

## **Aga Khan Foundation (AKF), Afghanistan Job Opportunity**

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**Position Title:** Maturity Index Assessment

**No of Position:** 01

**Duty Station:** Takhar (Warsaj, Kalafgan, Taloqan, Baharak, Khaja-Bahawuddin and Dasht-e-Qala)

**Announcing Date:** 28/02/2021

**Closing Date:** 14/03/2021

**Vacancy #:** CS/KBL/01/21/001

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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.

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.

At present, it is seeking exceptional individual or firms to conduct the short-term assignment of 'Maturity Index Assessment' in Takhar region.

### **1. Background**

Since 2003, Aga Khan Foundation Afghanistan (AKF- (Afg)) has implemented a multi-donor program in Afghanistan to reach a total of three million target beneficiaries in eight provinces in the country's Central highlands and Northeast region. Currently, 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. The overall goal of the AKDN is "To improve quality of life in the areas where its member institutions operate."

Aga Khan Foundation's Economic Inclusion (EI) program in Afghanistan was established in mid-2009 followed by a transitional phase in 2010.

EI is divided into four programmatic categories—Value Chain Development, Vocational Training, Business Development Services (BDS) and Business Membership Organizations (BMOs). The primary target beneficiaries comprise unskilled and/or semi-skilled youths and entrepreneurs, both male and female. The program works with various operators in its selected value chains including input suppliers, producers, processors, traders, and consumers. Vocational training is facilitated to upgrade youths' skills and enhance employability, whereas business management skills are provided to entrepreneurs. Capacity-building is also given to business service providers so that they can serve their entrepreneur clients. Through its business association component, the program also aims to reach larger numbers of entrepreneurs through their member groups, cooperatives, business associations and chambers of commerce.

## **2. The SCORED Project**

Via the European Union (EU), KFW, PATRIP Foundation and AKF (UK) funded Supporting Cooperation and Opportunities for Regional Economic Development (SCORED) Project–Infrastructure Development, the Aga Khan Foundation (Afg) is committed to building a cross-border bridge over the Panj River near Ai Khanoum and Kabul port. The bridge is expected to transform business and trade ties between Afghanistan and Tajikistan and significantly increasing the exchange of value-added goods and services. The project will also help nurture a thriving regional market through the active promotion of regional trade, establishment of business associations and the formation of lending and saving groups. Efforts will be made to improve agricultural productivity and value-addition to cash crops. The combined impact of infrastructure and investments in business and agriculture is expected to markedly slash poverty in the bordering and hitherto isolated districts of both countries.

The overall objective is to catalyse regional economic development and integration in the border regions of Afghanistan and Tajikistan. The specific objective is to facilitate an enabling physical and institutional environment for local business development, trade, and production in the target areas, where an estimated population of 1,039,982 will benefit directly and indirectly.

## **3. Rationale**

Over the three years of the implementation of SCORED, AKF (Afg)'s Economic Inclusion's department has formed 26 Business Membership Organisations (BMOs) and provided capacity building training for their maturity in the target areas of Dasht-e-Qala, Baharak, Khaja-Bahawuddin, Taloqan, Warsaj and Kalafgan districts the project plans to grant seed capital to 15 mature BMOs in the abovementioned districts to provide microloans to its members along with enterprise development support. The capital is intended to be set up as a revolving fund at the BMO level for credit support to members for both enterprise growth and capital required for start-ups.

AKF (Afg) is offering a short-term consultancy to undertake a maturity and needs assessment of the target BMOs that considers the following study objectives.

## **4. Objective**

The overall objective of this assignment is to conduct maturity and needs assessments for 26 target BMOs using the following domains of change in relation to the anticipated capacities of BMOs in the target districts of Warsaj, Kalafgan, Taloqan, Baharak, Khaja-Bahawuddin and Dasht-e-Qala. The study must cover the following components:

### **4.1. Leadership**

- Are the competencies and responsibilities of the BMO leaders (President, Vice Presidents, Secretary, Treasurer and Board Members) clearly defined, distributed, and understood?
- Does the BMO leadership take high-level decisions frequently? How those decisions are taken.”
- How Working committees are formed to implement different functional activities and temporary projects.
- Have well-defined ‘Vision and Mission Statements’ been developed, understood, followed and reviewed by BMOs?
- About the Board of Directors receives a monetary benefit (salary, allowances) from the BMO.

### **4.2. Governance and Management system**

- Does the BMO conduct a general assembly or general meeting of all its general members on an annual basis? How does this assembly/meeting make policy decisions and guide BMO leaders?
- Are elections conducted for the board of director on a regular basis?
- Does the BMO hold board meetings on a regular basis? Is an agenda developed before the meeting and are minutes prepared and circulated afterwards?
- While developing strategies and action plans, does the BMO take into consideration both: Micro-environment factors i.e., factors or elements in a firm's immediate environment which affect its performance and decision-making.
- Macro environment factors i.e., external forces (economic, demographic, technological, natural, social, and cultural, legal, and political) which influence a firm's decision making and performance.

### **4.3. Services**

- Does the BMO have a well-defined service package for its clientele (members and non-members)?
- Some of the services are delivered directly by the BMO itself and some are delivered through appropriate service providers.
- It is correctly calculating the exact costs of services.
- Is the BMO following a cost-plus pricing policy for the services? Are the services rendered profitable for the BMO?
- Does the BMO have a good understanding of the service requirement of its clientele?

### **4.4. Membership**

- Does the BMO have verifiable information regarding its current market share and geographic coverage? Does it have a plan for expanding clientele within its current geographic base and to expand into other geographic areas?
- Has the BMO had a positive membership growth as reflected in an increase in the number of new members, retention of existing members and an increase in membership revenue?
- Does the BMO conduct annual needs assessments to identify the service needs and requirements of its member base?
- Does the BMO interact regularly with its members and clients to assess satisfaction level and loyalty? Does it also assess membership growth, retention, repeat clients, higher income etc that reflect satisfaction level and loyalty?
- Does it report all its activities, achievements, and shortcomings to its members in the general assembly and seek their advice and approval on policy issues?

### **4.5. Finance and Accounting**

- Does the BMO have an accounting system, and can it analyses the books of accounts?
- Does the BMO prepare a financial plan each year and conduct its programs as per the plan?
- Where does the BMO's revenue come from? Does it come from different sources including the membership fee, service charges, investment returns, member contributions/donations and others?
- Are members charged a minimum amount of annual fee as well as service fees if they avail of a service? Are non-members charged higher service fees for the same services?

### **4.6. External relationship and partnership**

- Does the BMO have a good working relationship with the government at the local level?
- Does the BMO have a good working relationship with other BMOs and regional ACCI? Has the BMO jointly worked with other BMOs of a similar nature to for collective action?

### **4.7. Needs assessment.**

A comprehensive needs assessment is required to determine the real need of each BMO based on their value chain as following:

- Financial support: The need assessment should determine the required amount of financial support based on their value chains and reality of their business and ground.
- Infrastructure support: The needs assessments should determine any need for small-scale infrastructure projects such as cold storages, collection centers etc.
- Equipment supports: The needs assessments should determine what, if any, each BMO has a need for.
- Intuitional and Human capacity building: The assessments should determine the need for capacity building of BMO members and the BMO itself in terms of the institutional structure and systems.
- Standardization of BMO products including the need for machinery and sorting and packaging equipment.
- Market linkages and collection centers.

## **5. Methodology**

A mixed research methodology could be applied to undertake this assessment and to capture both the quantitative and qualitative nature of the required data and information. Considering the assessment objective and some key domains/areas, the consultant may apply some quantitative approaches in addition to qualitative work depending on the nature of needed data. The methodology should also consider the project's specific indicators relevant to the subject of assessment as part of the project's LFA/PMF and suggest possible sampling and data collection methods. Moreover, the consultant will also need to review relevant project documents to have a better understanding of the assignment. When conducting interviews, the aim should be to conduct the discussions/interviews without the presence of AKF (Afg)'s staff to ensure data reliability at all stages. The proposed methodology should be flexible enough to respond to questions and generate learning and consider aspects of gender including safeguarding issues.

## **6. Main Duties and Responsibilities**

The successful evaluator will need to work together with the relevant team members of AKF (Afg), particularly during the design and planning stages. Specifically, they will need to:

- Design the assessment tools and implementation plan.
- Conduct data collection including:
  - ✓ Desk review through reviewing the project documents, project reports and relevant external documents if needed.
  - ✓ Field visits to project areas and meetings with project direct beneficiaries and project team members as required to collect first-hand reliable data.
  - ✓ Apply and use appropriate sampling methods if required.
  - ✓ Data management and data analysis plan and reporting.
  - ✓ Prepare and present the first draft of the assessment report for review by the AKF-A's relevant staff for further discussions, validations, and recommendations.

The successful evaluator will need to fulfil the specific duties assigned below:

- Provision of a high-quality maturity index assessment for 26 BMOs (Business Membership Organization) that considers the abovementioned components.
- Provision of a high-quality need assessment in English for the 26 BMOs that considers the abovementioned components.
- Manage all activities related to the assignment including quality control, work plan preparations, reporting and the collection of photographs and videos from the assessment.
- Share with AKF (Afg) for their review and input all the questionnaires, methodology and the overall concept before conducting the assessment.

## **7. Qualifications**

The evaluators should have the following qualifications:

- Professional/academic writing abilities.
- Extensive experience in conducting assessments, studies, and maturity index assessments.
- Experience in market development and financial evaluation is preferred.
- Ability to work in adherence to agreed timelines.
- Ability to convey the message simply so, the members understand it.
- Spoken and written fluency in English and Dari.

## **8. Work locations and reporting lines**

The consultant will, at a minimum, must be present in Kabul for an initial series of orientation and kick-off meetings but will mainly focus on the target districts and regions. The consultant will Dasht-e-Qala, Khaja-Bahawuddin, Baharak, Taloqan, Kalafgan and Warsaj districts.

The consultant will report to the National Manager, SCORED project and the EI regional manager who is based in the National Programme Office in Kabul.

## 9. Terms of payments

Payments throughout the consultancy period will be based on the accomplishment of assigned deliverables to a high quality as per the agreed timeline and will be made as follows:

- 30% after the completion of the activities associated with an orientation meeting, the development and approval of the evaluation design and the design and approval of data collection tools and plan.
- 30% after the completion of data collection from the field and data analysis.
- 40% after the completion of high-quality, final analytical reports in English and Dari and their presentation to the relevant team and management at AKF (Afg).

## 10. Consultancy timelines

This assignment should be completed by the end of March 2021.

## 11. Additional significant information

The Evaluator 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 (Afg)'s policy and procedures including the relevant law of Afghanistan.

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

## 12. 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 consultancy.
- Assessment design including questionnaire, methodology and timeline.
- Data collection plan and tools.
- Data sets and data analysis framework.
- Draft of the assessment reports on both components for review and comments of AKF.
- Final reports on need assessment with BMOs needs in Target area.
- Final report on best practices and lessons learned.
- Final reports on maturity assessment highlighting 15 mature BMOs. The final report should include the training lists, participants' list, and training materials to be used. It also should provide details why these 15 BMOs are suitable to receive the revolving funds.
- PowerPoint presentations on both the assessments reports and learning report.
- Prepare Revolving fund manual or guideline to AKF.
- Quality pictures should be provided.

## Application

Interested applicants should submit their Proposal/application to [Jobs.afghanistan@akdn.org](mailto:Jobs.afghanistan@akdn.org) no later than 14<sup>th</sup> March 2021.

## Important Notes:

- Please quote the Vacancy Number as the Subject of the e-mail when applying.
- No supporting documents (e.g., diplomas, recommendation letters, identification card(s) etc.) are required at this stage.
- 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 safeguarding 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.**