

Aga Khan Foundation (AKF), Afghanistan

Consultancy announcement

Position Title: Conducting Endline Study – UNICEF ADB-CBE Project

No of Position: 01

Duty Station: Kabul, Bamyan and Baghlan

Announcing Date: 16/10/2023

Closing Date: 25/10/2023

Vacancy Number: CS/KBL/10/23/087

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.

1. Rationale

The Aga Khan Foundation (AKF), in partnership with UNICEF, is implementing the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the World Bank (WB) funded project, Consolidation and Expansion of Community-Based Education (CBE) in Afghanistan, aiming at providing formal education opportunities for boys and girls in Baghlan, and Bamyan provinces through establishing new Grade 1 CBE and Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) classes, and continuing existing CBE classes from grades 2-9 that were established under other projects prior to 2022.

This ToR outlines a request for conducting an end-line evaluation (open to qualified firms and individuals) of the project to compare the project results with baseline values for the project indicators, build an evidence base, and provide recommendations to inform the implementation of similar programs in the future.

2. Project Background

The project is aimed at providing learning opportunities for Afghan girls and boys by expanding and establishing community-based education (CBE) classes in Bamyan, and Baghlan provinces as detailed in Table:

Table 1: Project Geographic Coverage

Bamyan	Baghlan
Bamyan center	Baghlan-e Jadid
Waras	Doshi

Panjab	Khinjan
Kahmard	Dahna-e Ghor
Yawkalang 1 and 2	Nahrin
Saighan	Burka
Shibar	Pul-I Khumri
	Tala Wa Barfak

Outcome 1: Access to education for emergency-affected girls and boys is increased.

Under this outcome, the project has supported 1400 existing and new CBE/ALP classes based on an assessment of the current needs in existing and new communities that have never been served before across Baghlan, and Bamyan provinces. The project will prioritize multiple cohort CBEs in existing communities to ensure children have access to learning opportunities in the targeted communities. The project will also establish multigrade CBE classes where applicable and required.

Outcome 2: Quality of learning for emergency-affected girls and boys is improved.

To strengthen program sustainability, the project will build strong relationships with hub schools to enable future transition of students. This will be done by inviting Hub school management representatives to CBE teacher training and coordinating with Hub School Shuras to conduct yearly back-to-school campaigns. The intervention will also focus on the smooth transition and handover of the CBE classes to build ownership of the program by the key education stakeholders, therefore increasing their support for the program and preparation for handover after the project ends. Moreover, the project will also work with hub schools to establish a child-friendly environment and will enable them to admit more CBE students so that they can continue their education in hub schools.

3. Scope of work / Overall objective

The purpose of this end-line study is to evaluate the impact, effectiveness, and outcomes of the project in comparison to the expected outcomes and the baseline data.

Aligned with this purpose, the end-line study is designed to achieve the following specific objectives:

- To draw key findings on measuring the project results against the baseline value established for the Key Performance Indicators.
- Assess the effectiveness of specific interventions implemented within the project and identify what worked well and what didn't.
- To provide recommendations that inform decisions and implementation of future programs.

4. End-line Study Audience

The end-line study intends to understand the current situation from the perspective of the following groups and stakeholders.

- Students
- Parents
- Teachers
- School Management Shura / Council (SMS) members
- Hub schoolteachers and School Management Team (SMT)
- Community elders

- Students
- PED / DED Officials

5. Work Location (s)

The consultant will conduct in-person or virtual consultation meetings with the AKF Afghanistan Education team alongside in Kabul and will travel to the field for training and data collection purposes. Subsequently, the field data collection will take place in Baghlan and Bamyan provinces of Afghanistan. The consultant/firm will need to further elaborate and explore the suggested methods and validate/contextualize them in consultation with the education team. She/he will need to discuss the proposed study plan and approaches with AKF and seek technical guidance including the verification of all requested data collection, management, analysis, and reporting of proposed/planned ways forward. The consultant will report to the National Knowledge Management Manager, Education, who will coordinate field activities with the regional education teams.

6. Main duties and responsibilities

- Conduct a desk review to develop a contextual understanding of the project by using the project or other documents required.
- Develop an inception report for the end-line study.
- Develop study methodology, tools (English, Dari, and Pashto), evaluation matrix, research/evaluation questions, and training/orientation materials and guidelines for the data collectors.
- Recruit and train enumerators/field staff on the data collection tools, on how to obtain consent from beneficiaries to participate in the study/take photos, methodology, and other end-line activities as required.
- Ensure data quality by employing certain parameters and quality checks.
- Use of appropriate data management system and hand over of all data sets back to AKF as part of the final end-line report as an annex.
- Clean and analyze the data collected for the study including any translations needed.
- Provide regular monitoring of enumerators, updates to AKF, on data collection progress, and feedback on data collection.
- Draft end-line evaluation report and revise based on feedback from AKF after a review (AKF review will take at least 2 weeks for each revision).
- Provide the final, edited, approved, end-line report as per report requirements and quality standards.
- Produce a report brief (limit of 2 pages) for management, donor, and external audience use.
- Develop a PowerPoint presentation capturing study findings, and other key information.
- Present study findings to the AKF education management team.

7. Methodology

The selected consultant/s will be required to propose a detailed end-line methodology in coordination with the AKF Afghanistan and Geneva education teams. The study should adopt a mixed methods approach, integrating quantitative and qualitative methods to achieve the end-line objectives.

The study will use different methods such as desk review, observation, survey(s), KIIs, and FGDs to collect data from beneficiary groups e.g., students, parents, and communities, to add a diverse perspective to the end-line, triangulate results, and to encourage the participation of different groups of stakeholders. While developing the methodology, the consultant will consider age, and gender, and include gender analysis.

It is expected that the survey will be conducted by taking into consideration ethical standards as per the AKF **Safeguarding Guideline for Researchers and Data Collectors and Safeguarding Policy** regarding the gathering of data from girls, boys, men, and women.

Table 2: Project Result Framework

Expected Results	Indicators
Outcome 1: Access to education for emergency-affected girls and boys is increased	
Output 1.1: CBE classes are functional and meet minimum standards for quality	# of new CBE classes established
	# of existing CBE classes functioning
	# of children (m/f) regularly attending CBE (CBS/ALC) classes
	# of children (m/f) equipped with learning materials
	# of CBE learning spaces that have safe drinking water and handwashing facilities
Outcome 2: Quality of learning for emergency-affected girls and boys is improved	
Output 2.1: Teachers have improved capacity on teaching methodologies, including inclusive education and psychosocial support	# of teachers (m/f) recruited and trained on core methodologies
Output 2.2: Community decision-makers have improved knowledge on the importance and the right to education for all children, especially girls	# of trained CBE SMS and community members

In addition to the indicators in the above result framework, a set of proxy indicators was used that measured the learning outcomes of the students in all grades, community perception on girls' education, Covid-19 impact, etc.; therefore, the consultant is supposed to measure the indicators around the learning outcomes as well. To do this we are expecting the applicants/firms to propose indicators/methodologies that could measure the above-mentioned indicators including students learning outcomes in literacy, numeracy, science, and other competencies appropriate for the levels/grades.

8. Deliverables

- **Inception Report for the End-line Evaluation:** Includes a brief presentation on the field workplan, research methodology, sampling plan, quantitative and qualitative data collection tools, list of beneficiaries to be interviewed, etc.
- **Develop/Adopt End-line Tools and Evaluation Matrix:** The consultant will develop the end-line study tools to capture data on the project indicators, along with an evaluation matrix containing relevant research/evaluation questions and methodologies to measure the project indicators. The study shall use electronic / tablet-based data collection tools and the consultant will be responsible for translating any documents that are required to be in the local languages (Dari and Pashto).
- **Data Collection and Training:** The consultant will hire enumerators and train them on tools and data collection strategies and will collect the data with full consideration of the data quality standards, best practices, and research ethics.
- **Data Management:** The consultant is expected to suggest and develop a proper, reliable, and accessible data management system so that the required data can be stored safely and securely. As well as she/he is expected to carefully hand over all the data sets back to AKF-A upon the completion of consultancy.

- **Data Analysis:** The consultant will develop data outputs and conduct data analysis based on the data captured. She/he is also expected to develop a proper data analysis plan so that it can further be followed up based on the nature of required indicators and the needed level of data analysis.
- **First Draft of the Endline Evaluation Report:** Includes table of contents, acronym list, clear/organized headlines, executive summary, a narrative of how the study was conducted, findings, recommendations, beneficiary testimonials, and photos (must be accompanied with signed consent forms), lessons learned, and evaluation appendices such as quantitative databases, tools, and a matrix with evaluation notes (clean version). The report should be concise (limit of 20-30 pages), well-written (no spelling/grammar mistakes), includes 1-2 sentence descriptions of all photos and graphs/tables, and should be visually appealing where tables/ graphs are easy to read and used where appropriate/useful. The consultant is also required to have a presentation to the related program audience on the primary findings or as part of the first draft of the end-line report so that additional points or modifications by the program team including recommendations could also be considered in the final version of the report.
- **Final End-line Report:** The consultant will review and incorporate comments from AKF Afghanistan and Geneva technical teams and submit a final report.
- **Final Report Brief:** A 2-page brief summarizing the report's findings, recommendations, and other key information from the report.
- **PowerPoint Presentation:** key findings, recommendations, and lessons learned tailored to external education stakeholders (e.g., government and education partners); and should be presented in a session to the AKF education team.

9. Qualifications Required

- This assignment is open for individuals/organizations who have the below-mentioned competencies with a strong record in conducting evaluations with excellent knowledge of evaluation research and a good understanding of education sector programs, particularly in the context of Afghanistan. The consultant should have the following skills and competencies:
- Minimum of master's degree in education, Development Studies, Research / Evaluation, or any other related fields.
- At least 5 years of professional experience conducting research / evaluating education projects, especially those that work with adolescents in fragile contexts, such as Afghanistan.
- Demonstrable experience with an array of qualitative and quantitative methodologies, including in the systematic verification and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data.
- Ability to write concise analytical reports and a thorough understanding of how to tailor written content to fit different audiences.
- Demonstrable experience in producing high-quality, credible evaluation research (examples of past reports are required).
- Excellent writing and verbal communication skills in English; knowledge of local languages will be an asset but not required.
- Experience working in development/conflict contexts, like Afghanistan.
- Ability to travel (minimum of one visit to Kabul) to Afghanistan; ability to travel to project sites in Baghlan and Bamyán provinces will be an asset but not required.

10. Terms of Payment

The payment will be processed as follows:

- 30% after deliverable #3 finalized.
- 30% after deliverable #6 finalized.
- 40% after all assignments are finished and approved by the AKF team.

11. Timeline / Work plan

The study is expected to commence by mid-October 2023 (tentatively) with final deliverables by 30, November 2023. The total number of days for the consultancy shall not exceed 30 working days.

12. Ethical protocols and documents required (where applicable)

The assessment approach must consider the safety of participants, especially children, at all stages of the consultancy. The consultant will need to demonstrate how they have considered the protection of children through the different stages, including training of enumerators, data collection, data analysis, taking photos, conducting interviews, and report writing.

The consultant is required to set out their approach to ensuring complete compliance with international good practices about research ethics and protocols, particularly regarding safeguarding children, vulnerable groups (including people with disabilities), and those in fragile and conflict-affected areas. Consideration should be given to the items listed below. Note that this is not an exhaustive list and therefore, potential contractors should consider additional aspects of ethics. The consultant is also required to include a copy of their ethics policy as part of the package of supporting documents:

- Administrative, technical, and physical safeguards to protect the confidentiality of those participating in research.
- Data protection and secure maintenance procedures for personal information.
- Parental consent concerning data collection from / photographs of minors (participants under 18) or collation of data about minors.
- Age-and ability-appropriate assent processes based on reasonable assumptions about comprehension for the ages of minors and minors with disabilities they intend to involve in the research.
- Age-appropriate participation of minors, including in the development of data collection tools.

13. Additional Significant Information to know

All expenses (travel, translators, staff, accommodations, visa. etc.) and equipment required for research (laptop, tablets, smartphones, health insurance, communication, etc.) will be borne by the consultant and AKF will not pay any additional charges made for this assignment.

Application:

Interested firms or individual should submit their proposal to Jobs.Afghanistan@akdn.org no later than 25th October 2023. For more technical information and query please contact Mr. Rahmatshah Safi at: Rahmatshah.Safi@akdn.org on or before the cutoff date.

Important Points:

- Please quote the Vacancy Number as the Subject of the e-mail when applying.
- Please submit the resume of responsible individual along with the company license when applying.
- Only shortlisted proposals will be contacted for further assessment.

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.

Female candidates are encouraged to apply.

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