Assessment of Learning Assessment Practices in Afghan Schools

ABOUT SCA

Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA) is an aid organization that has been working in Afghanistan since 1982. We carry out development projects in the areas of education, healthcare, rural development and rehabilitation of persons with disabilities. SCA has about 5,500 employees, 99 per cent of whom are Afghans. Our operations are especially directed to the most vulnerable groups in the society and are always carried out in close cooperation with the local communities. We mainly work in the poor rural areas of Afghanistan with a special focus on women, children and persons with disabilities. The work with human rights and gender issues is central to SCA and permeates the entire organization.

In Sweden, SCA has about 8,000 members and monthly sponsors, as well as an office in Stockholm with about 20 employees.

SCA is a political and religiously independent aid organization that is funded by thousands of individuals, SIDA, EC and the World Bank. The member-based organization was established in 1980.

OVERVIEW OF THE ASSIGNMENT

Since 2002, Afghanistan has been going through a nationwide rebuilding process, and despite some setbacks due to the ongoing Taliban insurgency, the education sector is improving gradually. Tremendous expansion has been witnessed in access to education for all children during the last 15 years when comparing students’ statistics from around one million (with no girls) by end of the Taliban time to the existing more than eight million with more than 40% girls attending schools. However, the outcomes of students’ learning achievements is still questionable, mainly due to low quality of teaching and learning practices in schools. Along with other factors, learning assessment practices is one of the main pillars as a result of which students are either encouraged to learn more or forced to drop out.

In an effort to improve the quality of students’ learning achievements and encourage them to continue the learning process, SCA plans to conduct an assessment of the learning assessment practices in Afghan schools. The study is expected to help in developing new tools and methods to improve and measure the student’s learning outcomes through a series of formative assessments. Findings and recommendations of the assessment will be shared with the Ministry of Education (MoE) and other actors in the education sector and will form a basis for SCA’s efforts in improving the quality of teaching and learning in its supported CBE schools/classes.

The purpose of this study is to explore on existing assessment tools and methods applied (if any) by the teachers in schools as well as the effects of such diverse teachers-based practices in the learning outcomes of the students. The assessment is expected to help us put informed efforts
forward in making the CBE teachers learn and practice effective learning assessment tools in schools in the absence of a standard national assessment system in the country. The findings and recommendations of this study is going to be used not only in improving the SCA’s teacher training and mentoring modules/packages, but to be used as a means of advocacy for policy makers in the education sector for establishing and strengthening a national learning assessment system.

The consultancy will be carried out in one phase and will be for 30 days including the submission of the final report. This does not include weekends, national holiday and travel days from home country and back. The consultant is expected to submit a timetable and work plan with clear deliverables at each stage of the process along with a proposal, which will be reviewed and finalised in consultation with the Education Programme Manager/Coordinator and M&E Advisor/M&E Manager. The assessment is expected to start from 7th Aug 2016 and complete on 8th Sept 2016. The assessment will take place in a selected sample of schools in Kabul and three regions such as northern, northeastern and central regions where SCA Education Programme is functioning.

The assessment is going to take place in close collaboration with the concerned departments/units of Ministry of Education at national and subnational levels.

**ADMINISTRATIVE CONDITIONS**

The procuring organization is Swedish Committee for Afghanistan, identity number 802010-4850 in Sweden and registration number 118 in Afghanistan. Address: Paktia Kot, Jalalabad-Kabul road, Kabul, Afghanistan, info@sca.org.af.

**Questions regarding the procurement/tender process**

Please direct question regarding this consultancy to Mohammad Tahir Ismat, (+93) 787 266 972, tahir.ismat@sca.org.af.

All questions and queries regarding the ToR or tender procedures should be made in writing and will be answered in writing; questions and queries together with the response of SCA will be answered on the same websites where the ToR for this assignment were published.

**Announcement**

The invitation to tender has been made public through announcement on our website www.sak.se or www.swedishcommittee.org as well as through inquiry to known actors in the market.

**Procurement rules**

This procurement is a price comparison that is carried out with a simplified tender process with open tenders. Tenders should be submitted to SCA at the latest June 30, 2016 at 16:00.
Tenders may be submitted through regular mail directed to Swedish Committee for Afghanistan, evaluations@sca.org.af.

Please be aware that tenderers may not be allowed to make any corrections or additions to the tender after the deadline for submission has passed. Although the tenderer may correct obvious misstatements or miscalculations. SCA may in certain cases ask that the tender is clarified even after the deadline of submission has passed if it may be done without risking special treatment.

The tenderer has no right for compensation for the tender or cost associated with the tender process.

**ASSIGNMENT – Assessment of Learning Assessment Practices in Afghan Schools**

**Profile of Consultant required**

The consultant should be independent and meet the following requirements:

- Master’s Degree or PhD in developing of learning assessment tools and methods/or social studies.
- Evidence of conducting such a study/assessment/evaluation related to education or similar studies in developing countries preferably in a war or post conflict contexts.
- Experience of consultancy works with Governments, INGOs, UN Agencies and diverse cultures.
- Refined research, statistical analysis, data interpretation and communication skills.
- In-depth knowledge in learning assessment practices and developing of tools for it.
- Knowledge and understanding of education in conflict and post conflict contexts.
- Knowledge and understanding of Inclusive Education particularly the teachers’ support to all children including children with special needs in the classroom.
- Profound knowledge in gender analysis in a developing country.
- Full command of English language and familiarity in one of the Afghan official languages Pashto and/or Dari is preferable.
- Excellent communication skills.

**Expected outputs**

By making an analysis of the current learning assessment practices in Afghan schools, an international consultant is to:

- Assess the current formative learning assessment methods and tools in Afghan schools including, but not limited to daily assessment of students’ class activities, checking of homework and attendance records.
- Assess the current summative learning assessment in Afghan schools – the mid-term and annual examinations.
• Recommend new approaches for learning assessments which can match the MoE’s policies and encourage better learning outcomes in schools.

**Deliveries and due dates**

For the purpose of laying a firm background to the study as well as bringing the study to its conclusive end, it is important that the consultant acknowledges that the following deliverables will be expected.

**Inception Report**: The consultant will submit an inception report before arrival in Afghanistan. The inception report should cover the consultant’s understanding of the terms of reference, the methodology to be used for learning assessment, a work plan/schedule coverage and criteria for field visits, stakeholder analysis, agreement with the ministry of education, reference document to be used and major deadlines. Following is a further breakdown of the work plan.

• Review of the relevant literature, set criteria for the assessment of schools and meetings with key stakeholders (5 days)
• Assessment and analysis of existing assessment tools & practices (20 days)
• Presentation on key findings to the SCA panel (1 day)
• Writing the final report (4 days)

**Stakeholders Debriefing Workshop(s)**: The consultant will present the findings to a panel assigned by SCA and receive the feedback within a week. The preliminary findings will be discussed to inform decision making.

**Draft Study Report**: The consultant will submit a draft study report to SCA for discussions before the study comes to an end (the format of the report will be provided by the SCA’s Monitoring and Evaluation Unit).

**Developing Tools and methods for the learning assessment**: analysis of the existing learning assessment tools and develop new tools for learning assessments in Afghan schools in light of national curriculum and assessment guidelines.

**Final Report with Executive Summary (latest by 8th September 2016)**: A well analyzed report depicting agreed points, recommendations and conclusion. (The template for the final report will be provided by the Monitoring and Evaluation Unit).

**INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS**

SCA shall have a non-time-limited, free and exclusive right to use, reproduce, modify and process the results, in processed and unprocessed form, of the ordered assignment. The ownership and copyright of the results and material compiled in connection with the performance of the assignment belongs unrestrictedly to SCA, regardless of the medium/channel. The same applies to the original and working materials that form the basis of the assignment.
Furthermore, the supplier guarantees that SCA by the use of the product does not infringe on any intellectual property rights held exclusively by a third-party. SCA is entitled to submit original and working materials to another supplier for processing and production. The supplier shall, subject to SCA rights under the Intellectual Property Rights, make this a mandatory demand towards subcontractors (if applicable) and employees. The above still applies even if the agreement between SCA and the supplier has expired.

THE TENDER

The full documentation, – excluding CVs – is not to exceed three pages. The assignment is subject to a tender procedure according to SCA’s standard procurement regulations. SCA reserves the right not to accept any or all of the tenders submitted. In addition, SCA reserves the right to take references on the proposed candidate. Note that tenders shall remain valid for a period of 60 days.

Possible use of subcontractors should be specified in the tender. If applicable, the subcontractor should be presented in the same way as the tenderer according to the above requirements. Price for the performance of the assignment should be presented with VAT included (if applicable) and the percentage of VAT specified. The tender should specify time and price for all components included in the processes of the assignment. Possible applicable general conditions that are mandatory from the supplier side to be attached to the agreement should be presented in the tender. For suppliers registered in Sweden, the tax authority’s form SKV 4820 should be included in the tender. Taxation law of the government of Afghanistan will be applicable.

DEMANDS ON THE SERVICE/PRODUCT PROCURED

Interested consultants are required to submit the following:

- Technical Proposal that include a description of the methodology to be applied, tentative work plan on how he/she plan to conduct the assignment.
- In addition, the consultant should add a summary on financial offer including:
  - The consultancy fee,
  - Travel costs to Afghanistan (if travelling from another country).
  - Proposed payment schedule, based on achievements and milestones

  Accommodation and food for time in Afghanistan (for international consultant) will be arranged and paid for by SCA.

GROUNDS FOR EVALUATION

The tenders that have been submitted correctly and on time, and which fulfil the requirements of the supplier, will be included in the evaluation phase. SCA will accept the tender that is most the favourable with regards to the following aspects:
CV(s) of the consultant(s), showing relevant experience and educational background for the assignment;

That the general conditions or other legal demands from the supplier's side are included in the tender.

SCA may choose not to collaborate with suppliers that violates human rights. Changes to the proposed candidates can be made only with prior approval from SCA; substitute candidates must have the same or better qualifications.