



AGA KHAN FOUNDATION

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
Endline Study of the SESEA Project

1. Introduction

The Aga Khan Foundation (AKF) is an agency of the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN), a group of private not-for profit, non-denominational international development agencies, institutions and programmes that work primarily in the poorest parts of Africa and Asia to improve the quality of life of communities in remote and resource poor areas. In East Africa, AKF works with partners to improve the quality of life by promoting and developing innovative solutions to challenges of development in Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda. Reflecting the complex and multi-faceted nature of development, AKF programmes in the region encompasses education, health, Early Childhood Development, Rural Development and Civil Society Strengthening.

AKF is seeking a consulting firm to conduct an endline study to measure the ultimate and intermediate outcomes of the Strengthening Education Systems in East Africa (SESEA) project. Proposals are expected to:

- Be cost effective
- Be scientifically innovative and rigorous
- Demonstrate prior experience in conducting education research
- Adhere to the highest standards of quality and ethical integrity
- Commit to strict deadlines and deliverables

2. Project Background

SESEA is a \$31.8 million, five-year project funded by Global Affairs Canada (formerly CIDA) and Aga Khan Foundation Canada that seeks to strengthen teacher education and support systems in order to improve and sustain learning outcomes in literacy and numeracy for girls and boys in pre-primary and primary schools in Coastal Kenya, West Nile Uganda, and Southern Tanzania. To achieve this, the project implements three complementary components: (1) Professional development of teachers – building the capacity of pre-primary and primary school teachers; (2) Strengthening education support systems and institutions – building accountable leadership and technical capacity within government and community support systems; and (3) Learning and dialogue – through targeted research, developing an evidence base on key pre-primary and primary issues of regional relevance to stimulate policy dialogue and positive action to improve education systems.

SESEA Population

Country/ District ¹	Pre-primary schools	Pre- primary students		Pre- primary educators		Primary schools	Primary students		Primary educators		Head teachers	
		F	M	F	M		M	F	F	M	F	M
Kenya												
Kilifi	13	776	771	48	0							
Kwale	13	673	722	50	1	195 (SIP)	80,857	79,196	1,474	1,460	120	281
						85 (AKA)	13,722	12,481	384	255	21	55
Mombasa	2 (AKES) ²	278	303	50	20	97 (AKA)	84,393	70,142	186	9	67	45
	14 (MECP)	607	652	47	1							
Tanzania ³												
	20	711	730	106	46	150	26,260	27,095	154	326	53	97
Uganda												
Arua	15	833	812	86	13	50	26,441	29,130	528	458	14	36
Koboko	12	554	561	63	15	50	19,923	19,609	542	194	17	33
Yumbe	12	630	657	59	13	50	18,394	16,100	518	182	3	47

The project baseline survey was completed in May 2014 to establish the status of the following Performance Measurement Framework (PMF) ultimate and intermediate outcome indicators:

Indicator	Methodology	Sample size
Learning outcomes for girls and boys (M/F) in pre-primary grades	School Readiness Assessment	494 students and from 117 treatment schools and 134 students from 78 comparison schools
Learning outcomes for girls and boys (M/F) in primary grades (disaggregated by grade level)	Early Grade Reading Assessment and Early Grade Math Assessment	6,758 students from 225 treatment schools and 2,267 students from 76 comparison schools
% of pre-primary educators (M/F) trained and supported by the project applying improved knowledge and skills	Classroom observation of pre-primary teachers	271 pre-primary teachers
% of pre-primary educators (M/F) trained and supported by the project applying gender responsive teaching techniques	Classroom observation of pre-primary teachers	271 pre-primary teachers
% of primary educators (M/F) trained and supported by the project applying improved knowledge and skills	Classroom observation of primary teachers	845 teachers
% of primary educators (M/F) trained and supported by the project applying gender responsive teaching techniques	Classroom observation of primary teachers	845 teachers
% of School Management Committees/Parent Teacher Associations providing relevant and effective support to schools	Questionnaires to primary teachers and head teachers	845 teachers and 212 head teachers

¹Districts are called counties in Kenya

² 21 classes have benefited from the practicum program at the Aga Khan Nursery School and Aga Khan Primary School in Mombasa

³ Disaggregated figures are available on request.

% of District Education Officers/Centre Coordinating Tutors providing relevant and effective pedagogical coaching to primary teachers (M/F)	Questionnaires to primary teachers	845 teachers
% of Head Teachers /Key Resource Teachers providing relevant and effective support to primary Teachers (M/F)	Questionnaires to primary teachers	845 teachers
Influence of SESEA’s studies, learning agenda and events on education policy and practice in East Africa	This indicator was assumed to be 0 at baseline, since SESEA had no influence on education policy and practice prior to its activities. Therefore, a tool needs to be designed for endline.	N/A

3. Endline Survey Objectives and Methods

The primary objectives of the survey are:

- a) To determine the extent to which ultimate and intermediate outcomes have improved from those observed at baseline.
- b) Through a quasi-experimental approach, to determine if outcomes can be attributable to SESEA.

Follow-up data is required to achieve these objectives. It is anticipated that the methodology, sampling strategy, survey sites, and methods for data collection mirror those of the baseline survey, to the extent possible and taking into consideration lessons learned from baseline. The indicator “Influence of SESEA studies, learning agenda, and events on education policy and practice in East Africa” was not measured at baseline and therefore requires the development of a tool, likely qualitative.

4. Scope of Work

There are three anticipated phases for this consultancy:

- 1) Preparatory phase: During this phase, the consulting firm will:
 - a) Undertake an independent review of the baseline survey with the aim of strengthening the endline study management structure, evaluation design, sampling strategy, data collection tools, assessor selection and training, and data collection and transmission processes.
 - b) Explore the option of, necessity and motivation for adopting qualitative methods in the study design and subsequently recommend and develop detailed guidelines for a qualitative impact assessment methodology for the endline study;
 - c) Design a research methodology for evaluating the influence of SESEA’s studies, learning agenda, and events on education policy and practice in East Africa.
 - d) Prepare a study plan for the endline, including but not limited to:
 - Study design that takes into consideration the strengths and weaknesses of the baseline
 - Sampling strategy
 - Fieldwork implementation processes
 - Data quality assurance protocols
 - Statistical analysis plan
 - e) Prepare a fieldwork manual to guide assessor training, data collection, and data entry, including data quality assurance practices.

- f) Present and discuss the draft study plan and fieldwork manual with the SESEA Project Coordination Unit, AKFC, Global Affairs Canada, and all implementing partners, if needed.
 - g) Prepare documentation and apply for ethical approval from local Institutional Review Boards and relevant government bodies to conduct this study.
- 2) Fieldwork implementation phase: During this phase, the consulting firm will:
- a) Recruit sub-contractors to support the implementation of endline fieldwork and the management of related logistics in the three East African countries.
 - b) Assess the currency and contextual appropriateness of the standardized assessment tools: Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA); Early Grade Mathematics Assessment (EGMA); and the School Readiness Assessment used during the baseline survey in the 3 East African countries. The consultant will be expected to propose remedial actions including working with the PCU to identify suitable consultants for reviewing and updating the assessments;
 - c) Work with the Project Coordination Unit to oversee fieldwork implementation by the sub-contractors, including but not limited to:
 - Piloting study methodology
 - Training assessors
 - Adapting data collection tools based on the pilot
 - Providing suitable cost-effective platform for data collection, entry, cleaning, analysis, and coding
- 3) Data analysis and reporting phase: During this phase, the consulting firm will:
- a) Work with AKDN to propose output tables and a suitable outline of the study report.
 - b) Enter, clean, and analyse data.
 - c) Prepare the endline report including executive summary, conclusions, and recommendations. Consult all stakeholders for input and incorporate their comments.
 - d) Consult all relevant stakeholders and revise the draft report addressing their proposed inputs.
 - e) Participate in endline debrief.
 - f) Develop a presentation with the main findings for AKDN to disseminate to government and stakeholders.

5. Deliverables

- Study Plan
- Evaluation criteria for recruitment of country sub-contractors
- Final data collection tools
- Fieldwork manual
- Draft report
- Final report, including final tools, data set in SPSS or compatible format, and transcripts

6. Technical requirements/experience of key personnel

The firm sought should demonstrate:

- Expertise in designing baseline and endline studies including proven experience in sampling, mixed methods approaches, tool development, enumerator training, etc;
- Capacity in collecting data and producing quality baseline/endline study reports, preferably for international non-profit organizations or multilateral agencies and multi-country studies;
- The team coordinator must have at least a Master's Degree in a relevant field, with expertise and results in educational research, evaluation of education projects and strategy development;
- Experience in quantitative and qualitative data analysis;

- Knowledge and experience in gender equality issues in education sector;
- Experience integrating gender into MERL work;
- Fluency in English is mandatory and Kiswahili is an asset;
- Proven ability to adapt global education concepts and analyze the regional context with particular focus on education systems strengthening; and
- Ability to produce high quality work under tight timeframes

7. Timing of this consultancy

This consultancy is expected to commence September 12, 2016 and be concluded by June 30, 2017.

8. Preparation and Submission of Bids

Qualified and interested parties are asked to submit bids with the following:

- 1) **Cover letter:** A one-page cover letter signed by a responsible official of the bidding agency.
- 2) **Detailed technical proposal:** A detailed plan of no more than 12 pages plus annexes for accomplishing the tasks laid out in in this RFP, including:
 - a) Introduction: A brief overview of the assignment as understood by the bidding agency and a brief statement of the team's overall technical approach
 - b) An interpretation of the study objectives
 - c) Proposed methodology, sampling strategy, and rationale, including calculation of power, sample size, and a description of underlying assumptions
 - d) Data collection procedures
 - e) Study team composition including level of effort of each team member and their roles
 - f) Timetable for completion of major activities
 - g) Quality assurance procedures
 - h) Ethical considerations
- 3) **Annex A - Cost proposal:** A detailed budget for completing technical proposal activities.
- 4) **Annex B - Resumes:** CVs of all staff members assigned to the consultancy.
- 5) **Annex C - References:** A list of three former or current clients for whom similar work has been done, together with their addresses and telephone numbers.

Submissions should be made via email by 5:00 PM, September 2, 2016 to: recruitment@akfea.org with the subject title: Endline Study for SESEA Project. Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted

If you have any questions concerning this RFP, please contact Sheila.omom@akfea.org in writing no later than August 19 2016. Oral or verbal questions will not be answered. Only written questions will be answered.

AKF reserves the right to add or delete information, or otherwise amend the contents of this RFP during the period of preparation of proposals. AKF reserves the right to extend the period specified for presentation of proposals.

All proposals, once submitted, shall constitute firm offers and may not be retracted for a period of ninety (90) days following their submission. It is understood that bidding agencies assume the cost of preparation and submission of proposals.

9. Evaluation and Selection of Consulting Firm

AKF will establish a technical review team to assess all proposals in terms of the following criteria:

Criteria	Score (points)
Research design and scientific merit	35
Budget and budget justification	15
Corporate capability and experience in education research	15
Soundness of quality control measures	10
Understanding of the study objectives	10
Extent to which gender equality is incorporated in survey design	5
Overall innovativeness of the proposal	5
Time table	5
Total	100

AKF plans to award the contract to the bidding agency that offers the best value, cost and all other factors considered as outlined in the evaluation criteria above. AKF reserves the right to reject any and all proposals received and to award no contract as a result of this RFP. It is anticipated that the contract will be awarded no later than September 12 2016.