



## Terms of Reference

### Project Reflections Consultant: F4HE & F4EE Projects

*Location: Remote*

*Type: Consultancy Position*

## About AKFC

Aga Khan Foundation Canada (AKFC) is an international development organization and registered charity. AKFC partners with communities, businesses, and governments to find innovative, lasting solutions to global challenges. Working in Africa and Asia, we invest in local institutions and systems that anchor progress over the long term. In Canada, AKFC mobilizes funding and expertise and promotes awareness of global issues. AKFC is an agency of the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN), one of the world's most comprehensive development organizations ([www.akdn.org](http://www.akdn.org)). Since 1980, AKFC has helped millions of women and men to unlock their own potential to build a better life. *Learn more at [www.akfc.ca](http://www.akfc.ca).*

### I. Position

Aga Khan Foundation Canada (AKFC) and Global Affairs Canada (GAC) have partnered on two large, complex, and ambitious grants now entering their final year of country-level programming, namely: Foundations for Health and Empowerment (F4HE) in South and Central Asia and Foundations for Education and Empowerment (F4EE) in East Africa. These two projects run from 2020-2027, with country program activities scheduled to conclude in March 2026. Endline surveys covering most components of each grant are underway and scheduled to conclude by February 2026. A summative external review is also planned for 2026.

Prior to the conclusion of these projects, and prior to the external review, AKFC seeks to undertake **Project Reflections**. The purpose of this assignment is threefold:

1. **Identify key approaches and insights:** Clearly articulate the primary approaches and methods used in each F4HE and F4EE project component that has enabled them to achieve their intended results, and capture insights that can inform future programming (i.e., best practices, innovations, challenges, lessons learned).
2. **Inform communications** on F4HE and F4EE with internal and external stakeholders and audiences within and beyond the remainder of the projects. This includes communications and outreach activities under the Advancing Canadian Champions for Development (ACCD) component of both projects, which will continue until March 2027.
3. **Prepare for the external review** by ensuring all relevant project documentation is assembled, organized and available for the reviewers.

### II. Background

AKFC and GAC have partnered on the F4HE and F4EE projects:

- **F4HE** promotes equitable development and empowerment for women, girls, adolescents, their families, and communities in targeted regions of Afghanistan, India, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, and Tajikistan. The project has four complementary components: Foundations for Health (F4H), Foundations for Children (F4C), Advancing Gender Equality through Civil



Society (AGECS), and ACCD. The total project budget is CAD \$67.3 million (Global Affairs Canada: \$49 million; AKFC: \$18.3 million contributions).

- **F4EE** promotes equitable development and empowerment for women, girls, boys, and men in targeted regions of Kenya, Madagascar, Mozambique, Tanzania, and Uganda. The project has three complementary components: Foundations for Learning (F4L), AGECS, and ACCD. The total project budget is CAD \$57.6 million (Global Affairs Canada: \$49 million; AKFC: \$8.6 million contributions).

### III. Scope of Work

AKFC is seeking a consultant to undertake **Project Reflections**, which should take stock of and document:

- The **major changes and results** generated under both F4HE and F4EE (*what changed*)
- The **major approaches used** to achieve these changes and results (*how it was changed*)
- And **key insights gained** over the course of implementation (*lessons learned*).

To accomplish the scope of work, the Project Reflection will comprise the following steps:

1. **Step 1- Desk Review, Document Collation, and Interview Guide Development:** collect and review, including core project documentation (PIP, annual reports, surveys) as well as other sources (e.g., Community of Practice documents; research; workshop syntheses). This desk review will serve to both gain familiarity with the projects as well as establish an initial framing of key approaches described in the documentation as they relate to reported results. The consultant will also develop an interview guide and a work plan and validate this guide with AKFC.
2. **Step 2- Qualitative Data Collection:** Engage a wide range of AKDN project stakeholders to understand and document, using participatory approaches such as Focus Groups, Key Informant Interviews, Most Significant Change and/or Outcome Harvesting:
  - a. What AKF staff and agency partners deem to be ‘the most significant changes’ created by the projects.
  - b. How the projects are achieving intended results and most significant changes, to identify the leading approaches and related best practices, innovations, challenges, and lessons learned under each approach.
  - c. How results are or can be sustained, systematized, and scaled up beyond the projects’ lifetimes.
  - d. How global connections to regional or global health and education actors, funders and forum have informed global discourse, policy and/or programming.
  - e. How changing contexts have impacted the projects, such as the effects of COVID-19 and geopolitical events in Afghanistan and Central Asia.
  - f. What has worked well, and what was challenging, from a project design and management perspective. How project design and management could be improved under similar programming in future.
3. **Step 3- Analysis, Validation and Reporting:** Identify and articulate a set of leading approaches employed under each component of F4HE and F4EE that best capture how AKDN is achieving its intended results. The relationship between approaches and outcomes will be informed by relevant outcome indicator results, most significant changes and qualitative insights, best practices, innovations, potential for scale, lessons learned, among other insights captured under steps 1 and 2.
  - a. For example, a brief reflection session held with AKF global and regional stakeholders for



F4HE identified as key approaches, each with contextualized activities and interventions: a) children's development, health and wellbeing; b) adolescent's health and wellbeing; c) women's health and wellbeing; d) women's empowerment; e) localization through women-led and gender equality (GE)-focused civil society organizations; f) health systems strengthening. Such approaches should be mapped against the result indicators in the PMF.

4. **Concurrent Step:** Present findings to AKFC, and other stakeholders as determined beneficial by the AKFC lead, at each step in the process. Deliver a presentation of overall findings to a wider set of stakeholders for each project, prior to completion of the final report. This step is expected to require a more iterative approach, with several consultations with AKFC and project technical leadership overseeing F4HE and F4EE. Two draft interactions requiring review and feedback should be anticipated prior to finalization.

The consultant hired to carry out this assignment will lead the reflection process and documentation, with support of AKFC and both AKF and AKDN country unit stakeholders. The consultant would not be expected to travel, although this can be reconsidered with the consultant during the inception planning.

#### IV. Deliverables and Level of Effort

Reporting to the Director, Programs and Partnerships, and working closely with the Senior Manager, Programs and Partnerships, the consultant's responsibilities and deliverables would include the following, including an estimated breakdown of days for each area:

Assignment/Task	Estimated days
Step 1: Desk review, document collation, and interview guide and work plan development	10
Written deliverables: <u>Interview guide and work plan</u> for reflection process	
Step 2: Qualitative Data Collection	35
Step 3: Analysis, Validation, and Reporting	20
Written deliverables: a. <u>F4HE Reflections Report</u> : to cover the four components of the project. b. <u>F4EE Reflections Report</u> : to cover the three components of the project. c. <u>Synthesis Summary report</u> : from both Reflections Reports d. <u>A package and e-folder of all relevant project documents</u> for both F4HE and F4EE, each with a cover letter, that can be shared with future project External Reviewers.	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>65</b>

Note: This is an estimated breakdown of days for each area, to be refined and agreed prior to the assignment.

#### V. Duration of the Contract

- Consultant recruitment and selection by 20 June 2025
- Assignment starts from 1 July 2025
- Assignment concludes by 30 November 2025



## **VI. Travel**

- No travel is envisioned

## **VII. Qualifications of the Consultant(s)**

1. Educational Background:
  - Advanced degree in Social Sciences, International Development Studies, Public Health, Education, or a related field.
2. Experience:
  - Extensive experience (at least 5-7 years) in program/project reflection processes in international development contexts.
  - Proven track record of conducting qualitative research, including desk reviews, interviews, focus groups, and participatory approaches.
  - Experience working in East Africa and Central and/or South Asia, with a strong understanding of the local contexts and challenges, would be a strong asset.
3. Skills:
  - Qualitative Research Methods: Proficiency in qualitative data collection and analysis techniques such as Focus Groups, Key Informant Interviews, Most Significant Change, and Outcome Harvesting.
  - Analytical Skills: Ability to synthesize complex information from various sources and articulate insights clearly.
  - Writing Skills: Excellent writing skills to produce comprehensive and coherent reports, summaries, and presentations.
  - Communication Skills: Strong interpersonal and communication skills to engage effectively with diverse stakeholders.
  - Presentation Skills: Ability to present findings clearly and concisely to various stakeholders, including conducting iterative consultations and validation sessions.
4. Technical Expertise:
  - Familiarity with GAC project documentation and reporting processes, including Project Implementation Plans (PIPs), annual reports, surveys, and workshop syntheses.
  - Understanding of key thematic areas such as children's development, health and wellbeing, adolescent health, women's health, women's empowerment and gender equality, primary and pre-primary education, and health and education systems strengthening, would be a strong asset.
5. Cultural Competence:
  - Sensitivity to cultural differences and ability to work effectively in multicultural environments.
  - Experience in gender equality-focused civil society organizations and localization efforts, would be a strong asset.
6. Project Management:
  - Strong organizational skills to manage the reflection process, including developing work plans, interview guides, and coordinating with AKFC and project technical leadership.
  - Ability to handle iterative processes and incorporate feedback into final reports.
  - Ability to produce high quality work under tight timeframes.



## VIII. Application Package and Procedures

### Qualified and interested consultants are asked to submit the following:

- Curriculum Vitae(s) of the consultant(s) outlining relevant experience.
- Letter of interest, including reference to relevant experience conducted and the contact information of two previous clients who can be contacted regarding the relevant experience.
- Technical proposal of not more than 5 pages demonstrating a thorough understanding of assignment and including the following:
  - Described approach and methodology to undertake the reflection process
  - A draft proposed timeframe detailing activities and a schedule/work plan (including a Gantt chart)
- A financial proposal with a detailed breakdown of costs for the assignment.
- A copy of a previous report of similar work undertaken, e.g. from a programmatic reflection process.

Complete applications should be submitted electronically to: [akfc.hr@akdn.org](mailto:akfc.hr@akdn.org) with the email subjected “Project Reflection Process”

*Closing date for submission of the application package is end of business day EST on **1 June 2025.***

*AKFC is committed to advancing gender equality and inclusion through our programming and operations in Canada and overseas. AKFC requires all employees and 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 are kept safe from harm. All employees and consultants must respect the AKF Code of Conduct and Safeguarding Policy.*

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