

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

### Strategic Environmental Assessment Consultant

#### I. Position:

Aga Khan Foundation Canada (AKFC) is seeking an experienced Environmental Expert for a short-term environmental consultancy to complete a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for Aga Khan Foundation Canada (AKFC) and its implementing partners under two new multi-sectoral, multi-country projects in select countries of Asia and Africa. The dates of this assignment are subject to final confirmation once the consultant has been selected.

#### II. Background and Context:

The *Aga Khan Development Network* is a group of private, non-denominational international development agencies with individual mandates that address the social, economic, and cultural dimensions of development – ranging from health and education to rural development, microfinance, disaster reduction, the promotion of private-sector enterprise, architecture, and the revitalization of historic built environments. Together, these efforts contribute towards building a vibrant civil society that addresses the needs of vulnerable populations.

*Aga Khan Foundation Canada* (AKFC) is an international development organization and registered charity. Committed to breaking the cycle of poverty, AKFC partners with communities, businesses, and governments across Africa and Asia to find innovative solutions to global challenges – undertaking these efforts in cooperation with the Government of Canada and Canadian institutions and individuals across the country.

The Foundation invests in institutions and systems that anchor progress over the long term, with a focus on health and nutrition, education, economic opportunity, agriculture and food security, and early childhood development. All of this work promotes gender equality, an active civil society, and environmental sustainability – using approaches based in evidence and research. In Canada, AKFC promotes discussion and learning on global issues, raises funds, taps into Canadian expertise, and builds partnerships with Canadian institutions.

AKFC is an agency of the worldwide Aga Khan Development Network, a group of development agencies with individual mandates that address the social, economic, and cultural dimensions of development. Since 1980, AKFC has promoted inclusive development, helping millions of women and men unlock their own potential to build a better life.

#### III. Project Descriptions:

These multi-sectoral, multi-country projects will seek to improve equitable and sustainable development results through overseas programming in Asia and Africa, a robust learning agenda, and engaging with Canadians. Further details on the specifics of these projects will be made available at the outset of this assignment.

**Foundations for Health and Empowerment (F4HE)** will be active in five countries (Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Tajikistan, Kyrgyz Republic) and will improve the health and well-being of women, girls, their families and their communities. Taking a lifecycle approach, from early childhood through adolescence to

adulthood, the project will strengthen the foundations for equitable development and empowerment. The project will work at the intersection of systems for health care, early childhood development, women's empowerment, and gender equality. F4HE includes the following sub-components:

1. *Foundations for Health (F4H)* in Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Pakistan and Kyrgyz Republic will improve maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health, sexual and reproductive health services, as well as address increases in non-communicable diseases by strengthening health systems that respond to the double burden of disease in project geographies. By focusing on a broad range of sexual and reproductive health and rights issues, as well as non-communicable diseases such as cervical and breast cancer, mental health and malnutrition, all with a focus on women and adolescent girls, the project will mitigate inter-generational cycles of poor health outcomes.
2. *Foundations for Children (F4C)* will give girls and boys ages 0-6 the developmental foundations needed to succeed in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Tajikistan. F4C aims to improve the social, cognitive and emotional well-being of children and lay the foundation for a generation of girls and boys who value and benefit from gender equality. This component will adopt the Nurturing Care for Early Childhood Development framework that focuses on helping children to thrive to transform health and human potential.
3. *Advancing Gender Equality through Civil Society (AGECS)* will cover Afghanistan, India, Pakistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyz Republic and will promote gender equality through targeted and transformative programming delivered by AKDN and local gender equality and women's organization partners. It will strengthen the capacity of civil society, including post-secondary institutions, to deliver this programming, become more gender responsive and share learning and best practices on how to advance gender equality.

**Foundations for Education and Empowerment (F4EE)** will be active in five countries (Kenya, Madagascar, Mozambique, Tanzania, and Uganda) and will improve education systems at the pre-primary and primary levels, in addition to strengthening women's empowerment, and gender equality. F4EE will strengthen the delivery of quality, gender-responsive, and inclusive pre-primary and primary education, and other social development services, and reduce gender and social barriers to the utilization and uptake of education and other sustainable development services. F4EE includes the following sub-components:

1. *Foundations for Learning (F4L)* will train and equip students, teachers, school leaders, families, communities and civil society organisations, and government leaders with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values needed to promote more gender responsive and pluralist quality education systems in Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania. F4L will work at the system level to address many of the challenges currently faced within East Africa's education systems in delivering quality, gender responsive education to all girls and boys.
2. *Advancing Gender Equality through Civil Society (AGECS)* will cover Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Mozambique and Madagascar. AGECS will promote gender equality by providing capacity

strengthening for CSOs working on gender equality and women's empowerment, including targeted support to women's organisations. AGECS will improve the ability of CSOs to respond directly to the challenges facing women in civic spaces; and work with post-secondary institutions to support them with providing learning opportunities for both men and women, including by revising and developing gender responsive curricula and training educators to promote gender equality in their classrooms.

*Advancing Canadian Champions for Development (ACCD)* is a sub-component that will be delivered under both F4HE and F4EE. ACCD will engage Canadians to deepen their global citizenship, by learning about and taking part in global development efforts in Africa and Asia. Using digital and in-person communication channels, ACCD will reach Canadians across the country with stories of Canada's development efforts and impact, particularly those related to health, education, and gender equality. The program will also provide opportunities for Canadians to get involved in international development, including overseas fellowship and work opportunities for professionals at difference stages in their careers. In addition, ACCD will convene the Canadian development sector around evidence-based, gender-responsive development programming and innovations. AKFC will reach the Canadian public by working through education, media, volunteers, youth and professionals from Canada's corporate sector with a focus on emerging female leaders. Key activities include a bilingual travelling exhibit on gender equality, digital engagement, AKFC's flagship International Youth Fellowship Program, and learning and dialogue initiatives.

#### **IV. Purpose:**

The purpose of this consultancy is to systematically assess the potential environmental impacts of these broad projects through a comprehensive Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) that includes a review of overseas project components along with the public engagement component in Canada, in compliance with relevant laws and policies, such as the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* (CEAA) and AKFC's *Policy on Environmental Sustainability*. As an analytical tool, the SEA will provide AKFC and its partners with a more comprehensive and holistic understanding of the potential environmental effects (both positive and negative) of each sub-component and will help inform strategies for the effective management of cumulative environmental effects; improve project-level environmental impact assessments; and identify recommended and agreed-upon alternatives, strategies and priorities for the continued management and implementation of the project.<sup>1</sup> The final output will be development of SEAs for each project (F4HE and F4EE), including 10-page summary documents to be included in their Project Implementation Plans.

#### **V. Approach:**

The Consultant will, in consultation with AKFC, develop or adapt an existing framework in order to conduct the SEA. Examples of relevant frameworks include:

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<sup>1</sup> CCME. 2009. *Regional Strategic Environmental Assessment in Canada: Principles and Guidance*. Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment, Winnipeg, MB.

- The Regional Strategic Environmental Assessment in Canada framework, as developed for the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (2009);
- Guidelines outlined in the *Health and Strategic Environmental Assessment* report of the World Health Organization consultation meeting report (2009);
- The CIDA SEA process, as outlined in the *Strategic Environmental Assessment of Policy, Plan and Project Proposals: CIDA Handbook* (2004); and
- The SEA process developed by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in: *Applying Strategic Environmental Assessment: Good Practice Guidance for Development Co-operation* (2006).

The Consultant will be required to undertake an examination of each sub-component of the project, guided by the final report structure outlined in section VI of this Terms of Reference. Some of the questions that may be relevant include:

*i. What is the current context in the geographic areas where the project will be implemented?*

This involves identifying and evaluating existing environmental resources, relevant state and non-state institutions, current legislation, policies and projects. Key regional issues and relevant “valued ecosystem components”<sup>2</sup> must be recognized, along with the maximum level of change that these components can tolerate. Context analysis may also require the identification of stressors and trends, such as human or natural drivers of change. This information and analysis will serve as a baseline for the project, which will allow for monitoring throughout implementation.

*ii. Do the objectives of the project meet the guidelines outlined under the AKFC Policy on Environmental Sustainability and Canadian government policies such as the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act and the CIDA Policy on Environmental Sustainability? If not, provide recommendations on how these objectives can be met.*

The assessment must clearly demonstrate whether the proposed project activities for each sub-component meets the requirements set out in the policies noted above, while also ensuring compliance with the environment policies and regulations of the country where the activity will be implemented.

*iii. What are the positive and negative environmental issues associated with the sub-component’s project activities and how significant are they?*

Once the positive and negative impacts of the project activities have been identified, the level of risk for these environmental effects must be assessed, taking into consideration compliance with local and international standards, the institutional and/or environmental capacity to address these effects, the likelihood that they will occur and what cumulative effects may occur (if any), and the level of local or broader public concern regarding the project’s implementation.

*iv. How can the positive effects be augmented and the negative effects diminished?*

Once the relevant risks and benefits have been identified and assessed, it will be important to examine how these can then be addressed. Any recommendations for adjustments to the established programmatic approach must ensure that:

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

- The objectives of the project are being met;
- They are aligned to relevant AKFC and donor policies on environmental sustainability; and
- There are a minimal number of adverse environmental effects (both known and unknown).

v. *How will the associated environmental impacts be measured and evaluated?*

The Consultant will also be required to reflect on the utility of the AKFC Policy on Environmental Sustainability (PES) to allow AKFC and its implementing agencies to monitor the beneficial and adverse environmental impacts that will result once project implementation within each sub-component is underway. The Consultant may also recommend any changes to the AKFC PES that would further strengthen its utility as a tool for monitoring beneficial and adverse environmental impacts of AKFC projects.

Upon completion of the analysis, the Consultant will draft two documents for each project: a full SEA report (as per the table of contents outlined in Section VI) and an 8-10 page SEA summary report that summarizes the overall findings of the full analysis. Both documents will be submitted and presented to AKFC for feedback. For each of the sub-components, the reports must document the following:

- The processes and respective outcomes of all of the consultations that were undertaken to perform the SEA;
- The recommended modifications and accompanying justifications, with acknowledgement of the relevant trade-offs;
- An analysis of the institutional capacity of AKFC partners to implement the recommendations and how existing systems can be enhanced; and
- Measures to monitor and evaluate the environmental impacts associated with each component.

Upon receipt and incorporation of feedback into the drafts, final products will be submitted to AKFC.

**VI. Timeline and Deliverables (subject to final confirmation once the consultant has been selected):**

Task	Target date	Contractor's Time Requirement
Desk review of the AKFC PES, project materials and partner organizational structure and current procedures and materials	12th October	Up to 2 days
Initial discussion with client (AKFC) by phone/Skype	15th October	Up to 0.5 days
Development/finalization of framework for conducting SEA <i>Deliverables: A proposed work plan and draft table of contents</i>	21st October	Up to 2 days
Undertake SEA analysis for each of the sub-components: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Background reading</li> </ul>	1st December	Up to 28 days

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research on national/regional policies, environmental contexts</li> <li>• Interviews with implementing partner staff</li> <li>• Analysis</li> <li>• Write-up of analysis and recommendations</li> </ul>		
Debriefing with AKFC; presentation and discussion of draft findings <i>Deliverable: Draft SEA reports and draft Summary Reports</i>	8th December	Up to 2.5 days
Finalization of reports <i>Deliverables: Final SEA reports and Final Summary Reports</i>	15th December	Up to 5 days
<b>Total</b>		<b>Up to 40 days</b>

All reports are to be submitted in English. The above mentioned deliverables should contain the following sections, to be agreed upon by AKFC and the Consultant:

#### **Work Plan**

- Overview of Project
- Expectations of assignment
- Roles and Responsibilities
- Assessment Methodology
- Assessment Framework and Timeline
- Information Collection and Analysis
- Reporting
- Work Scheduling

#### **Final SEA Report Structure (maximum 30 pages)**

1. Title Page
2. Executive Summary (maximum four pages):
3. Introduction
4. Background
  - a. Project goals and objectives (including relationship with other relevant projects)
  - b. SEA objectives
  - c. SEA methodology
  - d. SEA consultation process
5. Baseline (*by project component*)
  - a. Relevant aspects of current state of environment in region(s) where project will be implemented (including existing environmental problems, stressors, trends)
  - b. Environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected by the project
  - c. Environmental protection objectives established at international or national levels relevant to areas of environmental importance
6. Strategic Environmental Analysis (*by project sub-component*)

- a. Identification of the project's potential significant and cumulative effects on the environment (positive and negative), including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, and the interrelationship between the above factors
  - b. Measures envisaged to prevent, reduce, and as fully as possible, offset any significant adverse and cumulative environmental effects – and to enhance any potential environmental benefits – of implementing the project
  - c. Identification of monitoring needs and management actions
  - d. Linkages with gender equality and governance
7. Conclusions
8. Recommendations
9. Follow-up, Monitoring and Reporting Framework

#### ***Annexes to the final report***

- Terms of Reference for the review
- Timetable
- List of individuals interviewed and of stakeholder groups and/or communities consulted
- List of supporting documentation reviewed
- Research instruments: questionnaire, interview guide(s), etc. as appropriate
- Specific monitoring data, as appropriate
- Short biography of the consultant

#### **Final Summary Report Structure (maximum of 8-10 pages)**

- To follow similar structure as Final SEA Report

#### **VII. Reporting:**

On technical and contract-related matters, the Consultant will report to the AKFC Environmental Focal Point.

#### **VIII. Qualifications & Proposal Process:**

Applicants must demonstrate how they meet the following requirements:

The consultant(s) should be a senior professional with an advanced degree in a relevant field and a minimum of 10 years' experience. The candidate(s) should bring to the position:

- Experience in developing and providing recommendations on Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEAs) for multi-sectoral international development projects, including health and education programming;
- Knowledge and experience of international best practices in SEAs;
- Knowledge and experience of GAC requirements for SEAs; and
- Outstanding written and interpersonal communications skills in English.
- Experience in/ understanding of development context in Central Asia and East Africa would be an asset.

## **IX. How to Apply:**

Consultants meeting the above criteria are invited to submit a proposal by e-mail to the AKFC Environmental Focal Point at: [alnasir@akfc.ca](mailto:alnasir@akfc.ca) no later than 5 pm Ottawa time on 28th September 2020.

Proposals should include the following:

- CV of the consultant(s), outlining previous environment and SEA experience and accomplishments;
- A cover letter, outlining the proposed approach, proposed schedule, and the consultant's proposed daily rate with justification; and
- Two examples of SEA or other environmental assessment reports recently completed. If possible, at least one of the reports should be relevant to the sectors/geographies of this assignment.

Each technical proposal will be evaluated based on evidence of the following items:

### **Technical Proposal (50 points)**

- Clarity of proposal and compliance with Terms of Reference;
- Appropriateness of time frame;
- Understanding of the assignment's questions and objectives; and
- Soundness of approach proposed.

### **Consultant's Demonstrated Capacity (50 points)**

- Experience of conducting assessments in the relevant sectors and/or geographies;
- Quality and suitability of the consultant to manage the project; and
- Consultant's qualifications.

Please note that applications from individuals or teams are eligible for this assignment, providing that the number of days does not exceed the total detailed in section VI.

*AKFC is committed to advancing gender equality and inclusion through our programming and operations in Canada and overseas. AKFC requires all consultants to review and abide by the AKFC Gender Equality Policy.*

*AKFC recognizes the importance of safeguarding and is committed to ensuring it manages a wide range of risks such that beneficiaries, staff, other associates, and the organization as a whole are kept safe from harm.*