



The Welfare Association for the Development of Afghanistan (WADAN)

House No. 4, Street 6 District 6, Opposite Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Dar-ul-Aman Road, Kabul Afghanistan

WADAN Supported by The Asia Foundation: Promoting Regional Cooperation Capacity Project (PRCC-MoFA) Project

Funding Opportunity Title: Role of Women in Regional Cooperation under the framework of the Heart of Asia Istanbul Process

Announcement Type: Request for Proposal

Funding Opportunity Number: N/A

Deadline for Applications: April 15, 2021 – 04:00 pm Kabul time via mail or email in PDF format.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For all queries contact Procurement Department through email: info@wadan.org or at mob#0786661555. No personal visits or telephone calls shall be entertained.

THE PROCUREMENT UNIT

WADAN Head Office, House No. 4, Street 6 District 6, Opposite Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Dar-ul-Aman Road, Kabul Afghanistan

WADAN will not be responsible for proposals left at the main gate, reception, guard offices, or handed over to any employee other than the procurement unit staff.

CHECKLIST OF DOCUMENTS INCLUDED IN PROPOSAL

Documents / Content to be included in the RFP	Yes	No	Please explain if “No” has been checked.
Technical proposal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
CVs of key staff and core personnel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Summary table of similar projects	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Letters of recommendation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Implementation plan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Risk assessment plan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Budget and budget narrative	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
M&E strategy/manual distinct from M&E Plan in body of technical	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Gender equity policy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Copies of last two years of annual audit reports	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Bidder's declaration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

BACKGROUND SUMMARY

Established in August 2002, the Welfare Association for the Development of Afghanistan (WADAN) is an indigenous NGO that envisions a peaceful, educated, drug free, democratic, developed and prosperous Afghanistan. Our mission is to advance the spread of democratic principles, development, social justice, human rights, and freedom; and to strengthen communities and local governance by promoting effective community and institutional development practices and drug control initiatives. For details please visit our website at www.wadan.org.

The Foundation supported the establishment of the Centre for Regional Cooperation (CRC) back in 2007 – 2010. Afterward, the center was included into the MoFA formal tashkeel and was named the Regional Cooperation Directorate (RCD). In the meantime, the Foundation worked with the European Union Delegation to Afghanistan and MoFA to design the concept for 'Promoting Regional Cooperation Capacity in MoFA (PRCC-MoFA) project. The overall objective of PRCC-MoFA project was to build the capacity of RCD to enable it and be an effective and efficient institution for leading the country's efforts in promoting regional cooperation.

The Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process (HoA-IP) is a regional initiative of Afghanistan and the Republic of Turkey, which was launched on 2 November 2011 in Istanbul, with the motto of "ISTANBUL PROCESS ON REGIONAL SECURITY AND COOPERATION FOR A SECURE AND STABLE AFGHANISTAN". The process aims to promote regional security, economic and political cooperation centered on Afghanistan through dialogue and Confidence Building Measures (CBMs). The conference was inaugurated by the presidents of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the Republic of Turkey with the Foreign Ministers, high representatives and delegations of the Participating Countries, Supporting Countries and Supporting Regional and International Organizations of the Process in attendance. The next conference was held in Kabul

on 14 June 2012 and the Participating Countries of the Process prioritized 6 areas for regional cooperation and confidence building measures.

In recognition of the importance of women's role as a matter of fundamental human rights and as integral to the well-being of societies around the world, the Participating Countries of the Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process recognized the great potential of women in political, economic and social spectrums that can be utilized in improving regional cooperation. And at the 8th Ministerial Conference of the Process in Istanbul on 9th December 2019, the participants of the Ministerial Conference approved the establishment of a new CBM under the name of Women Empowerment.

Therefore, an integrated approach is needed to gender equality and the promotion of women's active participation in social, economic and political life. Having unified efforts across the Heart of Asia Region, can lead to improved understanding of the specific challenges facing women and girls and find solutions to overcome them; address the distinct needs of women and girls through carefully targeted programs; build consensus and cooperation among government officials, the private sector, civil society, religious leaders, and local communities to address key issues affecting women and girls; generate pioneering pilot projects that utilize innovative approaches to accelerate women's and girls' progress that can be scaled up for sustainable impact.

In addition, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development contains Sustainable Development Goal 5 on the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment. In addition, in the 2030 Agenda it is recognized that gender considerations should not be seen in isolation as they are cross-cutting in nature; therefore, gender equality is mainstreamed in the Goals on education, health and poverty, among others. Building on the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Goals and targets for gender equality and women's empowerment in the 2030 Agenda provide the Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process with additional momentum for renewed action on key issues that are holding girls and women back from attaining their full rights and achieving their highest potential.

Though various challenges are faced by women in member countries, they play a very crucial role in peace building, social and economic developments. Women's multiple clan affiliations give them a structural role as a peace builder, drivers of economic and social development that enable them to become a channel for dialogue between different parties and countries that can lead to proposing solutions. While men typically focus on achieving a political settlement, with the assumption that peace will ensue, women's vision of peace exceeds this and includes sustainable livelihoods, education, truth and reconciliation.

Considering the high potential of women across many member countries, little work has been done to bring active and influential women networks around one table that can pursue a unified agenda focusing on better programming on equal decision sharing, gender equality in resource allocations, economic development, political participation, women education and girls'

enrolment, women access to justice, and women's reproductive health issues. Therefore, this research can lead towards understanding the role of women in supporting economic, political and social agendas of the Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process.

1. AUDIENCE AND USE OF REPORT

- This research will contribute to the shaping of a clear roadmap for increasing the role of women in political, social and economic dynamics under the framework of the HoA-IP. It will inform the Participating Countries of the Process about the specific vulnerabilities, the needs of women, and the existing potentials. These findings will provide guidance to a unified strategy on women's role in regional cooperation.
- This research will stand as a reference for the regional activities of the HoA-IP in building resilience, preventing crises, promoting peace and stability, embedding gender justice among programs, campaigns and humanitarian activities. In particular it will inform the HoA-IP Participating Countries in initiating women led initiatives under the framework of the Process.

2. RESEARCH PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

Overall Objective

- The purpose of this research is to provide insight about the role of women in regional cooperation within the HoA-IP framework focusing on conflict resolution, peacebuilding, economic and social development.
- The research will also navigate through the existing women organizations and associations in the Heart of Asia Region and point out the common challenges that the women of the 15 Participating Countries face as well as areas of common interests that could be explored for further enhance cooperation between these organizations and associations working for women rights.

Specific Objectives

- To examine the level and role of women participation in conflict resolution, peacebuilding, economic and social development within the Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process Participating Countries; the Past, Present and Possible future links. This includes women CSO's and success stories from past experience for learning and sharing.
- To analyze and document the factors that facilitates or hinders women participation in peacebuilding, political participation, economic and social development.
- To outline and suggest policy options for enhancing the participation of women in peace building, conflict management, decision making, economic and social interventions.

3. Research Questions

The research will entail primary data collection in specific selected fields, such as political, economic and social, in 5 targeted countries (in addition to Afghanistan) selected by the research team in collaboration with Directorate General for Regional Cooperation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan. The focus of the qualitative analysis will be on women as a variable that interacts with other factors to determine women's role in the Heart of Asia Region. The research will rely on qualitative methodologies adapted to investigate the role of women in relations to the three fields mentioned above, as well as on quantitative data whenever available. The research will provide answers to the following questions:

- How gender norms, stereotypes, access to rights, resources and decision making and leadership positions, can impact role of women in regional cooperation (in particular focusing on social and economic integration)?
- How women across the Heart of Asia Region can exchange their capacities, and how the transfer of ideas can increase resilience, social cohesion, and social & economic integration?
- How women across the Heart of Asia Region can support humanitarian and development responses under the framework of the HoA-IP?
- What are the key recommendations for improved role of women in economic & social development and peace building processes?

4. RESEARCH PLAN:

The research will include the following phases:

- A. INCEPTION: Based on literature review, preparatory meetings, discussion with stakeholders etc., the research team will prepare a methodological proposal inclusive of:
 1. Introduction
 - Research background
 - Brief literature review
 - Conceptual framework of the role of women in regional cooperation
 - Research themes and questions
 2. Research design and methodology
 - Selection of target fields for case studies in the 5 countries (in addition to Afghanistan)
 - Qualitative approaches and methods
 - Questions for focus groups or informants
 - Informant selection
 - Quantitative data collection and methods
 - Questionnaires & guidelines
 3. Data gathering processing and analysis
 4. Risks and limitations, ethical approach and informed consent
 5. Detailed work plan and Research Team composition and responsibilities
- B. FIELDWORK (remote or physical): will be carried out by the research team in collaboration with the research management and Directorate General for Region Cooperation (DGRC) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) of Afghanistan. DGRC with support from the Asia Foundation

will provide support whenever possible to help the team arrange meetings with target actors, partner organizations, experts, stakeholders or other informants, whenever possible.

C. **REPORT DRAFTING:** The report should be structured as per the outline below.

1. Cover Page (to include report title, logo of MoFA at the top of the page);
2. Acknowledgments;
3. Executive summary and recommendations;
4. Acronyms;
5. Table of Content;
6. Section 1 – Background of the Study;
7. Section 2 – History and geography setting of target countries (this will basically comprise of the literature review);
8. Section 3 – Methodology of the study;
9. Section 4 – Role of women in regional cooperation (peace building, conflict resolution, economic and social development);
10. Section 5 – Conclusion and Recommendations;
11. Annex 1 – Policy briefs and recommendations on women role in regional cooperation;
12. Annex 2 – List of organizations and/or officials interviewed;
13. Annex 3 – Profiles of study areas;
14. Annex 4 – Assessment Tools;
15. Annex 5 – Lists of women organizations and associations in the 15 Participating Countries of the HoA-IP;
16. Annex 6 – References.

The lead researcher may include additional chapters sections, sub sections and annexes as deemed necessary.

5. SUGGESTED METHODOLOGIES:

- Desk review, literature analysis, secondary data collection;
- Primary data collection based on quantitative and qualitative research methodologies adapted to group discussions, life stories, testimonies in selected target areas;
- Data should include, as much as possible, direct testimonies and stories collection as well as other participative research methodologies;
- Analysis of positive experiences and good practices, and experiences gathered from actors, including testimonies and stories collection involving senior government, private sector or civil society officials or other actors and stakeholders.

6. DELIVERABLES / FINAL REPORT

The overall objective of the research team will be to deliver a high quality and publishable research paper, but this project includes various deliverables:

- a. The definitive Research Paper should be between 25-30 pages, appendices can be added in annex. The report should include an executive summary where the length of it should not exceed 2 to 3 pages;
- b. After fieldwork (remote or physical) in each of the 5 selected countries (in addition to Afghanistan), the research team will produce a Country Synthesis Note of the main findings and present them at the local level to discuss them with national stakeholders – No more than 5-7 pages each;
- c. The research team will elaborate a clear and attractive Power Point Presentation (PPT) to present the main findings, conclusions and recommendations of the research report that can be used in different public arenas;
- d. The main researcher (project lead) will be asked to make a comprehensive Public Presentation of the final report based on the PPT presentation to the Secretariat of the HoA-IP at DGRC of MoFA. The Asia Foundation will be responsible to organize this event.

7. PROPOSED TIMETABLE

Starting from the selection of the tenders, the suggested timeframe breakdown includes:

June 15 – Dates to be fixed with Research Lead		
Preparation of the inception report	Desk study, literature review, research hypothesis draft, first stakeholders contacts, identification of target countries for case studies, methodology outline, matrix and questions drafting, timetable and work plan.	5 Days
Field work	Target area 1 – Field work + Production of Country Synthesis Note	3 Days
	Target area 2 – Field work + Production of Country Synthesis Note	3 Days
	Target area 3 – Field work + Production of Country Synthesis Note	3 Days
	Target area 4 – Field work + Production of Country Synthesis Note	3 Days
	Target area 5 – Field work + Production of Country Synthesis Note	3 Days
	Target area 6 – Field work + Production of Country Synthesis Note	3 Days
First Draft	Elaboration and delivery of the 1st draft	10 Days
Final Draft	Incorporation of comments received, and additions suggested from the review committee and production of the final research report.	5 Days
Total Days of Consultancy		38 Days

8. RESEARCH TEAM QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE REQUIRED

The research institution will have a demonstrated experience in gender and social sciences research, in relation with social, economic & conflict resolution context and changes.

Required research team lead qualifications:

- e. Proven experiences in designing and leading participatory researches focused on women in socio-economic context and relevant publications in this specific field of research;

- f. Proven experience in designing and leading researches on women related to development interventions and gender-specific interventions, and relevant publications in this field;
- g. Proven experience as a research team leader, strong team leadership skills and the ability to work as part of a team with other experts; strong mentoring capacity in methodologies for research focusing on women;
- h. A good knowledge of gender related socio-economic factors in Asia (mainly the Heart of Asia Region), including specific conditions affecting women;
- i. Demonstrated ability to lead and endure field research activities;
- j. Ability to produce well-written reports, in a plain and approachable text, demonstrating excellent analytical and communication skills;
- k. Ability to coordinate the research team and to establish constructive relations with the organizational structures that will support the research;
- l. Ability to deliver a high-quality product in a timely manner;
- m. Excellent command of English and Pashto/Dari Languages.

The Research Lead will be responsible for coordinating the research as a whole, will be in charge of communication with DGRC-MoFA and will be responsible for the deliverables agreed upon.

Required team member/s qualifications:

- a. Bachelor's degree, master's degree preferred, with at least 3-5 years of experience in gender research, or relevant and proven experience in gender research;
- b. Very good knowledge of methodologies for qualitative and quantitative research employed in gender researches;
- c. Good knowledge of gender issues, gender division of work, gender norms and stereotypes affecting access control and ownership of resources, women's and men's status, and good understanding of diversity and intersections related categories;
- d. Experience in facilitating groups' discussions in rural communities;
- e. A good knowledge of the Heart of Asia Region's context as well as the specific conditions affecting women;
- f. Ability to work constructively as part of a team;
- g. Excellent level of spoken and written English and Pashto/Dari languages.

9. RESEARCH BUDGET

Interested Bidders are required to submit their proposals with a detailed work plan for this research as per the above-mentioned scope of work. Also note that all potential agencies who wish to participate in this bid / proposal submission and are registered with AISA or Ministry of Economy are liable for a 2% tax deduction and those that are not registered are liable for a 7% deduction from the final payments. Hence it would be advisable that the agencies submit a copy of their registration certificate along with the proposal

documents. Disbursement will be delivered according to a timeframe that will be agreed with the research commissioning manager.

10. SUBMISSION OF TECHNICAL PROPOSALS

Submission of tenders should be made by email to the address indicated below, by specifying on the Cover page the research title **Role of Women in Regional Cooperation under the Framework of the Heart of Asia – Istanbul Process**. The tender proposals should include at least the following:

- a. Preliminary research framework based on the ToR;
- b. A timeframe for the research with clear details concerning the work to be executed, and specifying interim deliverables;
- c. A detailed budget;
- d. Research team description: composition, leadership and curriculum vitae of all members;
- e. An example of research report produced by the research team or research lead (or valid hyperlinks to online published papers or reports).

Type of Award Instrument

WADAN will issue an Agreement (type of agreement to be determined) to the IP, which will be as per the organization internal policies and will be governed by the WADAN's Rules, Regulations and Guidelines. Payments to the IP will be made as per the payment schedule, which will be negotiable and finalized while signing the agreement.

Other Terms and Conditions

Finally, this RFP does not obligate WADAN to award a contract nor does it commit WADAN to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of a proposal. Award of a Contract under this ToR is subject to availability of funds and other internal approvals.

WADAN reserves the right to visit the IP for due diligence purposes.

In case of you should be submitting your proposal in hard copy than it needs to be directed to:

THE PROCUREMENT UNIT

WADAN Head Office, House No. 4, Street 6 District 6, Opposite Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Dar-ul-Aman Road, Kabul Afghanistan.

Owing to the COVID -19 situation we would encourage you to submit your proposal via email (**PDF form**) duly signed and stamped (Technical Proposal & Financial Proposal) at the following email; info@wadan.org