USAID | KENYA AND EAST AFRICA
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

CALL FOR CONCEPT NOTES

Issue Date:	**March 22, 2023**
Deadline for Questions:	**March 30, 2023**
Concept submission Deadline:	**April 14, 2023, 10:00 am EAT**
Federal Assistance Listing Number:	**98.001**

SUBJECT: **Call for Concepts: Notice of Funding Opportunity Number 72061523RFA00005**

Program Title: **Land, Environment and Natural Resource Management Policy Program**

Ladies/Gentlemen:

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is seeking submission of concepts and ultimately full application from qualified entities to implement the Land, Environment and NRM Policy Program. Eligibility for this award is restricted to local organizations.

USAID intends to fund one award under this opportunity. USAID KEA intends to award to the applicant who best meets the objectives of this funding opportunity based on the merit review criteria under this call for concepts request, full application and subject to a risk assessment. This opportunity disseminates information to prospective respondents so they may develop and submit Concept Notes in response to this call for concepts and ultimately to be considered for USAID funding. This document describes and provides:

- The type of activities for which Concept Notes will be considered;
- Available funding, process and requirements for submitting Concept Notes;
- The Criteria for evaluating Concept Notes; and
- Refers prospective Applicants to relevant documentation and resources.

Based on the submitted Concept Note(s), USAID/KEA will determine whether to invite respondents to participate in co-creation and subsequently submit a Full Application from an eligible organization.

To be eligible for award, the applicant must provide all information as required in this NOFO and meet eligibility standards in Section C. This funding opportunity is posted on www.grants.gov, and may be amended. It is the responsibility of the applicant to regularly check the website to ensure they have the latest information pertaining to this notice of funding opportunity and to ensure that the NOFO has been received from the internet in its entirety. USAID bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion process. If you have difficulty registering on www.grants.gov or accessing the NOFO, please contact the Grants.gov Helpdesk at 1-800-518-4726 or via email at support@grants.gov for technical assistance.

USAID may not award to an applicant unless the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier and System for Award Management (SAM) requirements. The registration process may take many weeks to complete. Therefore, applicants are encouraged to begin registration early in the process.

Please send any questions to the point(s) of contact identified in Section D. The deadline for questions is shown above. Responses to questions received prior to the deadline will be furnished to all potential applicants through an amendment to this notice posted on www.grants.gov.

Issuance of this notice of funding opportunity does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Government nor does it commit the Government to pay for any costs incurred in preparation or submission of comments/suggestions or an application. Applications are submitted at the risk of the applicant.

Thank you for your interest in USAID programs.

Sincerely,

PETRINA CHRISTIANNA WILLIAMS (affiliate)

Digitally signed by PETRINA CHRISTIANNA WILLIAMS (affiliate)
Date: 2023.03.22 08:45:07 +03'00'

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Petrina Williams
Agreement Officer

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SECTION A: PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

This funding opportunity is authorized under the Foreign Assistance Act (FAA) of 1961, as amended. The resulting award (s) will be subject to 2 CFR 200 – Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, and USAID's supplement, 2 CFR 700, as well as the additional requirements found in Section F.

A.1 Program Summary

USAID/Kenya & East Africa seeks a concept paper and later, a full application for funding from Local organizations or partnership consortia comprising of Local not-for-profit organizations and relevant Government of Kenya Agencies. Subject to the availability of funds, USAID expects to make an award to support the Land, Environment and NRM Policy Program. Respondents are encouraged to submit concepts in areas of their core competency and/or seek strategic partnerships where beneficial, with other local organizations including county/national governments, private sector, research, academia, and others.

Background
Kenya's natural resource management sector has had a long history of mismanagement and corruption. Policy development capacity in the Ministries has improved but remains weak, and an overarching environmental policy framework is still missing. A review of natural resource related policies over the last thirty years demonstrates that many policies enacted in post-independent Kenya favored powerful individuals rather than protecting the common good for all Kenyans. This has since changed with the enactment of the 2010 Constitution and the shift has brought on board local communities in the management of water, forests, and wildlife.

Kenya's 2010 Constitution and Vision 2030 provided the foundation for transformational change in governance and economy. The new Constitution reserves an overarching role in determining the access, use and sustainability of natural resources while providing for devolution as a fundamental principle of governance. This has had significant implications for the legal and institutional context for rangeland management, forestry, and biodiversity conservation. Devolution represents both a significant threat and an important opportunity for improved natural resource management and biodiversity conservation. The proactive engagement in the reform area and success in creating some "first in the nation" examples, particularly in the land, environment and NRM sectors, obligates USAID/Kenya to stay engaged in the sectors.

In response to the policy reforms the Environment Office issued an PD in Feb 2015 seeking for innovative concepts to catalyze Policy implementation in support of Kenya's community conservancies. Around the same time the Environment Office teamed up with DGC Office and bought into an existing mechanism *"Supporting the Kenya Constitutional Implementation Process"* that was being implemented by the International Development Law Organization (IDLO). The goal of the Project was to *support the effective and efficient implementation of the* 2010 *Constitution of Kenya 2010, in accordance with international standards and best practices*. The Project focused on three interconnected outcomes:

- An enabling legal and policy framework for constitutional implementation is put in place.
- Land, environment and natural resources management policy and legislative framework are advanced.
- The capacity of the Judiciary for efficient electoral disputes resolution is strengthened.

IDLO supported the implementation of the constitution in the thematic area of Land, Environment and Natural Resources Management (NRM), through the technical support provided for several laws and policies. This support translated into (i) a more effective enabling legal, regulatory, and institutional framework for land, environmental and NRM; (ii) improved effective access to environmental justice (re. capacity building of Judiciary Environment and Land Court officers); (iii) enhanced awareness on forest conservation and management (notably through the 2016 Forest Conservation and Management Act).

The Kenya Wildlife Conservancies Association (KWCA) worked with The Nature Conservancy (TNC) to implement a policy support and implementation program for USAID/Kenya's Community Conservancies Support Program (CCSP) with the overall objective of conserving Kenya's biodiversity through policy interventions resulting in the inclusive and resilient development of community conservancies. The CCSP commenced on September 29, 2015, and ended on September 29, 2021. Some of the notable achievements of CCPSP include: i) KWCA presented a set of 41 recommendations in May 2017 to the taskforce on regulations to operationalize new land laws under the Ministry of Lands and Physical Planning, out of which 23 were adopted, representing 56%. The gazetting of the regulations paved the way for effective implementation of the Community Land Act; ii) KWCA and TNC supported the technical and financial drafting of 19 regulations under the Wildlife Act, a process that began in 2016. Five regulations were gazetted in YR3 of the CCSP; iii) KWCA participated in the final peer validation meeting of the Wildlife Policy on 14th-15th January 2019. The final product is Sessional Paper No.1 of 2020 on Wildlife Policy that was adopted in June 2020.

In May 2021 a follow-on activity- *"Kenya Conservation Policy Local Works Project"* was awarded to KWCA – This is a 3-year, $2 million Fixed Amount Award whose overall objective is to strengthen KWCA to advance the community conservation model as a means of accelerating locally led economic growth through sustainable community conservancies. The project is designed to address organizational capacity gaps to empower KWCA as a national level community led organization promoting community conservation models. The project recognizes that KWCA and conservancies is a Kenyan effort that promotes local based solutions to address conservation and development challenges.

Core Objective

The purpose of this PD is to facilitate policy reforms in support of deepening engagement among the private sector, local communities and other actors in key landscapes and localized development across sectors. The activity will also support environmental governance, climate change adaptation and mitigation, the development of a land tenure policy, carbon finance legal framework and implementation support and support for the Blue Economy and youth and women's engagement in eco-entrepreneurship and green jobs. This will be done within the context of the anticipated and ongoing legal reforms in Kenya. This is a follow-on activity that builds on the results of the previous policy support programs (*see background section under A.1)* that undertook an in-depth analysis of the range of policies and regulations that are necessary, applicable, and relevant for effective and sustainable biodiversity conservation based on secure land tenure. The focus of this follow-on activity is to facilitate policy reforms in support of deepening engagement between the private sector, local communities and other actors in key landscapes and localized development across sectors. The activity will also support environmental governance, climate change adaptation and mitigation, the development of a land tenure policy and support for the Blue Economy and youth and women's engagement in eco-entrepreneurship and green jobs. This will be done within the context of the anticipated and ongoing legal reforms in Kenya.

A.2 Program Results

This program anticipates an "end state" or "result" where policy reforms: support conservation challenges by securing land tenure of at least 5% of land under community conservancies; private sector and other non-state actors are involved in up to 50% of land tenure reform processes; unlock up to $500 million in additional private and public sector investments in target landscapes as a result of enabling policy reforms; increase tourism income by at least 30% of the current income as a result of enabling legal and policy framework; and create an enabling environment that allows up to 50% of women and youth in target landscapes to engage in eco-entrepreneurship and green jobs. . Specific areas of support are Land Tenure, Tourism, county and national climate change readiness, and youth and women's engagement in eco-entrepreneurship and green jobs.

1) Land Tenure/Reforms:

Given prior experience in Kenya in addressing land challenges and the current political environment and systemic biases, it is prudent that a new approach be employed. The new approach should focus on:
1) increased private sector-led engagement and participation by non-state actors in land reforms for effective land governance;
2) enhanced effectiveness of the devolved land governance system through improved intra-government engagement and cooperation; and
(3) increased quality and capacity of land administration services.

Land tenure insecurity is a threat to biodiversity, wildlife conservation, sustainable water use, and strategies to address climate resilience in Kenya. Land tenure and property rights challenges remain a serious obstacle to Kenya's economic potential and frequently threaten stability and the social fabric through outbreaks of violence.

Among governance concerns are:

- Technical complexity of land information and management systems.
- Fragmentation of institutions dealing with land along sectoral and land use lines (agriculture, wildlife, forests, mining, water among others).
- Vested interests that predispose the sector to corruption and with powerful actors opposed to change.
- Failure to align land use to land rights.
- Tenure insecurity and discrimination against women and marginalized groups and
- Misalignment of land reform interventions to local circumstances.

2) Enhancing Sustainable Tourism

The Government of Kenya recognizes tourism as a leading economic sector that will help the country achieve its Vision 2030. In acknowledgement of this, the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife in 2017 developed the National Tourism Blueprint 2030 to propel the sector's growth through a coordinated approach to tourism product development, institutional and stakeholder management, marketing, and the development of people in tourism. This blueprint points out that Kenya's tourism underperformance is more systemic than safety related- In response to this opportunity. respondents should demonstrate how they will address some of the core weakness in the industry that include but not limited to the following:

i) Failure to adapt and innovate the tourism industry in line with global trends and the changing world;
ii) Over-reliance on international leisure and a handful of source markets with a reliance on one segment;
iii) Highly seasonality with define peak seasons;
iv) The perception that Kenya is an expensive destination; and
v) Enclavic and tightly controlled tourism experience.

Areas of support include the review and finalization of the National Tourism Policy, 2020 and the amendment of the Tourism Act 2011 in support of the growing private sector engagement in the Tourism Sector in Kenya.

3) Youth and Women Engagement

One of the Policy Objectives under the Youth Development Policy 2019 is to support youth engagement in environmental management for sustainable development. One of the associated priority areas for policy intervention is promoting mechanisms that support youth engagement in the development, protection, conservation of natural resources and environment while engaging in eco-entrepreneurship and green jobs. This activity needs to support the implementation of this policy as part of bringing the youth on board in matters of conservation.

The Sessional Paper No. 02 of 2019 on National Policy on Gender and Development aims at creating a just, fair and transformed society free from gender-based discrimination in all spheres of life practice. Relevant sections of this policy that can be supported by activity include the section on Land, Housing and Agriculture where the aim is to implement measures to overcome barriers inhibiting women's access to and control of productive resources e.g., Land ownership, housing, and agriculture. The other relevant section for support is on Environment and Natural Resources management to ensure a clean, secure, and sustainable environment. One of the key policy actions under this section is the recommendation to develop and review environment, and other natural resources (including forests, water, mining, petroleum, and energy) management laws, policies, and programs to ensure gender and equity compliance. This is basically the core purpose of this activity.

4) Strengthening Climate Local Action

Kenya is vulnerable to climate change, with cyclic periodic extreme weather conditions becoming common.' Inter-seasonal rainfall variability continues to reduce recovery time between climatic shocks, such as floods and droughts, and enhances the vulnerability of communities, specifically in marginalized areas such as in northern and coastal parts of the country. The country is experiencing the worst drought in 40 years as a result of the fourth consecutive 'below average' rainfall season, leading to widespread livestock and wildlife deaths, minimal livestock productivity, low crop productivity and sharp declines in purchasing power. Socio-economic losses associated with climate change over the past decade amount to between 3% and 5% of GDP. Future projections estimate that Kenya could lose an additional 4% GDP per annum, on average, between 2021-2050. The economy, which relies heavily on agriculture, and tourism, is particularly exposed to the effects of climate change, which will become more severe even under the most optimistic scenarios. As the economy and population grows, so too will exposure to climate-related disasters. In this regard, greater emphasis, capacities and resources towards conservation and sustainable use of landscapes/rangelands, which are important in supporting tourism and livelihoods of communities is necessary in the changing climate context.

Collaborative management partnership arrangements between various private sector entities, CSOs and communities in targeted landscapes namely, North, Mara and Tsavo/Amboseli need to be pursued in a bid to leverage resources and particularly crowd source private sector investments towards strengthening resilience in critical wildlife corridors. This will strengthen biodiversity conservation, tourism, and local development in a changing climate context. Areas of support include:

- Creating enabling regulatory frameworks at landscape and national level to strengthen adaptation financing and private sector engagement in a bid to strengthen resilience in key landscapes across Kenya. A strong focus on identifying key policy instruments and promoting national and sub national actors to strengthen coordination and collaboration at landscape level will be prioritized.
- Exploring options for incentivizing and de-risking private investments in support of climate resilience at targeted vulnerable landscapes and conservancies.

- Support for climate finance readiness to county governments and the national level. Most of the counties in the Mara, Amboseli/Tsavo landscapes have not complied with the requirements for accessing financial support from the World Bank. In some landscapes where community conservancies plan to benefit from carbon sequestration, there is a need to establish baselines and strengthen natural resources governance structures including benefit sharing mechanisms.
- Support implementation of the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) to climate change action priorities at the local and national level and contribute to the development of the National Climate Change Action Plan (NCCAP) 2022-2027. The activity will also support tracking the NDC implementation and preparation of progress reports to be submitted to UNFCCC.

5) Development of Subsidiary Legislation/Regulations

Kenya has passed several key sectoral legislations that need support in terms of development of regulations. Key among them is the *Forest Conservation and Management Act, 2016 (No. 34 of 2016)* that gives effect to Article 69 of the Constitution with regard to forest resources. This Act makes provision for the conservation and management of public, community and private forests and areas of forest land that require special protection, defines the rights in forests and prescribes rules for the use of forest land. It also makes provision for community participation of forest lands by community forest association, the trade in forest products, the protection of indigenous forests and the protection of water resources.

The *Climate Change Act, 2016* is another important piece of legislation that puts Kenya ahead in the fight against climate change in the Region. This Act provides a framework for promoting climate resilient low carbon economic development. It aims to: mainstream climate change responses into development planning, decision making and implementation; build resilience and enhance adaptive capacity to the impacts of climate change; formulate programmes and plans to enhance the resilience and adaptive capacity of human and ecological systems to the impacts of climate change among other items. The Act establishes a National Climate Change Council, chaired by the President, with the Deputy President as vice-chair, that provides an overarching national climate change coordination mechanism. It also establishes the Climate Change Directorate - Secretariat to the Council and the lead agency of the government on national climate change plans and actions.

The other important legislation is the *Wildlife Conservation and Management Act, 2013 (No. 47 of 2013)*. This Act provides for protection, conservation and management of wildlife in Kenya and related matters, and it shall apply to all wildlife resources on public, community and private land, and Kenya territorial waters. The Act states that Wildlife resources shall be protected, conserved, managed and regulated in accordance with a national wildlife conservation and management strategy to be drafted every five years by the Cabinet Secretary. It also establishes the Kenya Wildlife Service as a body corporate for management of wildlife resources and protected areas and a Wildlife Research and Training Institute. The Wildlife Regulation Mechanism shall consist of a County Wildlife Conservation and Compensation Committee for each county. Areas of support include the development of subsidiary legislation, rules and regulations and gazettement of the same.

This activity is also expected to support Kenya's localization agenda by contributing to the indicators on Governments (both national and local government) commitment to economic policy through protection of biodiversity and habitats. This indicator measures the representativeness of protected areas and whether protected areas cover ranges and habitats of critical species. The activity will also contribute to the government capacity indicator through the government effectiveness metric that measures the quality of policy formulation and implementation as well as the indicator on civil society capacity that measures a range of actions and mechanisms that civil society organizations use to hold the government to account on biodiversity conservation such as social mobilization through the consortia.

A.3 Relationship to Government of Kenya and USAID Strategies and Policies

All program objectives in this PD support implementation of the Government of Kenya's Foundation/Enablers (Land Reforms and Disaster Risk management), Social Pillar (Environment, Water and Sanitation; Gender, Youth and Vulnerable Groups) and Economic Pillar (Tourism) of the third Medium Term Plan (2018-2022), specifically on wildlife conservation and management and strengthening environmental governance. Activities under this PD will align with the Sectoral (Land, Wildlife, Water and Forests) Conservation and Management Strategies

The anticipated program also supports several U.S. government priorities, including the USAID Biodiversity Policy, the U.S. National Strategy for Combating Wildlife Trafficking, the Eliminate, Neutralize and Disrupt (END) Wildlife Trafficking Act and USAID's Gender Equality and Women Empowerment Policy. These policies can be accessed by applicants at www.usaid.gov. The program is primarily anchored on USAID's Biodiversity Policy that advances biodiversity conservation as an essential component of human development. This policy recognizes that improving livelihoods, security, and human health depends on the conservation of biodiversity in healthy ecosystems. The approaches the Agency applies in its biodiversity conservation projects include economic incentives for conservation, protected area management, community-based conservation, sustainable use of natural resources, policy development and reform, and cross-sectoral linkages to biodiversity conservation.

[END OF SECTION A– PROGRAM DESCRIPTION]

SECTION B: FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

Issuance of this solicitation does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the U.S. Government, nor do those commit the U.S. Government to pay for any costs incurred in the preparation or submission of questions, comments, suggestions, Concept Notes, and/or Full Application. Applicants submit Concept Notes/Applications at their own risk, and all preparation and submission costs are at their expense.

I. Estimate of Funds Available and Number of Awards Contemplated

USAID intends to award one Cooperative Agreement pursuant to this notice of funding opportunity. Subject to funding availability and at the discretion of the Agency, USAID intends to provide $3,500,000 in total USAID funding over a five (5) year period. USAID reserves the right to make multiple awards or no awards at all through this opportunity.

II. Start Date and Period of Performance for Federal Awards

The period of performance is five years from the date of award.

III. Type of Instrument

Awards that result from LENRM will take the form of a cooperative agreement. USAID plans to be substantially involved during implementation. Examples of USAID's involvement are as follows:

a) Collaboration in establishing annual work objectives and approval of an annual work plan.
b) Collaboration in assessing progress and identifying issues that arise, which may impact the success of the program.
c) Collaboration in determining corrective actions, where necessary.
d) Approval of key personnel and any subsequent changes in the positions during the life of the award.
e) Approval of a high-quality monitoring and evaluation system.

USAID reserves the right to determine the type of award after merit review of Concept paper or full application or no awards at all through this solicitation.

[END OF SECTION B– FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION]

SECTION C: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

I. Eligible Applicants

Eligibility for this NOFO is restricted.

Eligibility is restricted to Local Partners, who are Kenyan entities as defined below:

Local entity means an individual, a corporation, a nonprofit organization, or another body of persons that—
(1) is legally organized under the laws of;
(2) has as its principal place of business or operations in;
(3) is majority owned by individuals who are citizens or lawful permanent residents of; and
(4) managed by a governing body the majority of who are citizens or lawful permanent residents of a country receiving assistance from funds appropriated under title III of this Act.

For purposes of this section, "majority-owned' and "-managed by" include, without limitation, beneficiary interests and the power, either directly or indirectly, whether exercised or exercisable, to control the election, appointment, or tenure of the organization's managers or a majority of the organization's governing body by any means."

II. Responsibility of Applicant: In order for an award to be made under this opportunity, the USAID Agreement Officer must make an affirmative determination that the applicant is "responsible," as discussed in ADS 303.3.9. This means that the applicant:

i. Possesses or has the ability to obtain the necessary management competence to plan and carry out the assistance program to be funded, and that the applicant will practice mutually agreed upon methods of accountability for funds and other assets provided by USAID;
ii. Has a satisfactory record of performance;
iii. Does not have active exclusions in the System for Award Management (SAM) (beta.sam.gov); iv. Does not appear on the Specially Designated Nationals (SDN) and Blocked Persons List maintained by the U.S. Treasury for the Office of Foreign Assets Control, sometimes referred to as the "OFAC List" (online at: http://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/SDNList/Pages/default.aspx); and
v. Is not listed in the United Nations Security designation list (online at: http://www.un.org/sc/committees/1267/aq_sanctions_list.shtml).

Failure to meet these thresholds will lead to removal from consideration for an award.

III. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost sharing or matching is not a requirement. However, we encourage the Applicant to cost share.

Cost-sharing or matching means that portion of project or program costs not borne by the U.S. Government. Cost-sharing includes cash and in-kind contributions and is subject to 2 CFR 200.306 and the USAID standard provision for Non-U.S. NGOs entitled "Cost-Share-June 2012" which, inter alia, requires that cost-sharing be verifiable from the Recipient's records. Cost-sharing or matching is normally associated with contributions from the same prime and sub-recipient sources that also receive USAID funds under an award but can include contributions from third parties. Failure to meet a cost-sharing requirement can result in the Recipient having to make refunds to USAID or a reduction in future funding.

IV. Other

i) If the applicant proposes to partner with other organizations through sub-awards, it should present a clear structure in terms of roles and responsibilities of each sub-recipient, lines of authority, and managerial decision-making process. Resources should be shared among the sub-recipients based on their contributions to the program. In preparing their submissions, applicants must not enter into exclusive arrangements for labor with any local staff or local organizations.

ii) Applicants must have established financial management systems, monitoring and evaluation processes, internal control systems, and policies and procedures that comply with established U.S. Government standards, laws, and regulations. The successful applicant(s) will be subject to a risk assessment by the Agreement Officer (AO).

Risk Assessment: In accordance with 2 CFR 200.205, USAID is required to perform a risk assessment prior to awarding a federal grant. Risk assessment under this NOFO will be conducted in accordance with ADS 303.3.9. Applicant and sub-awardees, if any, must submit additional evidence they deem necessary for the Agreement Officer to make a Risk Assessment Decision. The information submitted should substantiate that the applicant:

a) Has adequate financial resources or the ability to obtain such resources, as required during the performance of the Cooperative Agreement.
b) Has the ability to comply with the Cooperative Agreement terms and conditions, taking into account all existing and currently prospective commitments of the applicant, nongovernmental and governmental.
c) Has a satisfactory record of performance. Generally, relevant unsatisfactory performance in the past is enough to justify a finding of non-responsibility, unless there is clear evidence of subsequent satisfactory performance, or the applicant has taken adequate corrective measures to assure that it will be able to perform its functions satisfactorily.
d) Has a satisfactory record of business integrity.
e) Is otherwise qualified to receive a Cooperative Agreement under applicable laws and regulations.

All apparent successful applicants will be required to submit a copy of its accounting manual and audited financial statements for the previous three (3) year period by a certified public accountant or other auditor satisfactory to USAID upon request.

[END OF SECTION C: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION]

SECTION D: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

I. Agency Point of Contact

Petrina Williams
Agreement Officer
Office of Acquisition and Assistance
USAID Kenya and East Africa
pwilliams@usaid.gov

Mailing Address: USAID/Kenya and East Africa, United Nations Ave., P. O. Box 629 – 00621, Nairobi

II. Questions and Answers

Questions regarding this Call for Concepts should be submitted via email to: pwilliams@usaid.gov with a copy to Milly Warobi at mwarobi@usaid.gov no later than the date and time indicated on the cover letter, as amended.

III. Content and Format of Concept Submission

a) OVERVIEW

The application process for the LENRM Policy Program will happen in four phases:
1. An open call for a brief (5-page) Concept Note;
2. Review of concept notes by USAID as outlined below;
3. In-person and/or virtual co-creation discussions and/or workshop(s) with selected Concept Note(s), by invitation only: and
4. Submission and review of Full Application(s), by invitation only.

USAID/KEA will be responsible for the review of Concept Notes and Full Applications and management of any subsequent awards issued under this activity. Additional information about each phase of the Application and Review process is provided below.

Phase 1: Concept Note Submission
The Applicant should ONLY submit the information and materials specified – no other format will be accepted or reviewed. Respondents are asked to download the template from grants.gov in Word format, provide their responses in that document, and email a PDF saved copy of the document to pwilliams@usaid.gov with a copy mwarobi@usaid.gov with the file name saved as: **"CONCEPT NOTE AND BUDGET – NOFO# 72061523RFA00005**." The concept must be submitted in two separate parts: The Technical and the Business (Cost) Application.

The format and style of the submission shall:
- Be written in English language on letter size paper and legible; If the concept is in any other language, it will be treated as non-responsive and eliminated from further consideration.
- Be single spaced, standard margins, fonts and with each page consecutively numbered;
- Be in searchable and editable Microsoft Word or Adobe Acrobat formats and clearly labeled on all pages with the name of the submitting organization, opportunity title; Budgets must be submitted in Microsoft Excel in unlocked, unhidden formulas; and
- Not exceed **five (5)** pages in length (excluding the cover page and supporting information). Pages in excess of this stated limit will not be reviewed.
- **Concept Paper Content:** Applicants must follow the format provided as **Attachment 1** to this NoFO.

Content above five pages will not be reviewed. Concept notes submitted after the deadline will not be reviewed.

After a concept note is received, USAID/KEA reserves the right to request supplementary information or pose clarifying questions to any applicant. Requesting supplementary information or posing clarifying questions to one applicant does not obligate USAID to do so with all applicants, nor does it guarantee invitation to submit a full application.

Questions regarding the substance and objectives of the **LENRM policy program** should be directed to pwilliams@usaid.gov with a copy to mwarobi@usaid.gov by the time and date listed on the cover page. One week after the closure of the Q&A submission period, USAID/KEA will post written responses on www.grants.gov.

Phase 2: Concept Note Review

The submission will be reviewed in accordance with the merit review criteria under Section E and will be considered for further consideration after USAID's determination of meeting eligibility requirements and review criteria.

The purpose of the initial review and related communication is to determine whether USAID wishes to engage in further discussions regarding the proposed approach and activities. The initial review and communication will result in one of two outcomes:

- A decision to forego further consideration of the approach proposed in the Concept Note;
- An invitation to engage in more in-depth and specific co-creation discussions aimed at further developing the proposed approach and determining whether to request a Full Application.

USAID/KEA anticipates notifying authors of concept notes within 60 days of submission if the Mission wishes to engage in further discussions/co-creation, or if Mission will not pursue further collaboration under the activity based on the submitted concept note. USAID/KEA reserves the right to request respondents to do oral presentations of their concepts.

Phase 3: Co-Creation Process (Shared Responsibility, Collaboration, and Communication)

Subject to the availability of funds, USAID/KEA will invite the most highly qualified concept note applicant(s) to engage in a round of co-creation with USAID/KEA prior to submission of full applications. The aim of the co-creation phase is to further define activity objectives, design interventions and align timelines. Through discussions, both the applicant(s) and USAID/KEA may identify additional resources, partners, or strategies necessary to successfully implement the activity. This process may involve extensive discussions with USAID Mission staff or other experts, within or outside of USAID. Co-creation may happen in-person or virtually, through video conference, and phone calls.

By applying to LENRM Policy opportunity, applicants agree to allow USAID/KEA the right to share concept notes with appropriate external partners for the purposes of evaluation or co-creation. All parties privy to the contents of submitted concept notes, whether within or outside of USAID, will be required to keep contents in confidence.

If an Applicant does not succeed at the Co-creation phase, the process ends for that Applicant.

If USAID/KEA decides to continue with the proposed activities following the co-creation phase, USAID/KEA may request a full application from applicants, inclusive of all modifications, expansions, discussions, etc. resulting from the co-creation phase and will provide a full application template for completion. If co-creation results in a mutually acceptable concept, USAID will request a full application.

For more information on co-creation and its design approaches, see https://usaidlearninglab.org/library/co-creation-discussion-note-ads-201

Phase 4: Full Application

USAID/KEA will only accept full applications from applicants invited to continue in the application process. It is expected that full applications will expand upon their concept note and incorporate any discussions, ideas, plans, feedback or changes from USAID/KEA and other partners discussed during the co-creation phase. The request for application will have further details on that process. **Note: USAID/KEA's Request for a full application should not be interpreted as a commitment of funds.**

USAID's Agreement Officer will engage in a final review, award negotiation, responsibility determination, cost/price evaluation, and other steps as needed prior to award. USAID may request additional information from the Applicant(s) concerning its technical approach, organizational capacity, management structure and past performance, cost application and representations and certifications. USAID may cancel the negotiation(s) and award process at no cost to the Government.

[END OF SECTION D: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION]

SECTION E: APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

I. Review of Concept Notes

Once a Concept Note has been submitted in response to this opportunity, USAID will conduct an initial review of the Concept Note using the criteria outlined in the Merit Review Criteria and section below.

The purpose of the initial review and related communication is to determine whether USAID wishes to engage in further discussions regarding the proposed approach and activities. The initial review and communication will result in one of three outcomes:

- A decision to forego further consideration of the approach proposed in the Concept Note;
- An invitation to engage in more in-depth and specific co-creation discussions aimed at further developing the proposed approach and determining whether to request a Full Application.

II. REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

The concept will be reviewed by USAID Direct hire personnel against the eligibility criteria under section C and the merit review criteria under Section E. The decision to issue an award vests with the Agreement Officer.

III. CONCEPT PAPER MERIT REVIEW CRITERIA

Any Concept Note submitted to this activity should propose an approach that satisfies these criteria and exhibits the characteristics set forth below. Concept Notes will be assessed according to the following merit review criteria using an adjectival rating system. *Very Good, Satisfactory, and Marginal.* Technical merit review criterion 1 is significantly more important that merit review criterion 2. All technical evaluation factors when combined are significantly more important than cost or price.

<u>Criterion 1 - Technical Approach</u>

- The extent to which the concept demonstrates a comprehensive viewpoint that shows innovations and approaches and lays out unique capability to achieving the results set forth in the Program Description.
- The extent to which technical approach demonstrates how it will execute the objectives and achieve the expected results outlined in the Program Description. The concept must include enough specifics to demonstrate that the proposed approach is feasible and appropriate to the context and challenges facing biodiversity conservation in Kenya.

<u>Criterion 2 - Organizational Management and Staffing</u>:

- Extent to which the management and staffing plan demonstrate managerial and technical ability to cost-effectively achieve the activity objectives.
- Extent to which the proposed Key Personnel plan demonstrate experience, expertise and skills required to implement the program.
- The Applicant must demonstrate clear capacity and experience to accomplish the range of technical interventions described in the program description.

[END OF SECTION E: APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION]

SECTION F: FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

I. Federal Award Notices

Award of the agreement contemplated by this NOFO cannot be made until funds have been appropriated, allocated and committed through internal USAID procedures. While USAID anticipates that these procedures will be successfully completed, potential applicants are hereby notified of these requirements and conditions for the award.

II. Administrative & National Policy Requirements

The resulting award from this NOFO will be administered in accordance with the following policies and regulations.

For Non-US organizations: Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Non-governmental Organizations.

III. Additional Information On Award Administration

- ADS Chapter 201 Program Cycle Operational Policy:
  https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1870/201.pdf
- ADS Chapter 204 Environmental Procedures:
  https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1865/204.pdf
- ADS Chapter 205 - Integrating Gender Equality and Female Empowerment in USAID's Program Cycle: https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1870/205.pdf
- ADS Chapter 303 Standard Provisions for U.S. organizations:
  https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303maa.pdf
- ADS Chapter 318 Intellectual Property Rights:
  https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1876/318.pdf
- ADS Chapter 579 USAID Development Data:
  https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/579.pdf
- Grant and Contract Process:
  https://www.usaid.gov/work-usaid/get-grant-or-contract/grant-and-contract-process
- USAID Graphic Standards Manual and Partner Co-branding Guide:
  https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1869/USAID_GSM_03_05_2019.pdf

[END OF SECTION F: FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION]

SECTION G: FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACT(S)

I. NOFO Points of Contact

Petrina Williams
Agreement Officer
Office of Acquisition and Assistance
USAID Kenya and East Africa
pwilliams@usaid.gov

Mailing Address: USAID/Kenya and East Africa, United Nations Ave., P. O. Box 629 – 00621, Nairobi.

Any other POCs will be appointed through official amendments to this NOFO.

II. Acquisition and Assistance Ombudsman

The A&A Ombudsman helps ensure equitable treatment of all parties who participate in USAID's acquisition and assistance process. The A&A Ombudsman serves as a resource for all organizations who are doing or wish to do business with USAID. Please visit this page for additional information: https://www.usaid.gov/work-usaid/acquisition-assistance-ombudsman

The A&A Ombudsman may be contacted via: Ombudsman@usaid.gov

[END OF SECTION G: FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACT(S)]

SECTION H: OTHER INFORMATION

USAID reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted.

Applications with Proprietary Data

Applicants who include data that they do not want disclosed to the public for any purpose or used by the U.S. Government except for evaluation purpose, should mark the cover page with the following:

> “This application includes data that must not be disclosed duplicated, used, or disclosed – in whole or in part – for any purpose other than to evaluate this application. If, however, an award is made as a result of – or in connection with – the submission of this data, the U.S. Government will have the right to duplicate, use, or disclose the data to the extent provided in the resulting award. This restriction does not limit the U.S. Government’s right to use information contained in this data if it is obtained from another source without restriction. The data subject to this restriction are contained in sheets {insert sheet numbers}.”

Additionally, the applicant must mark each sheet of data it wishes to restrict with the following:

> “Use or disclosure of data contained on this sheet is subject to the restriction on the title page of this application.”

[END OF SECTION H: OTHER INFORMATION]

ATTACHMENT 1: CONCEPT PAPER TEMPLATE

Section I and II of your submission must not exceed five (5) pages and must use standard margins, fonts and be paginated. While no page limit exists for Section III, applicants are encouraged to be as concise as possible while still providing the necessary details. The concept paper must be submitted to: pwilliams@usaid.gov with a copy to mwarobi@usaid.gov

SECTION I – SUMMARY INFORMATION

- **A. NoFO Number and Title:**
- **B. Proposed short and unique title of the activity.**
- **C. Name and Contact Information of Applicant** *(POC Name, email and phone number)*
- **D. Full Address of applicant Organization.**
- **E. Type of Organization.** *(e.g., US, non-US, multilateral, private, for-profit, non-profit)*
- **F. List of Collaborating Organizations/Implementing Partners.**
- **G. Total Amount of Funding Requested from USAID including $ _______**
- **H. Cost-share amount (if proposed) $_______**
- **I. Proposed period of performance.** ***(Number of years/months)***
- **J. UEID number.**

SECTION II – CONCEPT BODY

- **A. Concept Introduction:** *(Present a specific problem statement and development hypothesis)*
- **B. Intervention Approach:** (Present proposed solution/technical approach and basic implementation plan)
- **C. Intervention results:** *(Identify tangible expected results of the program)*
- **D. Collaboration and Partnerships*:*** *(Identify strategic partners and describe the EXISTING relationship the respondent has with them and how they propose to work.)*
- **E. Cross-Cutting Issues integration:** *(Identify cross-cutting issues of gender equity and women's empowerment specifically as it relates to your development hypothesis and proposed gender sensitive approach.)*
- **F. Youth:** *(Present opportunities to engage youth strategically in the implementation of the activity, as relevant, to ensure broad-based participation and nurturing of change-agents and future leaders in conservation)*

G. Sustainability Plan: *Include a sustainability plan approach and goals (define what sustainability means to your program, what is realistic, and how to get there, particularly in the context of journey to self-reliance.)*

H. Other pertinent information

SECTION III – SUPPORTING INFORMATION *(Excluded from 5 Page Count)*

A. Proposed Estimated Cost and Cost Breakdown: This section should include the abbreviated proposed budget projections and brief narratives. The Applicant must submit Excel spreadsheets in a print-friendly format, with visible formulas, (unlocked cells) covering at a minimum the following categories:

- Salaries, Allowances and Fringe Benefits
- Travel and transportation
- Procurement or rental of goods (equipment and supplies)
- Subawards
- Other Direct Costs
- Indirect Costs
- Cost Sharing (if applicable)

B. Proposed Results Framework: A graphic representation of the applicant's strategy on how proposed interventions will lead to desired results. The graphs must include a short explanation on the cause-and-effect logic of the framework and outcome indicators.

C. Management Structure: A graphic representation of the applicant's staffing and management structure.

D. Collaborative Partner(s) Information: The applicant must submit letters of support and commitment from any named partner(s) to the program. Additionally, a contact list for all proposed partners/sub-awardees must be included covering: name, title, email and phone numbers and a brief description of each prospective partner's previous work and experience.

E. Local Organization Information: The applicant must provide supporting information to demonstrate how their organization meets the eligibility requirements under section c of this NoFO.

[THE END OF ATTACHMENT 1: CONCEPT PAPER TEMPLATE]