

**POSITION DESCRIPTION: Senior Agriculture Advisor**

GS-15

Agriculture Advisor will serve as a senior technical and policy advisor for USAID/Afghanistan's agricultural development programs and projects and help to manage over \$1.2 billion worth of ongoing activities that seek to raise incomes, create jobs and improve the capacity of the Afghan Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL). The incumbent has to possess significant expertise in agriculture development and/or agriculture economics with substantial management experience in agriculture policy formulation, agribusiness value chain development, agriculture production and process financing, agriculture association and coop development, agriculture trade and marketing, and transition to a market economy. The incumbent should be able to provide technical advice and leadership in the conceptualization, development, design, administration and monitoring of USAID/Afghanistan's agriculture development portfolio and represent the Mission at highest-level inter-agency settings.

The incumbent will be able to speak on the subject matters in various public fora.

The incumbent participates in the conception, design, development, and implementation of projects that help expand agriculture productivity; strengthen markets for related goods and services, link communities, manage the resource base; and restore the capacity of small and medium agro-enterprises to produce, process, and market agricultural goods and services. S/he performs management, supervisory, and representational responsibilities while providing a leadership role within the OAG team and with USAID's development partners.

**DETAILED DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

**A. Technical Leadership in Strategic Planning, Program Development, and Activity Design**

1) The Advisor provides post-wide strategic, technical, and organizational leadership in agriculture development. As a key advisor, the incumbent collaborates with the inter-agency team in managing major components of the strategy and meeting measurable objectives. The incumbent's recognized expertise in agricultural development, including host-country agriculture development programs and policies, is a powerful influence on program policy and design.

2) Serves as a key advisor in developing new mission agricultural development interventions. In this s/he is closely involved with the inter-agency team, host country officials and consultants in the development of new projects, writing Requests for Proposals (RFPs), Requests for Assistance (RFA), and other procurement mechanisms. S/he is also one of the chief architects of the agriculture development team's plans. This entails leading the design and implementation of major components of the plan.

3) Prepares project papers and design documents for agriculture development programs and leads research on social, political, cultural, and economic

factors pertaining to agriculture development in Afghanistan. Contributes to the development of the Mission's overall conceptual framework and formulates plans for implementation.

4) Develops and sustains close collaborative, professional relationships with highest-level officials of other USG agencies and Coalition Forces and host Government, key business leaders, other major donors and international organizations.

5) Represents the Agricultural development team to USAID stakeholders and external development partners in a wide variety of events sponsored by USAID development partners, including conferences, workshops, donor subgroup meetings, and other relevant forums on economic development. S/he negotiates with host country government on project design and implementation, ensuring that host country officials at the highest level are apprised of program progress. These responsibilities require the incumbent to demonstrate highly developed professional judgment and to provide technical direction and management oversight.

6) Ensures effective coordination of USAID-funded activities with those of other donors working with the Islamic Republic of Government of Afghanistan agriculture producers and processors, and agriculture coops and associations. Promotes expansion of effective strategies and approaches that can expand coverage and quality of economic services.

#### **B. Program/Project Management and Administration**

The incumbent will perform the function of Contractor Officers Technical Representative (COTR) as designated by the Mission Contracting Officer for the management of contracts and grants and reports to the Office of Agriculture Director or his/her designee.

1) Supports the Office of Agriculture Director in managing a \$1.2 billion portfolio of ongoing activities that seek to raise incomes, create jobs and improve the capacity of the Afghan Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL).

2) Ensures that activities achieve their intended results. S/he provides technical and organizational leadership on the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of activities. S/he ensures that partners meet their benchmark requirements in accordance with USAID regulations.

3) Conducts assessments and site visits to monitor the program and implementing partner, stakeholder, and counterpart progress in the implementation of activities at the local, district, and provincial government level.

4) Provides technical advice to institutional contractors, grantees, Government officials, and other stakeholders as warranted.

5) Collaborates with other donors and organizations in agriculture development to ensure synergy of program activities with those of other organizations.

6) Manages financial matters related to program activities, such as providing administrative approval of vouchers, planning and preparing for annual incremental funding amendments, and other financial administrative

activities as needed, to ensure that fiscal needs of the recipient Islamic Republic of Government of Afghanistan and U.S. and local contractors are met in a timely manner.

7) Prepares all necessary internal USAID project obligation and implementation documentation for smooth program implementation, including to Modified Acquisition and Assistance Documents (MAARDs) and other required reporting.

8) Prepares and submits the annual evaluation of contractors' performance for inclusion in their central database on contractors.

**C. Program/Policy Analysis and Reporting**

1) S/he ensures that all activities are appropriately documented in required reports and through regular updates given to USAID stakeholders and external development partners, including the Annual Report, Portfolio Reviews, annual budget and pipeline analyses, Congressional Presentations, briefs and talking points.

2) Ensures indicators to measure program impact are tracked accurately and used to revise strategy as necessary. Coordinates with other members of OAG to ensure data submitted on activities are complete and consistent for reporting in the annual report, portfolio reviews, annual budget, pipeline analyses and other required reporting.

3) Keeps the team abreast of current events in Afghanistan that impact on its mission or cooperation. Advises Mission senior management and other office staff of developments relevant to the program's implementation. Conducts consultations with stakeholders and tracks legislative developments. Collects, analyzes, and synthesizes information to inform and strategically guide program planning.

4) Prepares concept papers and other relevant documents and initiates and describes project ideas and initiatives in accordance with the sector strategy, the current environment in Afghanistan, the institutional capabilities and purposes of potential USAID recipients, resource availability, and funding sources.

**Requirements for the Position:**

The incumbent should meet the following requirements in education, work experience, knowledge and skills and abilities to be able to carry out aforementioned duties and responsibilities.

**Education (15 points):**

A minimum of a Masters degree in the fields of Agriculture, Agriculture Economics, Agriculture Marketing, or related subject is required with strong technical emphasis or specialization in the areas of agribusiness development, agriculture policy, production, marketing, finance and/or trade.

**Work experience (40 points):**

The incumbent is required to have a minimum of fifteen (15) years of agriculture development experience - including at least eight (8) years of

employment as a program manager and/or COTR with large international organizations - with significant project management, project design, and project development experience. Prior supervisory and management experience in a position of similar complexity is required.

Recent experience in the area of agriculture development as applied to economic growth and economic reform programs in transition economies is required.

**Knowledge (15 points):** Knowledge of project development, management, performance monitoring and reporting, and procurement policies and procedures is required. Prior experience and/or technical knowledge in evaluating USAID economic development activities is required.

A thorough understanding of major problems frequently faced by conflict environments and hands-on experience is preferred.

**Skills and Abilities (30 points):** Proven, demonstrated ability to work independently within agreed upon parameters with minimal supervision or guidance and while exercising sound judgment is required.

The position requires an entrepreneurial, results-oriented approach to assistance, and the ability to diplomatically and tactfully confront and resolve institutional and interagency bureaucratic challenges while maintaining collaborative relations.

Experience in initiating and brokering policy dialogue and work plan development and bringing such dialogue with senior government officials, policy makers, NGOs and private sector representatives to closure is required.

The incumbent must also have a high degree of technical, analytical, and quantitative skill in the analysis of statistical data, public policy, and market-related data for decision making.

The following skills and abilities are also sought: interpersonal skills, operational and management skills; computer skills including ease and skill in using word processing and power point programs, email, databases and spreadsheets; and the ability to conceptualize both strategically and programmatically.

Successful candidates must demonstrate the ability to manage more than one activity at a time in the performance of project management.

Demonstrated communications skills are critical. Candidate must be fluent in English and have a proven ability to communicate quickly, clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing, including in preparation of technical reports and presentations and briefings.

The applicant should have demonstrated ability to produce professional quality analytical pieces and deliver authoritative, persuasive oral presentations to senior USG officials from multiple agencies, other donors, foreign government, and local governments.

The applicant must also have the ability to explain USAID agricultural program policies, objectives and procedures as well as U.S. government

legislation relating to agriculture development to technical and non-technical colleagues.

**Total: 100 points**