistan and, once in Afghanistan, meet with these project stakeholders to understand the projects in detail to identify synergies and prevent overlap and duplication of efforts;
- Conduct project field visits through visiting schools and social mobilizers offices to understand the context and to get a general overview of the challenges and opportunities prevalent in education systems;
- Meet with local and national education officials including school teachers, school administrators, district and provincial level social mobilizers, national social mobilization specialists, and other key stakeholders, including local and religious leaders, to understand current social mobilization structure, their effectiveness, what is working, and what is not working.

Social Mobilization Competency Framework:

- Organize a series of national and provincial level consultation meetings and workshops to collect inputs from the relevant stakeholders (GDAS, DSMS, Directorate of Policy, Curriculum Department, Teacher Education Department, General Education, UNICEF, World Bank, UNESCO, GIZ, JICA, AQLC, and any other development partners identified by AQLC) for the development of the Social Mobilization Competency Framework;
- Develop necessary documentation (i.e. Power Point presentation(s), concept brief(s) and a summary of the Social Mobilization Competency Framework) for presentation in the relevant education consultative meetings and forums;
- Participate in relevant education technical working group meetings and forums (CBE working group, Teacher Policy working group, EMIS working group, etc.) to learn from other education programs and to provide updates on the development of the Social Mobilization Competency Framework; as required.

Training needs assessments of DSMS staff:

- Develop assessment tools for the MoE's staff capacity needs, jointly with the MoE;
- Lead the assessment of the capacity needs of DSMS staff to identify capacity gaps;
- Analyze data, prepare and submit a report with recommendations for the MoE's social mobilisers' professional development.

Development of standardized professional development training program:

- Review the existing training packages, including the social audit guide, School Safety Guidelines, child protection and child safeguarding;
- Review, revise, and finalize the existing project training index aligning it with the competencies;
- Develop a detailed work plan for the preparation of professional development packages, manuals and handouts;
- Develop curriculum and syllabi for each professional development program module defining objectives and learning outcomes;
- Assign different task forces within the technical working groups for the development of professional development program, tools and resources;
- Ensure quality of developed professional training package development and write progress reports.

Pilot and finalization of the Social Mobilization Competency Framework and associated professional development programs

- Lead the pilot of the professional development training program in two provinces and assess the effectiveness of the pilot;
- Revise the Social Mobilization Competency Framework and associated training packages with support from the MoE and the AQLC Technical Working Group (TWG);
- Develop a plan for scaling up the training in eight AQL project provinces in close consultations with the MoE and the AQLC;
- Present the final Social Mobilization Competency Framework to the MoE, AQLC and relevant stakeholders.

Qualifications Required

- Open to both groups of individuals (a group of national and international experts) with minimum of Master's degree (PhD is preferred) in social mobilization, community engagement, educational monitoring, school management and/or a related field; AND to organizations with extensive experience in social mobilization or community engagement in developing, conservative and fragile countries;
- Demonstrated experience developing large scale level policies, frameworks and strategies, particularly related to social mobilization;
- Experience in designing capacity building courses and training packages.

Deliverables

The consultant will be responsible for carrying out all consultancy deliverables and activities. Consortium partners will only provide logistics support. The consultant will consult with the AQLC technical advisers and relevant MoE point persons if required. All the costs including engaging assistants and associates to support the consultant should be reflected in the budget.

Deliverable #1: A detailed inception plan developed

The awarded consultant will be required to prepare a detailed inception plan outlining activities, work plan, budget and milestones. The plan should clearly state the number of required consultation meetings and workshops with clear outcomes of each consultation. The inception plan should include details regarding the development of professional development training packages (number of task forces, timelines, etc.) and the needs assessment study. The inception plan will be reviewed and approved by the MoE and the AQLC partners. All the planned activities are expected to be led by the consultant's team in coordination with the MoE and the AQL technical team with the roles and responsibilities of respective team members clearly elaborated on and shared.

Deliverable #2: Social Mobilization Competency Framework drafted

After the approval of the inception plan, the consultant will start the implementation of the plan. The Social Mobilization Competency Framework should be developed using a participatory, consultative methodology. A number of consultation meetings and workshops are anticipated at this stage. Regular progress updates (weekly or bi-weekly) should be given to the AQLC.

Deliverable #3: Social mobilizers large scale needs assessment study conducted

Working closely with the MoE and AQLC members, the consultant will commission a large scale needs assessment study with an aim to find capacity needs of the social mobilizers at national, provincial and district levels in close accordance with the defined competency. Assessment tools and instruments will be developed by the consultant and AQL project's TWG and M&E working groups. The final needs assessment study should clearly identify capacity gaps of social mobilizers at the national, provincial and district levels. Capacity gaps of social mobilizers in one province may be different from other provinces, and this should be clearly reflected in the needs assessment study final report.

Deliverable #4: Completion of a detailed curriculum plan and the development of the training program required for the social mobilization staff.

The consultant will develop a training index of the training modules that are required for the professional development of the social mobilizers working at the national, provincial and district levels. This master list should include objectives and descriptions of each training program. The consultant will serve as a lead curriculum developer and develop all the curriculum and syllabi for each training program. The consultant will form curriculum development task forces out of the AQLC project technical working group members that will act as junior curriculum developers for the development of the training packages. The consultant should also develop a quality control mechanism for the timely completion of the training packages.

Deliverable #5: Piloting the Social Mobilization Competency Framework and finalize it based on the realities on the ground.

The draft Social Mobilization Competency Framework and its associated training program should be piloted in at least two provinces (rural and urban settings). The effectiveness of the piloted program should be properly assessed. The draft Social Mobilization Competency Framework and its associated

training program should be revised and finalized based on the realities on the ground and lessons learned during the pilot.

Deliverable #6: Submission of the final report and completion of any consultancy documents that require revision and refinement.

The consultant will submit a final consultancy report to the consortium partners. The report should include a summary of the consultancy activities, challenges, lessons learned and recommendations. Additionally, any pending documents that require revision by the consultant should be completed and submitted.

Reporting line

The consultant will report directly to the AQL Coordinator. The consultant will lead all the technical activities under this consultancy.

Work location(s)

The consultant(s) will be based in Kabul, Afghanistan, frequently meeting with DSMS relevant staff, SDC representatives, and Consortium Partners in Kabul. The consultant will travel to 2 to 3 provinces (Badakhshan, Takhar, Bamyan, Jawzjan, Kandahar, Kapisa, Balkh, and Parwan) to visit program sites and meet with field staff.

Schedule (including number assignment days in Afghanistan, total assignment days, total payable days)

The schedule will be subject to the work plan the consultant(s) offers. However, the proposed work plan might change according to the context of program areas and AQL consortium partners' suggestions.

Terms of Payment

The payment will be processed based on the completion of the deliverables.

10% of the fees will be paid after the completion of the inception report which is found to be satisfactory by the MoE and AQL consortium partners. 20% of the fees will be released when Deliverable 2 is completed and AQL consortium members and MoE are satisfied with the framework draft. 20% of the fees will be released when Deliverable 3 is satisfactorily completed and the needs assessment report is submitted. 20% of the fees will be released when Deliverable 4 is completed and AQL consortium members and MoE are satisfied with the professional development curriculum and training program. 20% of the fees will be released when MoE approves the framework (Deliverable 5). 10% of the money will be paid after the submission of the final pending documents that require editing or revision and the final consultancy report.

Budget source

SDC50 – AQL– Consultancy – Kabul

Additional Significant Information

The consultancy period is between five to seven months (45 working days) subject to the agreement of consultant and partners. The travel days to and from Afghanistan will be paid according to AKF (Afg) policy. All costs including accommodations, health insurance, meals and refreshments, per diems, incidentals and any other costs should be reflected in the proposal budget.

The criteria through which the proposals will be evaluated are as below:

No	Criteria	Description	Score	
1	Technical proposal	ToR	Understanding of the ToR and addressing the ToR deliverables	10
		Consultancy methodology	Sound methodology of the consultancy including the procedures, timeline, sustainability and ownership etc.	30
		Writing style	Integrity, coherence, and originality of the proposal	10
2	Consultant background	Relevant experience and technical knowledge in school improvement, school community mobilization; and experience working in Afghanistan or any other developing, conservative and fragile country with poor resources.	30	
3	Cost/budget	Reasonableness and appropriateness of cost. Clear budget alignment between level of effort, technical approach, and deliverables.	20	
Total			100	

Application

Individuals/organizations interested in leading this consultancy must submit their CVs/fact sheets and a technical and cost proposal through electronic mail by COB Oct 14th 2019 to jobs.afghanistan@akdn.org

Important Notes:

Please quote the Vacancy Number as the Subject of the e-mail when sending your application. Supporting documents, e.g. diplomas, recommendation letters, identification card(s) etc., are not required at this stage, therefore not to be sent along with the application.

Only short listed candidates will be contacted for further assessment.

Female candidates are encouraged to apply. Aga Khan Foundation Afghanistan recruitment and selection procedures reflect our commitment to equal opportunity and safe guarding of children, beneficiaries, partners, community members and employees in accordance with AKF (Afg)'s safeguarding policy.

Your details and information shared on this advertisement shall remain confidential.