

## **Aga Khan Foundation, Afghanistan**

### **Job Opportunities**

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Position Title	: Short Term Assignment for the delivery of 3 separate studies (combined in one report) for ACES project in Badakhshan, Bamyán, and Takhar regions.
Duty Station	: Kabul with travel to the regions
Announcing Date	: July 07 <sup>th</sup> , 2020
Closing Date	: July 20 <sup>th</sup> , 2020
Vacancy No	: CS/KBL/07/20/025

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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.

## **1. STUDY RATIONALE**

AKF Afghanistan's (AKF (Afg)) Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Learning (MERL) Unit is looking for an experienced and qualified firm (hereafter referred to as "consultancy") to conduct the three crucial studies (listed below), merged in one report to evaluate specific parts of the ACES project which are determined below by AKF (Afg) and agreed by donor. The study should help understand the areas of success, for instance, greater lessons learned, or detailed design descriptions that can be adopted by other organizations.

The reports of these studies will be shared with relevant stakeholders including government to ensure that relevant lessons are incorporated into subsequent national-level policy frameworks and NPPs.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

Active in Afghanistan since 2002, AKF (Afg) delivers integrated multi-input development programs in eight provinces of the country's 34 provinces. With over 2,000 staff members engaged in 53 districts, AKF (Afg) focuses on community development and governance, civil society, market development, natural resource management, infrastructure, education, and health. AKF's vision of Afghanistan is a stable, peaceful and more prosperous country where resilient communities have access to quality basic services and the knowledge and tools to uphold inclusive and effective institutions to support a democratic and pluralistic society.

The AKF (Afg) is part of the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN), a group of private, international, non-denominational agencies founded by His Highness the Aga Khan. As the overall goal of the AKDN is “To improve quality of life) in the areas where its member institutions operate.

## **2.1. About ACES:**

The Afghanistan Community-Led Economic Stability Project (ACES) is a 3-year project that is implemented in Bamyan, Kunduz, Takhar, and Badakhshan provinces in central and north-eastern Afghanistan. The ultimate objective of ACES is the sustainable improvements in quality of life for women and men through increased economic activity, market improvement, and access. The project aims to achieve this through four intermediate objectives:

1. Increased community and institutional support for women’s social and economic empowerment.
2. Increased participation of unemployed and vulnerable individuals in on- and off-farm small-scale economic activities.
3. Increased participation of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) in financial services, business development, and larger-scale market linkages.
4. Sustainable results through effective project management, monitoring, and evaluation.

The project will directly benefit 18,945 male and female adults, and indirectly benefit the 2.5 million people living in the 42 districts of Bamyan, Takhar, Kunduz, and Badakhshan provinces. The actors include a wide range of people and organizations spanning Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), Sub-National Governance (SNGs), and Businesses to unskilled and poor men and women in the rural and peri-urban areas of the target provinces.

## **3. OVERALL OBJECTIVES**

At this time, AKF(Afg) is offering a short-term consultancy to undertake the following three crucial studies (merged in one report) with the respecting objective:

1. To assess community acceptance for women participation in economic activities.
2. To assess and highlight the targeted values chains which are best for creating opportunities for more employment and income generating activities.
3. To assess and highlight the impact of established CBSGs and its Clusters on improved access to finance for rural people, particularly women and suggest way forward for revolving RLF to cover large number of CBSG members and institutional sustainability of CBSGs and Clusters.

## **4. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:**

The specific objectives are reflected in the below questions:

Study # 1 key questions (Community Acceptance for Women Participation in Economic Activities):

- What is the impact of ACES interventions on community awareness related to gender issues, and their acceptance and support for women's participation in economic activities, decision making at community level and mobility?
- What is the impact of ACES interventions on improving women's Economic empowerment consider the Women Empowerment Index criteria such as agency, income, leadership, resources and time?
- What are the hindering issues at policy, community, household and individual level to be addressed? What are the opportunities that can be built for improving women's Economic empowerment?
- What is the best module in ACES' interventions which can be replicated in another geography and other programs?

Study # 2 key questions (highlight the targeted values chains which are best for creating opportunities for more employment and income generating activities):

- Which value chain/s had more impacts on creating employment opportunities and income generating activities?
- Which value chain had more impact on creating employment and income generating activities specific for women?
- What is the hindering for improving employment and income generating activities related to specific value chain?
- What are the areas to improve employment and income generating activities related to targeted value chains and what are the recommendations?

Study # 3 Key Questions (impact of established CBSGs and its Clusters on access to finance for rural people, particularly women)

- What are the impact of CBSGs and its Cluster for addressing access to finance of CBSG members, , especially by provision of revolving loan fund (RLF)?
- what are the other positive or negative impacts of these institutions on the community in addition to access to finance?
- How the CBSG and its cluster can extend their role on economic activities and businesses? (including non-members)
- What are the issues and challenges that needs to be addressed? (is there a need for risk fund for difficult period such as pandemic or any other emergency issues? if yes how to do?),
- How to ensure rotation of RLF and coverage of more CBSG members beyond existing clusters once project is over, what can be institutional mechanism as aggregator of CBSGs and clusters and at what scale?

- Are these groups addressing the most vulnerable people of the community such as differently abled people, returnees, widows, women headed household, single women etc..
- Sustainability of CBSGs and clusters,
- What are available and accessible options for formal financial inclusion of rural people ?, what are challenges in accessing formal financial inclusion options and what can be way forward?

## 5. METHODOLOGY

A mixed methodology of quantitative and qualitative can be used for undertaking these assessments. Considering the key questions, the consultancy could provide their details of methods including all technical aspects, such as sampling methods, data management, analysis, reporting and dissemination. The consultancy can use the available monitoring, process review, and other available data, while also need to collect primary data from the field and relevant beneficiaries to respond to above-mentioned questions.

Also, the consultancy should be able to review the documents, including government policies, program implementation approaches, and partnership records and meetings minutes to collect relevant data for answering the key questions.

The methodology should be flexible enough to respond to questions and generate learning and produce recommendations for future programming. Therefore, the consultancy can suggest the method in their proposals.

## 6. MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The successful Consultancy firm in coordination with national and regional MERL team will need to work the specific duties assigned below:

- Design the assessments, tools, and plan for implementation
- Define the sampling and sampling strategy.
- Data collection from the field
- Data management and analysis
- Present the preliminary findings for AKF MERL and relevant program team
- Draft and finalize the 3 separate reports combined in one report.
- Prepare the 3 summary and briefing report that can be shared with external stakeholders
- Prepare power point presentation and present the findings to AKF-A's management and other stakeholders.

## 7. QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED

The consultancy should have the following qualifications:

- Extensive M&E, research, data management, and research;
- Experience working in Afghanistan
- Experience in preparing and writing professional and utilizable reports and other utilization focussed outputs;

- Experience working in the regions in which this study will take place, including knowledge of the local language(s) and context;
- An ability to work to tight timelines;
- Education and/or research experience in development challenges; and
- Ability and willingness to work in remote, hard-to-reach parts of Afghanistan.
- Ability to prepare analyses, presentations, and reports in English.

## 8. WORK LOCATION(S) AND REPORTING LINE

The consultancy firm will need to be present in Kabul for an initial series of orientations and kick-off meetings, at a minimum, but will mainly focus on concerned regions in order to enhance understanding. The consultancy firm will report to the National Manager, M&E – MERL who is based in the National Programme Office in Kabul.

## 9. TERMS OF PAYMENT

Payment throughout the consultancy period will be based on accomplishing assigned deliverables to an agreed high quality as per the consultancy timeline, and will be made as follows:

- 30% will be paid after the completion of the activities associated with an orientation meeting, developed and approved assessments design, design and approved data collection tools and plan.
- 30% will be paid after the completion of data collection from the field and data analysis
- 40% will be paid after the completion of quality, final analytical reports, and presentation to AKF relevant team and management.
- In case of not submitting the report for any reason or the report is not approved the consultancy firm must pay all the payment that has been received

## 10. DELIVERABLES

The following deliverables are expected to be provided to AKF (Afg) as per this contract:

- A comprehensive work plan to be followed by the contractor/s;
- Assessments Design including methodology and timeline
- Data collection tools
- Data set and data analysis framework
- A monthly report including reports from field data collection.
- Draft of assessments report
- Final assessment report
- 3 summary and brief report on key findings for dissemination with external stakeholders.
- PowerPoint presentations on both assessment report
- Final progress report.

## 11. CONSULTANCY TIMELINE

This assignment needs to be completed by the end of October 2020.

## 12. ADDITIONAL SIGNIFICANT INFORMATION

The contractor is bound to all ethical norms with the consideration of confidentiality for all information provided by AKF (Afg), including record-keeping for the pre-defined/agreed timeline. Ignorance of any ethical norms will be considered a breach of mentioned norms and will lead to a follow up of AKDN/AKF-A's policy and procedures including the relevant law of Afghanistan.

The contractor should be aware that this opportunity is offered on a quality output-based contract basis and that AKF (Afg) reserve the right to cancel this contract where this is not achieved.

## 13. APPLICATION DOCUMENTS REQUIRED

Please note that all the following documents are required to be submitted with the proposal and that failure to supply these will result in an automatic disqualification from the process:

- Detailed technical proposal – this should demonstrate the following :
  - o Understanding of the ToR, and ability to respond to all necessary requirements;
  - o Good technical M&E knowledge and experience and the ability to apply best practice to this contract;
  - o An understanding of the subject matter;
  - o Good technical analysis skills including choice of methodology, limitations, and bias, etc;
  - o A strong and appropriate team; and
  - o An understanding of key principles such as beneficiary engagement and feedback.

The review panel will be using these criteria to assess the bids.

- Detailed budget including a breakdown of costs;
- CVs and up to five examples of previous similar contracts including a description of the impact of this work;
- Appropriate business registration documents; and
- Anti-corruption and counter fraud policy.

Applicants should be aware that no communication should be attempted between an organization/staff and AKF (Afg) with respect to this opportunity outside those channels and times specified by AKF (Afg); any such contact will result in the removal of the relevant organization from the bidding process. AKF (Afg) will provide feedback for unsuccessful contractors if requested.

### **Confidentiality:**

All documents, data and reports under this assignment should not be used for any other purpose without prior written approval from AKF (Afg)

**Contractors may:**

- a. Register their interest to submit a proposal to [jobs.afghanistan@akdn.org](mailto:jobs.afghanistan@akdn.org)
- b. Put queries in writing via email to Didar Ali Didar ([didarali.didar@akdn.org](mailto:didarali.didar@akdn.org)) before 15<sup>th</sup> July 2020. All queries will be shared with contractors who have registered their interest in submitting a proposal, via email.

**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.

**Female candidates are encouraged to apply. Aga Khan Foundation Afghanistan recruitment and selection procedures reflect our commitment to equal opportunity, safe guarding of children from abuse and zero tolerance to sexual-harassment.**

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