



USAID | INDIA

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

ISSUANCE DATE: August 10, 2022
PRE-APPLICATION CONFERENCE: August 19, 2022, 8a.m., India Time (IST)
DEADLINE FOR QUESTIONS: August 26, 2022, 11:55 p.m., IST
CLOSING DATE & TIME: September 16, 2022, 11:55 p.m., IST

Subject: Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) No. **72038622RFA00002**

Program Title: Strengthening Landscape Management and Conservation

Federal Assistance Listing Number: 98.001

Dear Prospective Applicants:

The United States Agency for International Development through its Mission in India (USAID/India) is seeking Concept Papers for a Cooperative Agreement from qualified organizations to implement the **Strengthening Landscape Management and Conservation Activity**. Eligibility for this award is not restricted. All types of organizations are eligible to apply. USAID encourages the participation, to the maximum extent possible, of all local and international organizations.

USAID intends to make an award to the applicant(s) who best meets the objectives of this funding opportunity based on the merit review criteria described in this NOFO subject to a risk assessment. Eligible parties interested in submitting an application are encouraged to **read this NOFO thoroughly** to understand the type of program sought, application submission requirements and selection process.

Subject to the availability of funds, USAID anticipates making a single award as a result of this NOFO to the applicant who best satisfies the NOFO requirements. To be eligible for award, the applicant must provide all information as required in this NOFO and meet eligibility standards in Section C of this NOFO. 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/India will be hosting a virtual pre-application conference to provide potential applicants with a better understanding of the NOFO requirements. The conference will be held online on **August 19, 2022** from 8a.m. to 10a.m. IST. Participation is limited to only two persons per organization. USAID encourages all interested participants to attend. RSVP by **August 17, 2022**

to Mr. Ashaki Guyton-Blanton at aguyton-blanton@usaid.gov to obtain a link to attend the conference. The USAID attendance list is restricted and will not be shared.

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

USAID **may not** award an applicant unless the applicant has complied with **all** applicable unique entity identifiers and System for Award Management (SAM) requirements detailed in SECTION D. The registration process may take many weeks to complete. Therefore, Applicants are encouraged to obtain them early to be eligible to apply for this NOFO.

Issuance of this NOFO does not constitute an award commitment on the part of USAID, nor does it commit USAID to pay for any costs incurred in the preparation or submission of comments/suggestions or an application. Further, USAID reserves the right to reject any or all applications received. Applications are submitted at the risk of the applicant. All preparation and submission costs are at the applicant's expense.

Thank you for your interest in USAID Programs.

Sincerely,

Cheryl Hodge-
Snead

Digitally signed by Cheryl Hodge-
Snead
Date: 2022.08.10 16:45:36 +05'30'

Cheryl Hodge-Snead
Agreement Officer

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SECTION A: PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

A.1 Authorizing Legislation

This funding opportunity is authorized under the Foreign Assistance Act (FAA) of 1961, as amended. The resulting award 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.2 Program Framework

A.2.1 Purpose

The purpose of the Strengthening Landscape Management and Conservation Activity is to work in concert with the Government of India (GoI) to enhance the management of ecological landscapes for biodiversity conservation, human well being and climate benefits, contributing to reduced greenhouse gas emissions, improved carbon sequestration, and enhanced environmental benefits for the country. Through this activity, USAID/India and the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) will strengthen management practices in targeted landscapes by: (1) improving the management of protected areas and their corridors for wildlife conservation and other ecological benefits; (2) improving inclusive livelihoods from ecosystem services and (3) strengthening the conditions for institutionalizing landscape conservation.

A.2.2 Background

India is considered one of [17 megadiverse countries](#) and is home to a wide array of ecosystems that play a pivotal role both in conserving biodiversity and sequestering atmospheric carbon. Across its nearly 3.3 million square kilometers of area, India’s topographic and climatic ranges - from sea level to 8,586 meters and from 300 to more than 3,000 millimeters of precipitation per year on average¹ to produce great ecosystem diversity that harbors 6.5-7 percent of globally recorded species of flora and fauna.²

India is part of four of the world’s 35 identified biodiversity [hotspots](#) with “exceptional concentrations of plant endemism and experiencing high rates of habitat loss” and one of eight primary global centers of origin of cultivated plants as well as 140 wild breeds of livestock and poultry.

India has identified ten biogeographic zones based on its topographic and climatic variations. Within each zone, one or more major ecosystem types occur. These are forest, grassland, desert, aquatic, and montane ecosystem types.³ India’s forests are classified into four major groups based on annual mean temperatures: tropical, subtropical, temperate, and alpine, further subdivided into 16 forest types based on precipitation

¹ Center for Science and Environment [analysis of rainfall data](#) for 110 years (1901-2011) published by Indian Meteorological Department, dated 27 April 2013.

² MEF. 2009. [State of Environment Report India 2009](#). Environmental Information System, Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India. Prepared by George C Varughese, Dr. K Vijaya Lakshmi, Anand Kumar, and Neelam Rana of Development Alternatives. pg. 50

³ MoEFCC. 2019. [Implementation of India’s National Biodiversity Action Plan: An Overview, 2019](#). Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India. Chapter 2. pp. 9-22.

and characteristics of their tree species. Detailed descriptions of each forest type are available in [Chapter 6](#) of the [State of the Forest Report 2015](#). Grassland types of India include coastal, riverine, montane, sub-Himalayan *terai*, tropical savannas, and wetland grasses. Desert ecosystems include subtropical dry savannas of western India, alpine barrens such as [Ladakh](#) in Jammu and Kashmir, and tropical rain-shadow deserts in portions of Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh that are sandy areas nearly devoid of vegetation. Aquatic systems include rivers and lakes, wetlands, and marine and coastal ecosystems. Montane systems occupy the Himalayas, Western Ghats, Eastern Ghats, Vindhya, and Aravalli ranges.

Each of these unique landscapes provide a multitude of ecosystem services and benefits for Indian society and the globe. And yet, most if not all of these landscapes face a range of challenges. While national forest cover is increasing overall, there is ongoing degradation in some key landscapes due to pressures from population and persistent poverty. Grasslands are decreasing despite their critical importance supporting rhinos, elephants, and other large and small wildlife - from tigers to pheasants - necessary for ecological integrity in addition to providing critical grazing lands for millions of agro-pastoral communities. India's freshwater aquatic ecosystems are nearing crisis levels of degradation from pollution with dangerous toxins and over-extraction for agricultural, industrial, municipal, and other uses. Sea level rise attributed to climate change is affecting coasts and their ecosystems, along with warmer sea temperatures altering the distribution patterns of marine life and contributing to coral bleaching events, and ocean acidification negatively impacting shellfish and corals. Finally, deserts are growing and alpine meadows are shrinking. A 2019 analysis by USAID provides further detail on the many challenges facing India's ecosystems.

Recognizing these challenges, India has made a number of national and international commitments that demonstrate the government's resolve in furthering the conservation of its globally important biodiversity and contribute toward ambitiously addressing the climate crisis. These commitments include:

1. A set of [National Biodiversity Targets](#) aligned with the Aichi targets agreed by all parties to the **Convention on Biological Diversity**. For example, Target 6 calls for 20% of the geographic area of the country to be “conserved effectively and equitably” through designating and managing a system of protected areas that represent the ecological diversity described above, and instituting area-based conservation measures that are integrated into the wider landscapes and seascapes.⁴
2. At the 14th Conference of Parties to the **United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification** held in New Delhi in 2019, [Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced](#) that India will restore an additional 5 million hectares of degraded land by 2030, raising the land to be restored in India to 26 million hectares. India was one of the first countries to commit to the 2030 Sustainable Development Goal target of achieving [land degradation neutrality](#).
3. In its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) submitted to the **United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change** (UNFCCC), India committed to create an additional carbon sink of 2.5 to 3 billion tons of CO₂ equivalent through additional forest and tree cover by 2030.

The legislative, policy, and regulatory framework for natural resources conservation and management in India is founded on [Article 48A of the Constitution](#): “The State shall endeavor to protect and improve the environment and to safeguard the forests and wildlife of the country.” Nationally, the GoI has implemented a range of legal and policy frameworks that are aimed at the protection and management of the

⁴ MoEFCC. 2014. [National Biodiversity Action Plan \(NBAP\): Addendum 2014 to NBAP 2008](#). Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India. pp. 26-27

environment, wildlife, biodiversity, and forests in India, such as the Wildlife (Protection) Act of 1972, last amended in 2006; the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986; the Forest (Conservation) Act of 1980. Although the forest and biodiversity policy addresses some of the gender and social inequity issues, women and Indigenous Peoples continue to be disadvantaged by several legal and social frameworks and they, traditionally, do not have access to pertinent information regarding their applicability and associated consequences if violated.

One of the key priorities of the GoI is to enhance and bolster investments in developmental programs related to water resources, the Himalayas, coastal regions, health, and disaster management— all of which are sectors that are susceptible to the impacts of climate change. Additionally, the GoI aims to mobilize additional funds, from a range of stakeholders, to help address the resource gap needed to implement climate change mitigation strategies.

A.2.3 Challenges

Several of India's natural landscapes and resources are threatened by anthropogenic factors such as deforestation, degradation, and over-exploitation. Each of these unique challenges creates more and more pressure on the natural world and makes ecosystems less resilient, more susceptible to the impacts of climate change, and less effective at mitigating greenhouse gas emissions. As landscapes become more degraded, they are unable to provide the same ecosystem goods and services. Additionally, India is home to several forest-dwelling tribal communities, including the Koyas, Konda Reddies, Kondhs, Savaras, Valmiki, Soligas and Parajas in the Eastern Ghats and many in the North Eastern Region. The loss of forests and land degradation disproportionately affects these and many other communities that depend on natural landscapes for their dwellings and livelihoods. Furthermore, an increase in habitat degradation and fragmentation leads to an increased likelihood of human-wildlife conflict (HWC), which results in cultural, social, and economic damages and human life losses.

India's landscapes and biodiversity are threatened by anthropogenic factors that threaten to negatively affect India's rich ecology. One salient example of this is challenges created by climate change, i.e. rising temperatures can change ecosystems over time, thereby affecting the types of species that can live and grow in a particular region. Additionally, prolonged rainfall can contribute to increased incidences of flooding, resulting in increased rates of mortality for wildlife and facilitating the spread of diseases. Since climate change can create fluctuations in the normal temperature ranges for ecosystems, this can have long lasting consequences, especially for particular species. In India, some impacts of climate change include: changes in the migratory patterns, physiological changes, and changes in the types of flora and fauna that can grow in a region— all of which have severe impacts on the natural environment.

Another challenge facing India's natural world is increased incidences of human-wildlife conflict (HWC) and more fragmented landscapes from linear infrastructure. Linear infrastructure is defined as man-made objects, such as railways, roads, electrical networks that fragment natural habitats. HWC poses a risk to the health, safety, and livelihoods for thousands of Indians, especially for those living in rural communities and those from marginalized backgrounds, including women and indigenous communities. Oftentimes, women are disproportionately impacted by HWC, since they are more likely to forage in the forest for firewood and food. Women and men play different gendered roles and have different responsibilities and impacts, despite the commonly held belief that men and women are impacted equally by HWC.

Habitat fragmentation can also increase the risk of the spillover of zoonotic diseases. Different land use decisions, such as building roads or converting more forests for agriculture, increase forest fragmentation and lead to greater exploitation of wildlife and exposure to wildlife-borne diseases. A first line of defense, then, may be to maintain the ecological integrity of priority landscapes and ensure healthy ecosystems for humans, domesticated animals, and wildlife.

The myriad of challenges outlined above also play a role in releasing greenhouse gas emission and reducing the carbon sequestration capabilities of India's landscapes. Forests, grasslands, mangroves, and other ecosystems play a pivotal role in carbon sequestration. Such ecosystems are vulnerable to changes in land-use, fragmentation, sea level rise, temperature changes, and other factors, which results in increased emissions and reduced ability of ecosystems to capture and store carbon.

Given the range of challenges affecting India's natural landscape, the goal of this activity is to work with the GoI and other stakeholders to enhance and improve the management of India's protected areas and their corridors for biodiversity and wildlife conservation, human well-being, and climate benefits, helping to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improving carbon sequestration— all of which will result in enhanced climate benefits for the country. The Theory of Change and Key Objectives, underscored below, highlight how the objectives of this activity will accomplish the intended goal.

A.2.4 Theory of Change:

IF management of protected areas and their corridors for wildlife conservation and other ecological benefits is improved;

AND inclusive livelihoods from ecosystem services are improved;

AND an enabling environment is created for institutionalizing landscape conservation;

THEN there will be enhanced management of ecological landscapes for biodiversity conservation, human well being, and climate benefits such as reduced greenhouse gas emissions and improved carbon sequestration.

A.2.5 Objectives and Illustrative Outcomes

There are three main objectives for this activity: (1) Improved management of protected areas and their corridors for wildlife conservation and other ecological benefits; (2) Improved inclusive livelihoods from ecosystem services, and (3) Strengthened conditions for institutionalizing landscape conservation.

Objective 1: Improved management of connected landscapes for wildlife habitat and other ecological benefits

This objective aims to enhance the capabilities of protected areas (PA) staff to more effectively and efficiently manage their respective landscapes for both wildlife conservation and climate benefits. This component focuses on examining the factors that hinder effective management and finding solutions to those challenges. Illustrative outcomes might include implementation of new strategies and action plans, including to improve connectivity between protecting areas and to prevent emerging zoonotic diseases at the source; assessed management effectiveness of protected areas; strengthened and new systems to monitor ecosystems and forest health and climate impacts; human wildlife conflict addressed and

minimized; and awareness raised and behavior changed on the benefits of ecological integrity for human well-being, climate benefits, and preventing emerging zoonotic diseases at the source.

Objective 2: Improved Livelihoods from Ecosystem Services

Current understanding surrounding the economic, social, and cultural value associated with ecosystem services is insufficient. Illustrative outcomes under this component will provide critical information about the value of these services to address some of the gaps in understanding. These efforts will focus on ways to improve livelihoods and increase income that forest dependent communities - predominantly women and Indigenous Peoples - derive from ecosystem services. Illustrative outcomes may include stronger systems for monitoring of carbon, water, and other ecosystem services from ecological landscapes; strengthened capacity to conduct valuations of carbon, water, and other ecosystem services; prioritized actions to incentivise forest and wildlife conservation that increases income for forest dependent communities; functioning payment for ecosystem services or carbon market projects (e.g. REDD+) in selected landscapes; and increased understanding of the factors that limit or contribute to health of target wildlife populations across a mosaic of intact to degraded ecosystems to reduce the risk of zoonotic spillover.

Objective 3: Strengthen conditions for institutionalizing landscape conservation for human and climate benefits

This objective aims to strengthen conditions or create an enabling environment for institutionalizing landscape conservation. This approach will ensure that systems and processes are in place to sustain Objectives 1 and 2 beyond the life of the project as well as ensuring the potential for the GoI to scale successful conservation actions more widely across India. Illustrative outcomes may include strengthened platforms for learning and exchange of information among protected area managers and with other stakeholders; strengthened knowledge management and information dissemination systems and their wider application; and mobilization of additional resources, including from the private sector.

Geographic Scope:

The Strengthening Landscape Management and Conservation Activity will be undertaken in terrestrial ecosystems, most likely located in the Central Indian Landscapes. The geographic state selection can be anywhere in that region and the final geographic selection will be determined during the co-creation, in collaboration with the MoEFCC and USAID. For this Activity, the Central Indian Landscapes include regions in the following states: Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, and Maharashtra.

A.2.7: Links to Agencies Priorities

This activity links to USAID/India's CDCS outlined priorities on improving the management of protected areas in India and promoting biodiversity conservation. These actions would also help to bolster carbon sequestration in selected landscapes and also deepen the understanding of the contribution of ecosystem services for Indian society. Collectively, these actions will improve regional natural resource management in the country.

This activity also contributes toward implementation of the USAID Climate Strategy, the USAID Biodiversity Policy, the USAID Policy on Promoting the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (PRO-IP), the

USAID Private Sector Engagement Policy, and USAID priorities on inclusive development and working with under-represented communities.

A2.8: Guiding Principles

Gender and Social Inclusion:

USAID's gender and social analysis for this activity shows that loss of biodiversity and its consequences affect women and men in different ways. Also the roles, knowledge, and skills of tribal/rural men and women differ with respect to forest use and management. Women, and tribal communities have a disproportionate impact that needs special attention.

This activity will maximize the impacts of the interventions by equally focusing on and viewing women and men, and scheduled castes and tribes communities members, from the forest-dependent communities as valuable participants in forest and biodiversity conservation and management, whose knowledge, leadership and decision making can have transformative effects on local communities and national policies. The efforts will be designed, in consultation with these communities, to and will benefit everyone equally and equitably. Development efforts must, therefore, be aimed towards three interrelated goals: (1) enhancing effective forest and biodiversity measures, (2) addressing diverse needs of forest dependent groups, and (3) achieving socially inclusive and equitable development outcomes for affected individuals, regardless of their gender, socioeconomic, and caste status.

This activity will also follow USAID's Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) Framework, as outlined in the PRO-IP Policy and the International Human Rights standards that state, 'all peoples have the right to self-determination' using the available resources. The Policy reflects USAID's commitment to supporting inclusive and sustainable development by: advancing human dignity by protecting and empowering Indigenous Peoples, while safeguarding their environments and communities. Interventions should be designed after sufficiently understanding the governance, culture, and cosmovision of the communities that are culturally pertinent. This will help to support the communities in their own efforts to inform, educate, strengthen their own identity, values, social cohesion, and development.

As a result, in this activity, an outlook should be adopted to yield advantages for a range of marginalized communities and benefit both sexes in all their diversity, including the landless, scheduled tribes, persons with disabilities, and youth.

*Please see **Annex 1** for detailed information on gender and social inclusion.*

Sustainability:

A key component of the Strengthening Landscape Management and Conservation activity focuses on the sustainability of the interventions. USAID defines sustainability as how the project will be supported and can continue without donor funding.

Coordination

USAID/India will utilize a co-creation approach with the successful applicant to finalize the program description and the consortium framework. The successful applicant will also be expected to engage with the Government of India, MoEFCC, and other relevant stakeholders. Finally, this activity will also coordinate with other USAID-funded activities and leverage the work of other relevant actors and stakeholders to ensure complementarity and avoid duplication of efforts.

[END OF SECTION A]

SECTION B – FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

B.1 ESTIMATED 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 \$20,000,000 in total USAID funding over a five-year period. USAID reserves the right to change funding amounts and terms of the resulting Cooperative Agreement as a result of availability of funds and U.S. Government requirements.

B.2 EXPECTED PERFORMANCE INDICATORS, TARGETS, BASELINE DATA AND DATA COLLECTION

USAID/India intends for the activity to be subject to rigorous monitoring and evaluation, to (a) ensure the intended results and impact are being generated, and (b) inform the activity management if, and when, course corrections may be necessary – an important consideration, given that this is a new activity and partnership. The recipient should also conduct several periodic analyses to better understand certain aspects and issues within the award’s domain.

Performance monitoring and evaluation will be included by the Applicant while designing their technical approach. USAID may conduct additional monitoring and evaluation through external contract(s). A detailed Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) design will be developed upon completion of the design and will include appropriate Standard Foreign Assistance Indicators (F indicators).

USAID/India recognizes that development efforts yield positive change more quickly if they are coordinated and collaborative, test promising new approaches in a continuous search for improvement, and build on what works, while eliminating what does not. The recipient must therefore implement a Collaboration, Learning and Adaptation (CLA) approach to continuously assess the activity’s causal pathways, target outcomes, and adjust the interventions and approach as necessary to yield the most effective course of action. The CLA Plan must clearly relate to the Monitoring Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Plan.

Anticipated Results and Indicators

The activity will contribute to strengthening the conditions for institutionalizing landscape conservation, to enhance the capabilities of protected areas staff for effective and efficient management of landscapes for both wildlife conservation and climate benefit and to improve inclusive livelihoods from ecosystem services.

The Concept Paper shall propose intermediate results that will help inform its content areas and initiatives. Applicants are expected to propose activities that are appropriate and relevant to the situation. Potential indicators are outlined below, but the final list of indicators will be developed during co-creation:

- Number of people using climate information or implementing risk reducing actions to improve resilience to climate change as supported by USG assistance
- GHG Emissions Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, estimated in metric tons of CO2 equivalent, reduced, sequestered, or avoided through clean energy activities supported by USG assistance
- Institutional Capacity Number of institutions with improved capacity to address sustainable landscapes issues as supported by USG assistance National governmental Sub-national governmental Other
- Sustainable Landscapes Beneficiaries Number of people receiving livelihood co-benefits (monetary or non-monetary) associated with the implementation of USG sustainable landscapes activities
- Sustainable Landscapes Hectares Number of hectares under improved management expected to reduce greenhouse gas emissions as a result of USG assistance Protection, Forests Protection, Non-forests Restoration, Forests Restoration, Non-forests Management, Forests Management, Non-forest
- Number of hectares of biologically significant areas showing improved biophysical conditions as a result of USG assistance
- Number of hectares of biologically significant areas under improved natural resource management as a result of USG assistance
- Number of people with improved economic benefits derived from sustainable natural resource management and/or biodiversity conservation as a result of USG assistance
- Number of people trained in sustainable natural resources management and/or biodiversity conservation as a result of USG assistance
- Number of laws, policies, or regulations that address biodiversity conservation and/or other environmental themes officially proposed, adopted or implemented as a result of USG assistance
- Number of people that apply improved conservation law enforcement practices, as a result of USG assistance
- Number of people consulted to plan for livelihood needs related to sustainable landscape with USG support [Disaggregation: sex, social structure]
- Number of people trained in adaptive strategies (e.g., sustainable agriculture, water management, etc.) with USG support [Disaggregation: sex, social structure]

Annual Pause and Reflect session to inform annual reporting and the following year work plans. These Pause and Reflect sessions serve to review what types of interventions may be necessary to adjust course.

A mid-term and final evaluation will be conducted by a third party as per USAID guidelines. The mid-term evaluation will be undertaken in year two of the project implementation to assess the activity Theory of Change (TOC), risks and assumptions, and review the progress towards expected results and make mid-course corrections, if needed. The evaluation will measure processes, early progress on getting results, modification in the project implementation, if any.

B.3 START DATE AND PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE

The period of performance anticipated herein is five (5) years. The estimated start date of the award is March 1, 2023.

B.4 SUBSTANTIAL INVOLVEMENT

In accordance with ADS 303.3.11, USAID will remain substantially involved over the life of the Cooperative Agreement to assist the Recipient in achieving the expected outcomes and results of the program. Some examples of potential areas of substantial involvement during performance include the following:

- Approval of recipient's implementation plans during performance;
- Approval of key recipient personnel; and
- Joint participation will be necessary to ensure achievement of key objectives during the performance of the activity.

NOTE: This Substantial Involvement section is subject to change following the Co-Creation Workshop and submission of the Final Application of Phase

B.5 AUTHORIZED GEOGRAPHIC CODE

The authorized geographic code for the procurement of services and commodities is 937. Code 937 is defined as the United States, the recipient country (India), and developing countries, but excluding any country that is a prohibited source. There are currently no prohibited source countries, but the list is updated regularly and can be found here:

<http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1864/310mac.pdf>.

B.6. NATURE OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN USAID AND THE RECIPIENT

The principal purpose of the relationship with the Recipient and under the subject program is to transfer funds to accomplish a public purpose of support or stimulation of Strengthening Landscape Management and Conservation Activity which is authorized by Federal statute. The successful Recipient will be responsible for ensuring the achievement of the program objectives and the efficient and effective administration of the award through the application of sound management practices. The Recipient will assume responsibility for administering Federal funds in a manner consistent with underlying agreements, program objectives, and the terms and conditions of the Federal award.

[END OF SECTION B]

SECTION C – ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

C.1 ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Eligibility for this NOFO is unrestricted, open to all eligible and qualified entities. An organization may submit only one (1) application under this notice of funding opportunity. However, organizations participating as a member of a consortium may elect to participate in another consortium under a different Concept Paper.

Pursuant to 2CFR 200.400(g), it is USAID policy not to award profit under assistance instruments such as Cooperative Agreements. While for-profit organizations may participate, pursuant to 2 CFR 700.13(a)(1), Prohibition against Profit, no profit will be paid to any for-profit entity receiving or administering Federal financial assistance as a recipient or subrecipient.

USAID welcomes organizations that have not previously received financial assistance from USAID to submit their applications.

C.2 LEVERAGE

Leverage is defined as anything of value that is measured, financial contributions, third party contributions, donated services or property, or intellectual property. The Strengthening Landscape Management and Conservation requires the applicant to leverage resources from both the private and public resources. The resources leveraged from both the sectors will enable the activity to engage in interventions that are of shared interest and will enable the interventions to be continued after the Activity ends. At a minimum, the applicant is required to leverage 10% of the award amount from other sources, external to the United States Government. For more information about leverage, please refer to section E.2.1 Merit Review.

C.3. OTHER

C.3.1. SAM REGISTRATION

Applicants must have successfully registered in SAM (System for Award Management) prior to submitting a full application. Applicants must also provide a valid UEI number in the SF424 form to be submitted along with a full application. For those who have previously registered in SAM, they must renew and maintain an active SAM registration during the time they have concept notes or applications under consideration by a Federal awarding agency or during active Federal award. SAM registration is not required in the Phase 1 or Phase 2; however, applicants are advised to start the process now.

C.3.2. PRE-AWARD RISK ASSESSMENT

The Apparently Successful Applicant (ASA) will be responsible for ensuring achievement of the objectives described in the NOFO. Thus, an ASA must be a responsible entity. Prior to making an award under this NOFO, USAID may perform a pre-award survey for organizations that are new to working with USAID or for organizations with outstanding audit findings. Accounting systems, audit issues and management capability questions may be reviewed as part of this process.

Depending on the result of the risk assessment, USAID may determine to execute the award, not execute the award, or award with “specific conditions” (2 CFR 200.207). If notified by USAID that a pre-award survey is necessary, applicants must prepare in advance to provide the required information and documents. A pre-award survey does not commit USAID to make an award to any organization.

The Agreement Officer (AO) will decide on whether to subject the ASA to a pre-award survey, and based on the results, will make a determination if the prospective recipient is a responsible entity, whether the prospective recipient has the necessary organization, experience, accounting, and operational controls, financial resources, and technical skills – or ability to obtain them – in order to achieve the objectives of the program and comply with the terms and conditions of the award. The Agreement Officer reserves the right to perform a pre-award survey for any entity.

[END OF SECTION C]

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SECTION D: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

D.1 AGENCY POINT OF CONTACT

Cheryl Hodge-Snead
Title: Agreement Officer
Email: indiarco@usaid.gov

D.2 QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Questions regarding this NOFO should be submitted indiarco@usaid.gov, with a copy to aguyton-blanton@usaid.gov and clal@usaid.gov no later than the date and time indicated on the cover letter, as amended. Unless otherwise notified by an amendment to the NOFO, no questions will be accepted after the due date. Any information given to a prospective applicant concerning this NOFO will be furnished promptly to all other prospective applicants as an amendment to this NOFO, if that information is necessary in submitting applications or if the lack of it would be prejudicial to any other prospective applicant.

Applicants must not submit questions to any other USAID staff. All the submission of questions application files submitted must be compatible with Microsoft (MS) Office in a MS Windows environment and/or Adobe Acrobat (.pdf). The subject of each e-mail must read as follows: NOFO # 72038622RFA00002 - Strengthening Landscape Management and Conservation Activity.

D.3 GENERAL CONTENT AND FORM OF APPLICATION

Applicants are to review, understand and comply with all aspects of this NOFO. Applicants must ensure all necessary documents are complete and received at USAID on time. Failure to do so will result in the submission being considered non-responsive and will not be reviewed. All submissions received by the stated deadlines in the NOFO and determined responsive will be reviewed in accordance with the review criteria contained in Section E of this NOFO.

Each applicant must furnish the information required by this NOFO. Applications for each phase must be submitted in accordance with the instructions provided under Section D. Any erasures or other changes to the application must be initiated by the person signing the application. Applications signed by an agent on behalf of the applicant must be accompanied by evidence of that agent's authority, unless that evidence has been previously furnished to the issuing office.

Applicants may choose to submit a cover letter in addition to the cover pages, but it will serve only as a transmittal letter to the Agreement Officer. The cover letter will not be reviewed as part of the merit review criteria. USAID will not review any pages in excess of the page limits noted in the subsequent sections. Please ensure that applications comply with the page limitations.

Submissions must be in electronic format. Applicants' authorized representatives are to sign their names (manually or digitally) on the cover pages of their submissions, as well as in required

certifications. For a submission to be considered timely, the electronic transmission must be submitted by email to indiarco@usaid.gov with a copy to aguyton-blanton@usaid.gov and clal@usaid.gov and received by USAID/India no later than the date and time indicated on the coversheet of the NOFO. USAID bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes associated with electronic submissions.

Applicants not selected for the consecutive phase will be notified at the end of each phase. Depending on the number of applicants, the AO may or may not respond to requests for additional information from unsuccessful applicants.

D.3.1 Overall Selection Process

Under this NOFO, there will be a three-phase process that is described below:

Phase 1 - Concept Paper and Oral Presentation:

Conditional Acceptance of Concept Paper: Applicants are to first submit a concept paper for an initial review. All concept papers received in response to this NOFO will be evaluated by a USAID Merit Review Committee (MRC) for responsiveness to the merit review/evaluation criteria outlined in Section E. After all concept papers are evaluated, only applicants whose concept paper is **conditionally accepted (based on the Merit Review Criteria)** will be invited to present their concept paper. This process is to identify concept papers that align with the intended objectives of the NOFO. **The process ends for all applicants whose concept paper was not conditionally accepted and no further consideration will be given to the applicant(s).**

Oral Presentations: Applicants whose Concept Paper was conditionally accepted (**based on the Merit Review Criteria in Section E**) will be invited to present orally on the specific areas of their concept that need further detailing. The Oral Presentation will provide USAID an opportunity to better understand the concept and its approach to the solution, as well as to pose clarifying questions. This will be two weeks approximately after being notified that their Concept Papers were conditionally accepted.

The Oral Presentation will be held through video conferencing or in person, depending on the location of the applicant. The technical as well as format requirements for this phase will be made available to the selected applicants invited to the Oral Presentation. The Applicant's Concept Paper author/s and lead Technical Representatives must be part of the presentation team. After the presentations, USAID will use the Merit Review Criteria to determine the Applicant's concept paper that is acceptable (**See Section E**) to move to the next Phase, The Co-Creation Workshop.

Approximately two weeks after the oral presentations are completed, only the applicant whose Oral Presentation of Concept Paper presentation is successful will be invited to a co-creation workshop - Phase 2.

NOTE: USAID reserves the right to consider co-creating with all applicant(s) whose concept papers were conditionally accepted up until the award is made. For example, should a viable solution not materialize with the applicant whose concept paper was accepted, USAID will commence co-creation with the next viable applicant. USAID will provide a written summary feedback to applicant(s) who

will remain in the conditionally acceptable category to those applicant/s who were invited for an oral presentation. Those applicant(s) whose concept paper was not accepted will have the opportunity to request additional information. **The process ends for applicants who were notified that their concept paper was not accepted. No further consideration will be given to the applicant(s).**

USAID reserves the right to accept a concept paper that fully meets the requirements of the NOFO, not hold oral presentations, and proceed directly to Phase 2 - Co-creation.

Phase 2- Co-Creation Workshop: Approximately two weeks after notification of acceptable concept paper, a one-week co-creation workshop (virtual/in person) will be hosted by USAID. The applicant whose concept paper was accepted will be invited to submit a draft Program Description and participate in a co-creation workshop. Specific details will be included in the invitational letter. The purpose of the co-creation workshop is to design a mutually sustainable Program Description using a participatory process that assumes some degree of shared power and decision making. Participants in this co-creation workshop will include the applicant, USAID, and potentially other stakeholders such as representatives from MoEFCC.

Phase 3 - Full Application (RFA): At the end of the co-creation workshop, the applicant will be requested to submit a full application including the technical and detailed cost application. The full application will elaborate the project's theory of change and proposed key results and indicators. The full application also requires the applicant to complete specific USG forms and to provide additional information that USAID/India will need to move forward with an appropriate implementing instrument. The full application will be reviewed for its technical merit against the full application merit review/evaluation criteria by the Merit Review Committee. USAID will continue to work with the applicant(s) to strengthen the Full Application, if additional information is required, prior to making an award.

NOTE: No funding will be made to any applicant prior to the award of the Cooperative Agreement. The Applicants are responsible for all costs incurred prior to the award of the Cooperative Agreement, including costs incurred during all the phases - concept paper preparation, oral presentation, co-creation and pre-award. Please note that USAID reserves the right to make no award under this NOFO at any stage of the process.

D.4. APPLICATION FORMATS:

Each applicant must furnish the information required by this NOFO. This subsection addresses content requirements applying to this NOFO. Please see subsections D.5 and D.6, below, for information on the content specific to the application.

Concept papers must be submitted by email to indiarco@usaid.gov, with a copy to aguyton-blanton@usaid.gov and clal@usaid.gov no later than the date and time indicated on the cover letter, as amended. Email submissions must include the NOFO number and applicant's name in the subject line heading.

After sending the concept paper electronically, applicants should immediately check their own email to confirm that the attachments were indeed sent. If an applicant discovers an error in transmission, please send the material again and note in the subject line of the email that it is a "corrected" submission. Do not send the same email more than once unless there has been a change, and if so, please note that it is a "corrected" email.

Applicants are reminded that e-mail is NOT instantaneous, and in some cases delays of several hours occur from transmission to receipt. Therefore, applicants are requested to send the application in sufficient time ahead of the deadline. For this NOFO, the initial point of entry to the government infrastructure is the USAID mail server.

There may be a problem with the receipt of *.zip files due to anti-virus software. Therefore, applicants are discouraged from sending files in this format as USAID/India cannot guarantee their acceptance by the internet server.

Application must comply with the following:

- USAID will not review any pages in excess of the page limits noted in the subsequent sections. Please ensure that applications comply with the page limitations.
- Written in English.
- Use standard 8 ½" x 11", single sided, single-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font, 1" margins, left justification and headers and/or footers on each page including consecutive page numbers, date of submission, and applicant's name.
- a 10 point font can be used for graphs and charts. Tables however, must comply with the 12 point Times New Roman requirement.
- Submitted via Microsoft Word or PDF formats.
- Applicants must review, understand, and comply with all aspects of this NOFO. Failure to do so may be considered as being non-responsive and may be evaluated accordingly. Applicants should retain a copy of the application and all enclosures for their records.

DO NOT SUBMIT: Promotional literature and materials regarding the Applicant or other unsolicited material.

D.4.1. PHASE 1: Concept Paper Format

The concept paper is to be specific, complete, and presented concisely. The concept must demonstrate the applicant's capabilities and expertise with respect to achieving the goals of this program. The concept is to consider the requirements of the program and merit review criteria found in this NOFO.

Applicants should also ensure that their concept paper contains the following aspects:

- List of Acronyms (*does not count towards page limitation*)
- Table of Contents (*does not count towards page limitation*)

No other documents/annexures are being requested currently; USAID will inform the applicants about additional documentation required in subsequent phases, if needed.

A Concept Paper can be no more than a maximum of **Eight (8) pages**, where the applicant provides an overview of its idea. **Please see Concept Paper Instructions below.** Applicants must submit a Concept Paper by the deadline specified in this NOFO. USAID will review Concept Papers against merit review criteria detailed in Section E of this NOFO

Concept Paper must include a cover page containing the following information:

A. Concept Paper Cover Page (*does not count towards page limitation*):

The concept paper must include a cover page containing the following information:

- Proposed Activity Name/Title;
- Period of Performance (i.e., start date and end date);
- Total Amount of Funding Requested from USAID;
- Total amount leveraged, including from what source(s);
- Applicant Organization Name;
- Applicant Contact Person (name, phone, e-mail);
- Full Address for Applicant Organization;
- Type of Organization [please include certification of incorporation] (e.g., US. non-US, multilateral, private, for-profit, nonprofit, etc) date of incorporation;
- Notice of Funding Opportunity number;
- (if Applicable) Name(s) of Partner(s) Organization(s)

Applicants may choose to submit a cover letter in addition to the cover pages, but it will serve only as a transmittal letter to the Agreement Officer. The cover letter will not be reviewed as part of the merit review criteria.

B. Include major sections and page numbering to easily cross-reference and identify the information below.

C. Concept Technical Approach: (5 pages)

Concept papers should describe your organization's approach for tackling the challenges and objectives described in Section A of the NOFO. Collectively, these interventions should achieve improved regional natural resource management in India and contribute towards the implementation of the USAID Climate Strategy, the USAID Biodiversity Policy, the USAID Policy on Promoting the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (PRO-IP), the USAID Private Sector Engagement Policy, and USAID priorities on inclusive development and working with under-represented communities.

Concept papers must address the following:

- Provide a broad framing and describe the organization's approach to addressing the challenges detailed in Section A of the NOFO.
- Describe the interventions the organization will take to meet the stated objectives in Section A of the NOFO and describe the anticipated results and/or impact of the proposed intervention.

- Provide a high-level narrative Theory of Change (ToC) that describes the logic behind how the proposed interventions will lead to the stated results and articulates underlying assumptions.
- Outline a strategy to coordinate with other USAID and donor biodiversity, sustainable landscapes, and relevant environmental programming.
- Highlight the proposed approach to leverage funds, the various sources of leveraged funds, and the associated percentage.
- Though the final geographic scope will be determined with the MoEFCC and USAID, applicants must provide a reasonable justification for the selected intervention locations.

D. Organizational Structure and Management: (1.5 pages)

Provide a description of the management approach for this activity that shows the relationship within the team and between partner organizations (as applicable). As applicable, articulate the role of each member of the consortium and their respective contributions. Describe how your proposed concept will partner with and leverage experience(s) from local Indian organizations. Additionally, identify four to five positions that would be critical to accomplishing the outcomes outlined in the Concept Technical Approach and describe the qualifications for each role and why the role is critical to successful implementation of the project .

E. Institutional Capacity and History of Performance: (1.5 pages)

Describe the institutional capacity – technical, managerial, and financial – to carry out the proposed intervention. Describe your organization’s relevant previous experiences, from the past five years, working on projects related to landscape management and wildlife conservation, highlighting the timeframe, scale, and geographic region for each project. As applicable, provide information on institutional capacity and strengths of consortium members.

F. Name and Signature of authorized individual (does not count towards page limitation):

Any erasures or other changes to the concept paper must be initialed by the person signing. A concept paper signed by an agent on behalf of the applicant must be accompanied by evidence of that agent’s authority unless that evidence has been previously furnished to the issuing office.

D.5. REQUIREMENTS FOR A FULL APPLICATION (For Information Purpose Only)

NOTE: ONLY THOSE APPLICANT(S) WHO ARE SUCCESSFUL AT PHASE 2 WILL BE REQUESTED TO SUBMIT A FULL APPLICATION. NO FULL APPLICATION IS REQUIRED AT THIS TIME.

Please note additional requirements below that must be met prior to award and as part of the Full Application evaluation stage:

(a) Business (cost) Application Format

NO Business (Cost) Application Is Required At Phase 1 or 2. The following information is provided for **information purposes only** for the applicant(s) that will be required to submit a full application after successful co-creation at Phase 2.

(b) Certifications and Assurances

As part of Phase 3 (Full Application stage), the Applicant must complete the following documents, upon request by the AO:

- (1) “Certifications, Assurances, Representations, and Other Statements of the Recipient” ADS 303mav document found at <http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303mav.pdf>
- (2) Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424B)
- (3) Certificate of Compliance: Please submit a copy of your Certificate of Compliance if your organization's systems have been certified by USAID/Washington's Office of Acquisition and Assistance (M/OAA).

(c) Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and SAM Requirements

USAID may not award to an applicant unless the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier (earlier known as DUNS number) and System for Award Management (SAM) requirements. If requested to submit information as part of Phase 3, the applicant(s) (unless the applicant is an individual or Federal awarding agency that is exempted from requirements under 2 CFR 25.110(b) or (c), or has an exception approved by the Federal awarding agency under 2 CFR 25.110(d)) is required to:

1. Provide a valid UEI number for the applicant and all proposed sub-recipients (if any).
2. Be registered in SAM prior to the issuance of an award. (www.sam.gov).
3. Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a federal awarding agency.

The registration process may take many weeks to complete. Therefore, applicants are encouraged to begin the process early. If an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements above by the time USAID is ready to make an award, USAID may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award and use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant.

UEI/DUNS number: <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>

SAM registration: <http://www.sam.gov>

Applicants can find additional resources for registering in SAM, including a Quick Start Guide and a video on how to obtain an NCAGE code, on www.sam.gov, navigate to Help, then to International Registrants.

(d) Funding Restrictions

Profit is not allowable for recipients or subrecipient(s) under this award. See 2 CFR 200.331 for assistance in determining whether a sub-tier entity is a subrecipient or contractor.

Construction will not be authorized under this award.

USAID will not allow the reimbursement of pre-award costs under this award without the explicit written approval of the Agreement Officer. Except as may be specifically approved in advance by the AO, all commodities and services that will be reimbursed by USAID under this award must be from the authorized geographic code specified in Section B.6 of this NOFO and must meet the source and nationality requirements set forth in 22 CFR 228.

(e) Consortium arrangements

If the Applicant has established a consortium or another legal relationship among its partners, the Cost/Business application must include a copy of the legal relationship between the parties. The agreement should include a full discussion of the relationship between the Applicant and Sub-Applicant(s) including identification of the Applicant with whom USAID will work with for purposes of Agreement administration, identity of the Applicant which will have accounting responsibility, how Agreement effort will be allocated and the express agreement of the principals thereto to be held jointly and severally liable for the acts or omissions of the other.

(f) Negotiation

Upon consideration of award or during the negotiations leading to an award, Applicants may be required to submit additional documentation deemed necessary for the Agreement Officer to make an affirmative determination of responsibility. Applicants should not submit the information below with their applications! The information in this section is provided so that Applicant may become familiar with additional documentation that may be requested by the Agreement Officer:

- Bylaws, constitution, and articles of incorporation, if applicable.
- Whether the organizational travel, procurement, financial management, accounting manual and personnel policies and procedures, especially regarding salary, promotion, leave, differentials, etc., submitted under this section have been reviewed and approved by any agency of the Federal Government, and if so, provide the name, address, and phone number of the cognizant reviewing official. The Applicant should provide copies of the same.

(f) Conflict of Interest Pre-Award Term (August 2018)

(a) Personal Conflict of Interest

1) An actual or appearance of a conflict of interest exists when an applicant organization or an employee of the organization has a relationship with an Agency official involved in the competitive award decision-making process that could affect that Agency official's impartiality. The term "conflict of interest" includes situations in which financial or other personal considerations may compromise, or have the appearance of compromising, the obligations and duties of a USAID employee or recipient employee.

2) The applicant must provide conflict of interest disclosures when it submits an SF-424. Should the applicant discover a previously undisclosed conflict of interest after submitting the application, the applicant must disclose the conflict of interest to the AO no later than ten (10) calendar days following discovery.

(b) Organizational Conflict of Interest

The applicant must notify USAID of any actual or potential conflict of interest that they are aware of that may provide the applicant with an unfair competitive advantage in competing for this financial assistance award. Examples of an unfair competitive advantage include but are not limited to situations in which an applicant or the applicant's employee gained access to non-public information regarding a federal assistance funding opportunity, or an applicant or applicant's employee was substantially involved in the preparation of a federal assistance funding opportunity. USAID will promptly take appropriate action upon receiving any such notification from the applicant.

[END OF SECTION D]

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SECTION E: APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

E.1 CRITERIA

All applications will be reviewed in accordance with the review criteria set forth below. The merit review criteria prescribed here are tailored to the requirements of this particular NOFO. Applicants should note that these criteria serve to: (a) identify the significant matters which the applicants should address in their applications, and (b) set the standard against which all applications will be evaluated

Merit Review Factors will be evaluated relative to each other, as described here and prescribed by the Technical Application Format.

E.2 REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

PHASE 1: CONCEPT PAPER & ORAL PRESENTATION

Concept Paper: The concept paper will be reviewed by a Merit Review Committee according to the criteria described below. The purpose of this review is to ensure that the applicant incorporates interventions that will build upon and expand USAID's and the Government of India's (GoI) efforts to enhance the management of ecological landscapes for biodiversity conservation, human well being and climate benefits, contributing to reduced greenhouse gas emissions, improved carbon sequestration, and enhanced environmental benefits for the country. A concept paper is determined to be acceptable if it proposes a sound approach and USAID has **Strong Confidence** that the applicant understands the requirement and will be successful in performing with **no** government intervention based on the criteria below, which are listed in descending order of importance.

The Agreement Officer makes the final determination and is the only individual who may legally commit the U.S. Government to the expenditure of public funds. No costs chargeable to the proposed Agreement may be incurred before receipt of either an Agreement signed by the Agreement Officer or a specific, written authorization from the Agreement Officer.

Oral Presentations: Successful applicants whose application was conditionally accepted (based on the Merit Review Criteria) will be invited to present their concept. The purpose of the presentation is to better understand the concept and its approach to the solution, as well as provide USAID an opportunity to pose clarifying questions. After the presentations, USAID will use the Merit Review Criteria to assign a final rating to applicants. The outcomes of the presentation will be used to determine which concept paper moves forward to the Co-Creation stage.

NOTE: USAID reserves the right to consider co-creating with all applicant(s) whose concept papers were conditionally accepted up until the award is made. For example, should a viable solution not materialize with the applicant whose concept paper was accepted, USAID will commence co-creation with the next viable applicant. USAID will provide a written summary feedback to applicant(s) who will remain in the conditionally acceptable category to those applicant/s who were invited for an oral presentation. Those applicant(s) whose concept paper was not accepted will have the opportunity to request additional information. **The process ends for applicants who were notified that their concept paper was not accepted. No further consideration will be given to the applicant(s).**

NOTE: After concept paper/s have been **accepted**, detailed activity design discussions between USAID and the applicant will begin and continue throughout the remainder of the process.

NOTE: USAID reserves the right to accept a concept paper that fully meets the requirements of the NOFO, not hold oral presentations, and proceed directly to Phase 2 - Co-creation.

USAID will not be responsible for costs associated with presentation.

PHASE 2: CO-CREATION WORKSHOP

USAID/India may host either an in-person or via video conference co-creation workshop depending on COVID-19 restrictions. The applicant will be sent an invitation letter requesting a draft Program Description and notifying the applicant of the date, time, and venue for the workshop. Specific details will be included in the invitational letter. Participants will include the applicant, USAID, and potentially other stakeholders such as MoEFCC. The applicant is required to include their personnel who will be actually implementing the proposed activity.

No funding will be made available prior to the award of the Cooperative Agreement. Applicants, including the organization selected to collaboratively develop the Program Description, are responsible for all costs related to the oral presentation phase and the co-creation workshop. Once the award is signed, the implementing partner may start incurring costs. Applicants not selected for the consecutive phase will be notified at the end of each phase. Unsuccessful applicants may request additional information following such notification.

USAID reserves the right to make no award under this NOFO at any stage of the process.

PHASE 3: REQUEST FOR FULL APPLICATION

At the end of the Co-Creation, Applicant(s) will be requested to submit a full application that incorporates the feedback from USAID and the MoEFCC during the co-creation workshop. The Full Application should include, at a minimum, expanded information on the Applicant's Technical Approach and Organizational Management and Staffing. In addition, the Full Application will expand on the Theory of Change and articulate the applicant's strategies for implementing a Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning methodology, including an emphasis on adaptive management. The Applicant must also demonstrate how it will apply learning and adaptive management techniques to inform program management and key decisions. USAID will provide additional information about the full application.

E.2.1 MERIT REVIEW

Phase 1 – Concept Paper

USAID will conduct a merit review of all concept papers received that comply with the instructions in this NOFO. Applications will be reviewed and evaluated in accordance with the following criteria, and the technical approach will be weighted more heavily, while the other factors will be weighted equally.

Merit Review Criteria	Definition
Technical Approach	The extent to which the applicant's technical approach, interventions, results, and narrative Theory of Change demonstrate an understanding of the context, a feasible means to achieve the activity goals, and an innovative and scalable approach to enhance the management of ecological landscapes for biodiversity conservation, human well being, and climate benefits, contributing to reduced greenhouse gas emissions, improved carbon sequestration, and enhanced environmental benefits for the country.
Organizational Structure and Management	The extent to which the applicant demonstrates an adaptable and flexible management approach that highlights the unique contributions of each partner organization (as applicable); the management approach for personnel, an organizational approach that details a sound strategy to work with local Indian organizations; and proposed set of positions that demonstrate an adequate mix of skills to successfully implement the technical approach and accomplish the activity objectives.

Institutional Capacity and History of Performance	The extent to which the applicant and their consortium (as applicable) demonstrates the relevant technical and management expertise to successfully implement the project.
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USAID reserves the right to pose clarifying questions and conduct discussions with any applicant but may not opt to do so if it believes it has sufficient information in the concept paper itself. Posing clarifying questions and conducting discussions with one applicant does not obligate USAID to do so with all applicants.

USAID anticipates two (2) possible results from the Concept Paper merit review process:

- **CONDITIONALLY ACCEPTABLE** - Concept paper is evaluated and based on the merit review criteria the applicant is found to propose a good approach and USAID has **Good Confidence** that the applicant understands the requirement, and will be successful in performing with **little or no** government intervention. Applicant(s) whose concept paper is conditionally accepted are required to attend an oral presentation to present their concept paper to receive further consideration.
- **UNACCEPTABLE**: Concept Paper is **UNACCEPTABLE** when evaluated against the merit review criteria and is found to propose an unsound approach and USAID has **Low Confidence** that the applicant understands the requirements. The applicant(s) will be unsuccessful in implementing the program. If **UNACCEPTABLE**, USAID declines the concept paper. Due to the number of concept papers received, USAID is not able to provide details on why the concept paper was not selected.

After the oral presentation, USAID will determine whether or not the presented concepts address the strategic objectives outlined in Section A of the NOFO. Only concepts that are acceptable will move forward to the Co-Creation Workshop.

- **ACCEPTABLE** - Concept paper is **ACCEPTABLE** when the applicant proposes a sound approach and USAID has **Strong Confidence** that the applicant understands the requirements and will be successful in performing with **no** government intervention. Applicants can only be rated as **ACCEPTABLE** after the applicant(s) has orally presented a concept.

Leverage:

Leverage is resources that a non-traditional USAID partner brings to a public-private partnership, i.e. the portion not being borne by USAID. These non-traditional resource partners are typically NOT receiving USAID funds. It can be a variety of forms - anything of value that is measured, financial contributions, third party contributions, donated services or property, or intellectual property. USAID is seeking to leverage additional resources from both the private and public sectors for the activity's implementation. The resources leveraged from both sectors will enable the activity to engage in interventions that are of shared interest and that are sustainable and will enable the interventions to

be continued after the activity ends. For this activity, USAID seeks the mobilization of resources of other actors of at least 10% of the total program budget.

[END OF SECTION E]

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SECTION F: FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

F.1 Federal Award Notices

Notice of award signed by the Agreement Officer is the authorized document, which will be transmitted to the successful Applicant following the selection. This will be sent to the authorized agent of the successful Applicant electronically. The notice may be determined by the Agreement Officer, identify clarifying questions and request for a revised application by a specified date prior to finalization of the Cooperative Agreement. USAID reserves the right to award without requesting clarification or additional detail on the application. Once all outstanding issues have been resolved, the Agreement Officer will send the draft Cooperative Agreement to the Apparent recipient for review, comments and or acceptance to be followed by full execution of the Cooperative Agreement.

Award of the agreement contemplated under this NOFO cannot be made until funds are 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 of the award. The Agreement Officer is the only individual who may legally commit the Government to the expenditure of public funds.

Applicants are advised that costs incurred prior to receipt of either a fully executed Agreement (in electronic or print form) or a specific, written authorization from the Agreement Officer are not allowable and therefore are ineligible for reimbursement under the Agreement.

The Agreement Officer will also provide written notification electronically to the unsuccessful Applicants' Points of Contact. Requests for additional information from unsuccessful Applicants will not be considered.

F.2 Administrative & National Policy Requirements

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

For U.S. Non-governmental organizations

- 2 CFR 700 (<https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=531ffcc47b660d86ca8bbc5a64eed128&mc=true&node=pt2.1.700&rgn=div5>)
- 2 CFR 200 (https://ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr200_main_02.tpl)
- ADS 303maa, Standard Provisions for U.S. Non-governmental Organizations (<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303maa.pdf>)

See Section H , for a list of the Standard Provisions that will be applicable to any awards resulting from this NOFO.

USAID/India Office of Acquisition and Assistance (OAA) will administer this award. The Agreement Officer (AO) will designate an Agreement Officer’s Representative (AOR) to review, concur and/or approve on items outlined in Substantial Involvement (Section B.4 of this NOFO).

F.3 REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The Recipient will adhere to all reporting requirements listed below; further, US Non-governmental organizations need to be in compliance with 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 700 (specifically 2 CFR 200.327-329).

The Recipient will submit all reports by the due date for approval from the Agreement Officer’s Representative (AOR). The Recipient will consult with the AOR on the format and content prior to submission. In addition to the reports below, the AOR may request additional information to contribute to the internal USAID project reviews.

F.3.1. Performance Reporting

Reports and Deliverables	Due Dates
Activity Start-up Plan	Within 30 calendar days after the award. The plan should outline the Recipients plan for staffing, start-up workshop and work plan and MEL plan preparation.
Start-up workshop	Within 75 calendar days after award to inform activity theory of change, work plan and MEL plan
Annual Work Plan	A draft first year work plan – 60 calendar days after award (note: first year work plan should go from activity start date through the end oaf the next fiscal year so may be longer or shorter than 12 months depending on the date of the award.) Subsequent annual work plans – October 1st of each calendar year
Activity Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Plan	30 calendar days after finalization of the first year work plan
Quarterly Progress Report	30 calendar days after the end of the quarter
Gender and Social Inclusion Plan	60 calendar days from the date of the award

Reports and Deliverables	Due Dates
Activity Start-up Plan	Within 30 calendar days after the award. The plan should outline the Recipients plan for staffing, start-up workshop and work plan and MEL plan preparation.
Start-up workshop	Within 75 calendar days after award to inform activity theory of change, work plan and MEL plan
Annual Work Plan	A draft first year work plan – 60 calendar days after award (note: first year work plan should go from activity start date through the end oaf the next fiscal year so may be longer or shorter than 12 months depending on the date of the award.) Subsequent annual work plans – October 1st of each calendar year
Activity Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Plan	30 calendar days after finalization of the first year work plan
Quarterly Progress Report	30 calendar days after the end of the quarter
Annual Pause and Reflect Sessions	Planned and facilitated to help prepare work plan and annual performance report
6. Annual Performance Report	October 15th of each year
7. Final Report	30 calendar days prior to the end of the award

- **Start-up Workshop** - Within seventy five days post-award the Recipient will hold a workshop that includes USAID staff and relevant partners to guide development of the first year work plan, activity theory of change and anticipated outcomes, and MEL plan. The workshop will also serve to define requirements and format for deliverables and reporting. The objective of the workshop is to provide a dedicated forum for the activity consortium, USAID staff and other relevant partners to collaborate to refine the submitted technical approach, theory of change and anticipated outcomes, and MEL Plan. The cost of this 3-5 day workshop should be included in the applicant's cost proposal. Note, at the discretion of the AOR, this workshop may include or be done collectively with other mission implementing partners working on forest and biodiversity conservation.
- **Annual Work Plan** - The annual work plan details how the Recipient will use the work plan year effectively to achieve the activity’s objective. The work plan serves as a guide to program implementation and, once approved, represents an agreement as to the objectives and timing

of specific tasks and interventions. The work plan is intended to be an annual roadmap for USAID and the Recipient. It should be closely aligned to the theory of change agreed upon during the start-up workshop, and clearly explain how the actions and outputs will lead to the expected outcomes identified in the theory of change. More details on the format of the implementation plan will be provided after the award.

- **Activity Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (MEL)** - The Applicant must prepare a clear Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) methodology for this activity that facilitates adaptive learning and management. The MEL plan must provide an overview of the project's objectives, theory of change and strategic approaches; indicate the custom and standard indicators that will be used to monitor progress towards achieving the stated objectives; and define the processes to monitor, analyze and evaluate progress. The plan should outline opportunities for learning and adaptive management throughout all stages of the project and include in its learning agenda evaluations or studies to assess and inform the roll out of interventions. More details on the format of the MEL plan will be provided after the award.
- **Quarterly Performance Reports** - The Recipient will submit brief quarterly performance reports to reflect progress, the activities of the preceding three months and lessons learned. The report must describe the tasks completed in the last three months relative to what was anticipated in the approved work plan, and will assess the overall activity impact to date relative to the performance indicator targets and results defined in the activity theory of change. More details on the format of the quarterly performance reports will be provided after the award.
- **Gender Consideration** - To the greatest extent possible, the Recipient should seek to include both men and women in all aspects of this program including participation and leadership in e.g., meetings, training, etc. The Recipient must collect, analyze and submit to USAID sex-disaggregated data and proposed actions that will address any identified gender-related issues.

In order to ensure that USAID assistance makes the maximum optimal contribution to gender equality, performance management systems and evaluations must include gender-sensitive indicators and sex-disaggregated data when the technical analyses supporting the Agreement demonstrates that:

- The different roles and status of women and men affect the activities to be undertaken, and
 - The anticipated results of the work would affect women and men differently.
- **Annual Pause and Reflect Sessions (APR)** - Annual pause and reflect (APR) sessions should precede and inform the development of the annual work plan and annual performance report. These will form the basis for a management review conducted by USAID and program staff to assess: program directions, priorities, achievements, and prior year implementation results; management and implementation impediments; and recommendations for adaptive management actions. The format, participation and final output of the APR will be defined through consultation with the AOR and can entail a series of internal meetings, a multi-day workshop, or a brief report to summarize learning and major conclusions about the effectiveness of the actions and strategic approaches to achieve the activity purpose. The APR may be used to suggest refinements or updates to the activity theory of change, MEL plan,

and subsequent annual work plans. Note, at the discretion of the AOR, APRs may include or be done collectively with other mission implementing partners working on forest and biodiversity conservation.

- **Annual Performance Report** - Annual performance reports will summarize actions, progress and results during the year in relation to the approved work plan and the activity theory of change it supports. The report should include lessons learned, proposed adaptive management shifts, and proposed updates to the theory of change. The annual performance report will be used by USAID to assess the status of activity implementation. Each annual performance report will include an assessment as to whether the activity strategic approaches and actions are leading to the activity purpose. The annual performance report will cover all of the items included in the bi-annual performance report, with a focus on the Activity results over the entire year. More details on the format of the annual performance report will be provided after the award.
- **Close-out Plan** - No later than six (6) months prior to the completion date of the agreement, the Recipient will submit a close-out plan for the Agreement Officer (AO) approval. The close-out plan shall include:
 - Draft property disposition plan
 - Plan for the phase-out of in-country operations
 - Delivery schedule for all reports or other deliverables required under the agreement
 - Timetable for completing all required actions in the close-out plan, including submission date of the final property disposition plan to the AO.
- **Final Report** - The Final Report must discuss all strategic approaches and results from the start of the award through its completion. More details on the format of the final report will be provided after the award.

(b) Financial Reporting:

(1) Quarterly Financial Report

The Recipient must submit the Federal Financial Form (SF-425) quarterly, no later than 30 days after the end of the quarter, via electronic format to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (<http://www.dpm.psc.gov>). The Recipient must submit a copy of SF-425 at the same time to the Agreement Officer Representative (AOR) and the Controller.

Electronic copies of SF-425 and instructions for using it can be found at:

http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/standard_forms/ff_report.pdf

<http://www.forms.gov/bgfPortal/docDetails.do?dId=15149>

http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/standard_forms/ffr_instructions.pdf”

(2) Final Financial Report

Within 90 days following the estimated completion date of this award, the Recipient must submit to the: (a) USAID/Washington, M/CFO/CMP-LOC Unit; (b) Agreement Officer ([manila-roaa-](#)

admin@usaid.gov); (c) Controller (aidmnlrfsc@usaid.gov); and (c) Agreement Officer Representative (AOR), the final Federal Financial Form (SF-425).

(3) Foreign Tax Reports

Reporting of foreign taxes under this agreement shall follow the standard provision entitled “Reporting Host Government Taxes (December 2014)” of this award document.

Host government taxes are not allowable where the Agreement Officer provides the necessary means to the recipient to obtain an exemption or refund of such taxes, and the recipient fails to take reasonable steps to obtain such exemption or refund. Otherwise, taxes are allowable in accordance with the Standard Provision, “Applicability of 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 700 (December 2014),” and must be reported as required in this provision.

The Recipient must include this reporting requirement in all applicable sub-agreements, including subawards and contracts.

F.4 Program Income

If the successful applicant is a non-profit organization, any program income generated under the award will be added to USAID funding (and any cost-sharing that may be provided, if applicable), and used for program purposes. However, pursuant to 2 CFR 200.307 Program Income, if the successful Applicant is a for-profit or commercial organization, any program income generated under the award will be deducted from the U.S. Government share of this award to determine the amount of USAID funding.

Program income will be subject to 2 CFR 200.307 for U.S. NGOs or the standard provision entitled Program Income for non-U.S. NGOs. If the successful Applicant is/are a PIO, any program income generated under the award will be added to USAID funding (and any non-USAID funding that may be provided) and used for program purposes.

F.5 Environmental Compliance

The Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, Section 117 requires that the impact of USAID’s activities on the environment be considered and that USAID include environmental sustainability as a central consideration in designing and carrying out its development programs. This mandate is codified in Federal Regulations (22 CFR 216) and in USAID’s Automated Directives System (ADS) Parts 201.5.10g and 204 (<http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/200/>), which, in part, require that the potential environmental impacts of USAID-financed activities are identified prior to a final decision to proceed and that appropriate environmental safeguards are adopted for all activities.

1a) Respondent environmental compliance obligations under these regulations and procedures are specified in the following paragraphs of this Notice of Funding Opportunity.

1b) In addition, the recipient must comply with host country environmental regulations unless otherwise directed in writing by USAID. In case of conflict between host country and USAID regulations, the latter shall govern.

1c) No activity funded under this award will be implemented unless an environmental threshold determination, as defined by 22 CFR 216, has been reached for that activity, as documented in a environmental compliance document (Request for Categorical Exclusion (RCE), Initial Environmental Examination (IEE), or Environmental Assessment (EA)) that will be duly signed by the Bureau Environmental Officer (BEO). (Hereinafter, such documents are described as “approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation.”)

An Initial Environmental Examination (IEE) will be prepared and approved during the co-creation and finalization of various components for this activity. Prior to award, USAID will get the IEE approved by BEO and also make it publicly available in the USAID’s environmental compliance database. The IEE will cover activities expected to be implemented under this award. The recipient shall be responsible for implementing all IEE conditions pertaining to activities to be funded after the award.

2a) As part of its initial Work Plan, and all Annual Work Plans thereafter, the recipient, in collaboration with the USAID Cognizant Technical Officer and Mission Environmental Officer or Bureau Environmental Officer, as appropriate, shall review all ongoing and planned activities under this award to determine if they are within the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation.

2b) If the recipient plans any new activities outside the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation, it shall prepare an amendment to the documentation for USAID review and approval. No such new activities shall be undertaken prior to receiving written USAID approval of environmental documentation amendments.

2c) Any ongoing activities found to be outside the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation shall be halted until an amendment to the documentation is submitted and written approval is received from USAID.

3) If the approved Regulation 216 documentation is (1) an IEE that contains one or more Negative Determinations with conditions and/or (2) an Environmental Assessment (EA), the recipient shall:

3a) Unless the approved Regulation 216 documentation contains a complete environmental mitigation and monitoring plan (EMMP) or a project mitigation and monitoring (M&M) plan, the recipient shall prepare an EMMP or M&M Plan describing how the recipient will, in specific terms, implement all IEE and/or EA conditions that apply to proposed project activities within the scope of the award. The EMMP or M&M Plan shall include monitoring the implementation of the conditions and their effectiveness.

3b) Integrate a completed EMMP or M&M Plan into the initial work plan.

3c) Integrate an EMMP or M&M Plan into subsequent Annual Work Plans, making any necessary adjustments to activity implementation in order to minimize adverse impacts to the environment.

- 4a) Cost and technical applications must reflect environmental compliance costs and approaches.
- 4b) Recipient will be expected to comply with all conditions specified in the approved IEE and/or EA.
- 4c) If an IEE, as developed, includes a Positive Determination for one or more activities, the recipient will be required to develop and submit an EA addressing these activities.
- 5a) USAID anticipates that environmental compliance and achieving optimal development outcomes for the proposed activities will require environmental management expertise. Respondents to the NOFO should therefore include as part of their application their approach to achieving environmental compliance and management, to include:
- 5b) The respondent's approach to implementing an IEE or EA.
- 5c) The respondent's approach to providing necessary environmental management expertise, including examples of past experiences of environmental management of similar activities.
- 5d) The respondent's illustrative budget for implementing the environmental compliance activities. For the purposes of this solicitation, applicants should reflect illustrative costs for environmental compliance implementation and monitoring in their cost proposal.

F.6 Branding & Marking

It is a federal statutory and regulatory requirement that all USAID programs, projects, activities, public communications, and commodities that USAID partially or fully funded under a USAID grant or cooperative agreement or other assistance award or sub-award, must be marked appropriately overseas with the USAID identity. See Section 641, Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended and 2 CFR 700.16.

Under the regulation, USAID requires the submission of a Branding Strategy and a Marking Plan by the Apparently Successful Applicant, as defined in the regulation. A Branding Implementation Strategy and Marking Plan must be in accordance with USAID Branding and Marking Plan as required per ADS 320 at the following link:

<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/320.pdf>

The Branding and Marking Plan may include a request for a waiver or exceptions to marking requirements established in 2 CFR 700.16. The Agreement Officer is responsible for evaluating and approving the Branding Strategy and Marking Plan (including any request for exceptions and waiver) of the ASA, consistent with the provisions "Branding Strategy", "Marking Plan", and "Marking of USAID-funded Assistance Awards" contained in AAPD 05-11 and in 2 CFR 700.16. Please note that in contrast to "exception" to marking requirements, waivers based on circumstances in the host

country must be approved by the Mission Director or other USAID Principal Officers, see 1 CFR 700.16(j).

[END OF SECTION F]

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SECTION G: FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACT(S)

G.1 AGENCY POINT OF CONTACT(POC) FOR QUESTIONS

Agency Point of Contact

Name: Ashaki Guyton-Blanton

Title: Acquisition and Assistance Specialist

Above is the Point of contact (POC) for questions while the funding opportunity is open.

All prospective Applicants must send their questions in writing by the due date and time specified on the cover page of this NOFO, so that a reply can reach all prospective Applicants before the submission of their Initial Concept Note. Oral explanations or instructions given before the award will not be binding. Any information given to a prospective Applicant concerning this NOFO will be furnished promptly to all other prospective Applicants as an amendment of this NOFO if that information is necessary in submitting applications or if a lack of the information would be prejudicial to any other prospective Applicants.

Any questions concerning this NOFO must be submitted in writing to indiarco@usaid.gov with a copy to aguyton-blanton@usaid.gov and clal@usaid.gov. In the subject line please indicate “Questions Regarding the NOFO# 72038622RFA00002”. Applicants will retain for their records one copy of all enclosures which accompany their application.

G.2 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-assistanceombudsman>.

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

[END OF SECTION G]

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SECTION H: OTHER INFORMATION

USAID reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted. The Agreement Officer is the only individual who may legally commit the Government to the expenditure of public funds. Any award and subsequent incremental funding will be subject to the availability of funds and continued relevance to Agency programming.

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 purposes, 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.”

Additional information available to Applicants includes:

1. ADS 201.3.15.3; USAID’s Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy (http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/pdact200.pdf)
2. USAID India’s Country Development Cooperation Strategy <https://www.usaid.gov/india/cdcs>
3. USAID’s Climate Change and Development Strategy 2012-2018 (2012). (<http://www.usaid.gov/climate/strategy>)
 - a. USAID’s Adaptation to Climate Variability and Change: A Guidance Manual for Development Planning (2007). Basic introduction to how to think about integrating climate change into development programs, using a six-step process to engage stakeholders and analyze vulnerabilities and adaptation options. (<http://www.usaid.gov/climate/adaptation/resources>).
4. USAID’s Global Climate Change Initiative. (<http://www.usaid.gov/climate/us-gcci>).
5. USAID Standard Provisions:
 - (i) ADS 303mab, Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Non-governmental Organizations. <https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/303mab.pdf>
 - (ii) ADS 303mab, Standard Provisions for U.S. Non-governmental Organizations. <https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/303maa.pdf>

6. Certifications, Assurances, Other Statement of the Recipient

(1) “Certifications, Assurances, Representations, and Other Statements of the Recipient” ADS 303mav document found at <https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/303mav.pdf>

(2) Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424B)

(3) Certificate of Compliance: Please submit a copy of your Certificate of Compliance if your organization's systems have been certified by USAID/Washington's Office of Acquisition and Assistance (M/OAA).

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Annex 1: Preliminary Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Analysis.

[END OF SECTION H]

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**U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) / India
GENDER and Social Inclusion ANALYSIS**

Program/Project/Activity Data:

Activity/Project Title: Strengthening Landscape Management and Conservation		Solicitation #:
Contract /Award Number (if known): TBD		
Geographic Location : India (States yet to be identified)		
Originating Bureau/Office: USAID/India, General Development Office		
Funding Amount: \$20 million	Life of Project Amount: 20 Million	
Implementation Start/End: 09/2022-09/2027		
Prepared By: Chigozie Okwu/Ritika Chopra	Date Prepared: Feb 01-March 10, 2022	

I. BACKGROUND

The goal of USAID’s [Gender Equality and Female Empowerment 2020 policy](#) is to both improve the lives of citizens around the world by advancing gender equality and to empower women and girls in all their diversity to participate fully in and benefit from the development of their societies. The policy has the primary objective of improving access to resources, opportunities, and information (economic, social, political, and cultural); reducing gender based violence (GBV); promoting female leadership and empowerment; securing private-property rights and land tenure for women; and enhancing education and skill-building opportunities for better workforce development. USAID’s programs address the needs of and benefit all people inclusive of ethnicity, gender identity and expression, sex characteristics, sexual orientation, income level, disability, and other factors. Pursuant to ADS 205.3.1 and in alignment with the USAID Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy, Operating Units (OU) are responsible for conducting gender and social inclusion analyses at the design stage of a new activity and for ensuring that the Policy is implemented throughout each stage of the Program Cycle.

This activity will also align its activity implementation with USAID's Promoting *the Rights of Indigenous Peoples 2020 Policy* ([PRO-IP Policy](#)). The Policy reflects USAID’s commitment to supporting inclusive and sustainable development and advancing human dignity by protecting and empowering Indigenous Peoples while safeguarding the environments in which they live. The Policy positions USAID to strengthen and expand upon decades of support it has committed to Indigenous Peoples around the world. The Policy offers guidance on the robust engagement and

partnership with Indigenous Peoples to help USAID programs align with the communities' own development priorities and ensure that USAID staff and implementing partners safeguard against unintended, adverse impacts.

USAID/India's proposed Strengthening Landscape Management and Conservation is a five-year activity that supports the Government of India (GoI) and other stakeholders in protecting landscapes, improving biodiversity conservation, and increasing nature-based climate benefits. Through the activity, USAID will provide targeted technical assistance to address key environmental challenges, threats, and opportunities, specifically focusing on habitat loss and fragmentation, zoonotic disease spillover, human-wildlife conflict, and ecosystem services. The Strengthening Landscape Management and Conservation activity will foster collaboration between stakeholders to help improve the evidence based decision making process by analyzing the economic and social impacts that ecosystems provide for India, and bolstering the ability of protected area staff and other stakeholders to better manage India's natural landscapes.

The proposed activity will build upon the work undertaken by the Forest-PLUS 2.0 (FP2) activity, which aims to implement an ecosystem approach to landscape management that increases ecological and socioeconomic sustainability.

Men and women throughout the developing world are adversely affected by the loss of forests and biodiversity, particularly through the loss of access to green spaces and common property resources, including forests. Traditionally, women are more impacted by this as compared to men, and some of these impacts include increased household labor, occupational hazards both indoor and outdoors, psychological and emotional stress, higher mortality resulting in increased poverty, and impaired health. Also the roles, knowledge, and skills of rural men and women differ with respect to forest use and management. Hence, it is essential to ensure that gender and poverty linkages are incorporated in conservation, management, and sustainable development opportunities. Common challenges in mainstreaming gender to achieve gender equality in forest and biodiversity conservation include: gendered norms and cultural prejudices that reinforce forestry as a male profession, lack of evidence-based research and gender-disaggregated data, limited technical capacity and expertise, limited budget to implement gender-focused activities and women's limited representation in decision-making.

India has more than 104 million Indigenous Peoples, approximately 8.6 percent of the population, who are commonly known as 'adivasi' or scheduled tribes. Overall, they live below the poverty line. Throughout the world and in India, these indigenous communities are highly dependent on forests, wetlands, pastures and rangelands, and mountain ecosystems for their livelihoods. There is a symbiotic relationship between these communities and the natural environment. Similarly, rural women in India play a key role in managing, conserving, and using resources from the forests.

It's important to keep an equal focus on both women and men from the forest-dependent communities as valuable participants in forest and biodiversity conservation and management, whose knowledge, leadership and decision making can have transformative effects on local communities and national policies. USAID will follow the free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC), per the PRO-IP Policy and the International Human Rights standards that state, 'all peoples have the right to self-determination' using the [available resources](#).

Forest and biodiversity conservation and management is not only about conserving species, genetic resources, and ecosystems, but also social-ecological processes, which can be gendered. Development efforts must therefore be aimed towards three interrelated goals: effective forest and biodiversity protection, addressing multiple needs of forest dependent social groups, and achieving socially inclusive and equitable development outcomes for everyone, regardless of their gender, socioeconomic, and caste status. As a result, considerations, in this activity, should not solely be given to women's issues; instead, an outlook should be adopted to yield advantages for whole communities and benefit both sexes in all their diversity.

The activity design team recognizes that for the activity to be effective and inclusive they must work to close the following gender gaps in forest and biodiversity conservation and management:

- Ensure that women and marginalized groups (including but not limited to women, the landless, scheduled tribes, persons with disabilities, and youth) intersectional needs and concerns are considered and they can meaningfully participate in decision-making;
- Ensure that benefits received through ecosystem services are equally distributed to women and other marginalized groups, specifically Indigenous Peoples, who are dependent on forests for their livelihood.
- Consider how various aspects of the intervention would impact both women and marginalized communities
- Solidify that training programs are suited to the specific requirements of women and marginalized communities.
- Identify women, and marginalized groups as separate categories of stakeholders with activities targeted to ensure their full participation.

It is important to note that a gender and social inclusion analysis considers the different and intersectional threats, impacts, and opportunities of men and women in all their diversity and marginalized populations, including persons with disabilities, religious minorities, Schedule Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes, other backward castes (OBC), youth, and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Intersex persons (LGBTQI+). As such, this analysis considers gender and social inclusion issues throughout the various stages of the Program Cycle – from activity design and implementation, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), and learning and adapting.

II. EXISTING GENDER ASSESSMENTS

In 2019, a [Mission-wide gender analysis](#) was conducted while formulating the USAID/India 2020-2025 CDCS.

In 2020, [PAD level gender analysis was conducted for DO3](#) under which this activity falls which addressed Natural Resource Management but limited.

In 2019, [FOREST PLUS 2 Gender Analysis](#) was conducted, under which this new activity is further built upon.

In 2020, Mission conducted a social inclusion assessment to ascertain the most distinctive characteristics and determinants of exclusion (discrimination, bias, stigmatization) affecting a selected set of marginalized groups, so as to better understand how this exclusion is negatively impacting their well-being and development, and how such exclusion also constrains such marginalized persons and groups from effectively contributing to India's growth and development.

III. MAIN FINDINGS BY DOMAIN

Indian Laws, Policies, Regulations, and Institutional Practices.

Recently, several efforts have been undertaken to make policies, laws and regulations gender sensitive as well as conscious efforts by Indian government agencies to empower women and marginalized communities. For example, India's 2014 National Agroforestry Policy, among other things, also aims to enhance the livelihood opportunities of small farmers, the landless and women.

The Government of India has undertaken formal types of conservation practices, such as the Protected Forests, Reserved Forests, National Parks and Sanctuaries, and Conservation Reserves and Community Reserves. The Government has also tried to involve local stakeholders in the management of the forest resources by establishing the Joint Forest Management (JFM), and Eco-development Committees.

Some Indian laws, such as the Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996, the Forest Conservation Act read with the Forest Rights Act 2006, the Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement (LARR) Act 2013, and the public hearing provisions under environment regulations have provisions for public participation which provides people the space to voice their opinion on development proposals and projects.

Biological Diversity Act (BDA) passed in 2002, supports the conservation and the sustainable use of biological resources, also promoting an equitable sharing of benefits that come from their use. This one law has the potential to revolutionize the rights of communities over the natural resources they live with. The BDA has made it mandatory for every local self-governing institution in rural and urban areas to constitute a Biodiversity Management Committee (BMC) within their area of jurisdiction. Once constituted, the BMC must prepare a Peoples' Biodiversity Register (PBR) in consultation with local people. A PBR comprehensively documents traditional knowledge of local biological resources. The National Biodiversity Authority is tasked with ensuring the monitoring of PBRs and BMCs. Refer to the [Hindu story](#) on BDA.

Although the forest and biodiversity policy for addressing gender and social inequity has improved slightly over the past decade, women and Indigenous Peoples continue to be disadvantaged by several legal and social frameworks such as: insecure access and property rights to land resources, discrimination by male bias in the provision of services like credit and technology, and by exclusion from decision making at all levels.

Furthermore, throughout the country, there may be implicit gender biases in the manner in which the laws, policies, and regulations are implemented and enforced — as many women and marginalized groups mostly do not have access to pertinent information regarding their

applicability and associated consequences if violated. For example, the Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act (PESA) and the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 (commonly referred as the Forest Rights Act), open a legal window of opportunity for more gender and class equitable decision-making, but are fraught with implementation challenges and women are not often aware of their rights under these acts.

Cultural Norms and Beliefs.

In a large and diverse country such as India, there is an extreme variance in cultural norms and beliefs. Though Indian law is in favor of equal land rights for women, customary practices, which are still used today, restrict women's rights to access land. Without equal access to land and other key resources, women's opportunities and capacity to play an active role in biodiversity conservation is severely limited.

The cultural and culinary practices of smallholder farmers play a significant role in preserving and maintaining the genetic diversity of plant species as a result of selection preferences based on food habits, food culture, taste, time taken for cooking, nutrition, and the health benefits of different species. Since biodiversity supports a variety of vital livelihood resources for indigenous peoples, they are highly knowledgeable about the plants they use. Economically poor households, including those from indigenous groups, are disproportionately dependent on agricultural and forest biodiversity for subsistence and livelihoods. For example, medicinal and aromatic plants are an important livelihood resource for many poor households, who spend a significant part of their time in collection activities. Similarly, in the northeast Indian states of Meghalaya, Nagaland, Mizoram, and Arunachal Pradesh, where nearly 80 percent of the population belong to Indigenous communities, these communities have contributed to the conservation of genetic diversity within various species, such as coir, jute, sugar-cane, cucurbits, rice, soybean, maize, citrus, buckwheat, and several beans. Indigenous Peoples residing in the western Indian Himalayan belt contribute significantly to conserving and maintaining a large pool of buckwheat, amaranth, soybeans, lentils, cowpeas, pome, and stone fruits.

Many policies recognize the role of people, especially women and Indigenous Peoples, in the conservation and sustainable use of biological resources. For the meaningful participation of women and indigenous people at all levels of policy-making for biodiversity conservation, we need to mitigate cultural and logistical barriers, allow them to voice their needs, knowledge, priorities, and solutions in relation to sustainable development – at the same level as men.

Gender Roles, Responsibilities, and Time Use

Studies carried out in various cultures in India reveal that women in tribal communities play a critical role in maintaining and sustaining local-level forest and biodiversity resources and hold extensive knowledge of domestic and wild plants, agricultural practices, local species, and the genetic manipulation of plants and animals. This is because they play multiple roles as farmers, herders, forest gatherers, primary health care givers, collectors of water, food processors, herbalist, market vendors, collectors and cultivators of indigenous vegetables, selectors and preservers of seeds, soil conservationists, and sustainers of natural and human-made environments.

These women need to be equally and actively involved in processes to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity because they play critical roles as primary land managers and resource users, and they face disproportionate impacts both from forest and biodiversity loss and gender insensitive conservation measures. For example, with increased migration of men to cities, women in many parts of India are increasingly taking on additional responsibility, in addition to the household and care work, for managing small-scale agriculture; however they do not have an equivalent voice in decision-making related to land use, nor equal access to needed resources. Forest and biodiversity loss also poses a disproportionate burden for women and girls by increasing the time required to obtain necessary resources such as water, fuel wood, and medicinal plants, which reduces the time they can spend on income generating activities and education. Beyond equity, enabling women's full engagement in decisions is critical to ensure that forest and biodiversity conservation and sustainable use efforts are successful in the long term. This is especially true for indigenous and rural women, who are often more marginalized in decision-making processes.

Because of women's greater responsibility for securing water, food, seeds, medicinal plants, wild edibles, fuelwood, forage, and fodder, they have a greater interest and role in conserving forests and biodiversity. Their knowledge, science, and skills are critical for the sustainable supply of forests and biodiversity products. Men's and women's choices vary when it comes to selection of crops and trees. Women's knowledge, needs, and problems associated with forest and biodiversity conservation and management are often different from men's. This is not based on biological differences and needs, but socially constructed roles, responsibilities, and meanings attributed to what it means to be a woman, or man, in their particular contexts and culturally specific locales. As the primary users and managers of resources, women have tremendous knowledge of the medicinal and nutritional value of diverse plant species. In many contexts, women are more familiar than men with the medicinal value of local flora. Women's roles in seed management — including seed selection, processing, storage, and exchange — contribute to conserving biodiversity in farms and home gardens. Understanding women's gender-specific knowledge and choices, and the extent to which they access resources and make decisions related to biodiversity is not only relevant, but central, to achieving sustainable development and biodiversity conservation. Despite this, women in India remain 'invisible' actors from the grassroots right up to the policy level and their contribution to biodiversity conservation is largely limited or ignored.

They are thereby in a unique position to bring different perspectives and new solutions to addressing forests and biodiversity concerns. Women also fall well behind men in achieving paid employment in natural resource management sectors — notably agriculture, fisheries, forest areas, and forestry.

Men and women, with different positions in society, use mangroves differently. They have unique perspectives about why mangroves are important and how they should be protected. There are many [inspiring stories from Odisha](#) where mangrove nurseries changed the lives of Odisha women and the forest around them by giving them extra income by growing trees and bio-shields against the tidal surges of severe storms. There are many [more examples](#) from other countries where mangrove projects have supported women through sustainable livelihoods and financial leadership training. Such training provides them with alternative livelihoods and income opportunities. For example, when women have received training on the advantages of cultivating mangrove plants, they are able to see an increase in fish stocks, providing an additional income opportunity.

Awareness about good health practices is also relatively low among the Indigenous Peoples. Men and women differ in their exposures to zoonotic diseases which can be acquired from either domestic or wild animals. They differ as regards direct exposure to animal pathogens as well as indirect exposures through vectors. Occupations that involve close contact with wild animal habitats, forestry, and mining are usually male-dominated. In contrast, work that involves the care and feeding of animals kept close to home or in small backyard farms is often done by women and children. For example, studies in India, found that over 70% of animal bite and rabies victims were males. Occupational exposure leading to greater incidence of leptospirosis in males compared to females has been found for occupations involving contact with contaminated water and soil, such as working in rice fields, and for occupations that involve frequent contact with carrier animals, such as pigs, cattle, dogs, and rats. It is important that information, education, and communication (IEC) messages are designed for tribal communities, especially women (who have limited access to information), so they understand how to minimize wildlife contact.

Access to and Control over Assets and Resources and Decision making

Gender-sensitive forest and biodiversity conservation, sustainable use, and benefit sharing are influenced by rights, institutional (formal and customary) practices, land ownership, and markets. In India, property rights to land and tenure rights are controlled by men (only 13 percent of the land owned by women), not as much through the formal law but customary laws, and also lack of record upgradation. This affects men's and women's access to, and rights and control over, biodiversity resources. A woman living in a biologically rich forest area might have access to private farm land, and to use or sell the produce from such land, even if she does not have legal ownership. In cases where land becomes scarce because of external forces such as climate change or the commercialization of agriculture, women may lose these de facto rights, because she does not own land by virtue of customs. While land is usually the main source of economic livelihood, it is also an important source of power and status in agrarian systems. Losing land not only means a loss of income and food security, but also a loss of autonomy and a feeling of disempowerment.

In the greater Himalayan region, institutional practices strongly shape women's and men's access to, and control over, natural resources. For example, although women are the main collectors of herbs and wild vegetables from common property resources with controlled access, the majority of community forest user groups in India are led by men, who mostly make the decisions related to forest conservation, development, and use, including the distribution of benefits. Women, although included in the executive bodies of such groups, continue to lack a voice and influence in these decision-making processes.

Studies confirm that besides customary laws, gender based violence has strong linkages to women's widespread lack of legal rights to control land and resources. IUCN notes GBV is often used on women for property grabbing, limiting women's access to decision-making spheres (where they are further excluded because they are not landholders), and restricting influence on conservation activities — all which affect biodiversity safeguarding and sustain discriminatory status quo.

With respect to marginalized groups, members of marginalized communities and certain religious groups (such as Muslims) have lower rates of land ownership compared to others. For example, 93 percent of Scheduled Caste (SC) members are marginal farmers, owning less than one hectare as of

2013. On the other hand, there are provisions in the Indian constitution and in relevant laws that protect the interest of the marginalized communities. For instance, the “Fifth Schedule of the Indian constitution declares areas which have predominance of Scheduled Tribes (ST) as “Scheduled Areas” to protect the tribal autonomy and culture. Many states have passed laws to regulate sale or lease of land in Scheduled areas to non-tribals.

IV. STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS

In preparation for this activity, USAID/India conducted consultations with the Ministry of Environment, Forestry, and Climate Change, the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ), State Forestry Departments, and other stakeholders to learn about the key threats, challenges, and opportunities in regard to India’s biodiversity and natural landscapes. These consultations allowed USAID/India to better understand the priorities of the GoI and other actions undertaken by donor organizations to improve and increase the country’s natural resources. Finally, USAID/India also contracted Panagora, an international consulting agency, to conduct an options and opportunities analysis for this activity.

Panagora interviewed and conducted focus group discussions with a range of stakeholders, including academics, members from local communities, private sector organizations, and donor organizations, and government officials. Though discussions surrounding gender and the environment were somewhat limited, several stakeholders highlighted that women need to be included in the decision-making process. One participant noted that [Joint-Forestry Programs](#) focus on women’s empowerment and that has had long-term positive impacts on communities, such as the Baiga tribe. The participant underscores the fact that when programs focus on gender and women’s empowerment, there can be long-lasting consequences and impacts.

Additionally, Panagora’s analysis revealed that it is important to collect data that includes social demographics, such as gender, to better understand how USAID programming affects people from different social backgrounds. By collecting this data, USAID can help contribute to increasing the understanding of how people of various gender and social identities benefit from and interact with the natural world, including landscapes and biodiversity.

As part of its ongoing sustainable landscapes/ forestry and women empowerment activities, USAID has had continuous engagement with women and other marginalized communities such as tribal communities in Bihar, Kerala, Telangana, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. These stakeholders emphasized the need for training and capacity building in establishing forest based enterprises and sustainable harvest of non-timber forest products, marketing of forest products. These stakeholders also highlighted the need for sensitizing men about the importance of socially and economically empowering women, and the need for organizing leadership training for women and marginalized sections (closer to their homes) such as the tribal communities.

V. ANALYSIS OF ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY TECHNICAL COMPONENT

The table below provides an overview of the activities that will be implemented under the activity

technical components. For those activities where gender issues have been identified, the table presents recommended actions that will be taken to ensure gender equity remains at the forefront of the activities’ design, implementation, and M&E. The integration of gender and social sensitivity into the proposed technical approach is part of the evaluation criteria for the program. In addition, the Awardee will be obligated to draft a gender and social integration plan within 90 days of initiating the award. The team should aim to consult with the Adivasis communities (leveraging the FPIC framework) and pursue an analysis of impact (leveraging the SIA framework) for the program. For the frameworks, see link:
<https://www.usaid.gov/indigenous-peoples/social-impact-assessment-toolkit>

Table 1: Activity Results Framework

<p>Activity Goal: Suggested: Enhance biodiversity conservation, human well being, and climate benefits from ecological landscapes. <i>Ecological Landscapes: These ecosystems are often arrayed as ecological landscapes –mosaics of ecosystem types that typically include forests, grasslands, and wetlands, interspersed with human settlements and agriculture.</i></p>
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Table 2: Technical Components/Activities and Identified Potential Gender Issues

Components and Activities	Potential Gender Issues and Relevance to the Activity	Recommendations, Specific Actions, General Considerations
<p>Objective/Outcome 1:Improved management of connected landscapes for wildlife habitat and other ecological benefits</p> <p>1.1 Assess management effectiveness of protected areas for wildlife conservation [and climate benefits]</p> <p>1.2 Support park managers and other stakeholders to implement strategies and action plans for wildlife conservation, climate benefits, and preventing emerging zoonotic diseases at the source</p>	<p>Indigenous/tribal communities, especially women, that are dependent on the forests have extensive knowledge and experience in wildlife conservation but are rarely consulted or included in the management and conservation of biodiversity/forests and frequently alienated from their natural resource base.</p> <p>Gendered norms and cultural prejudices reinforce forestry as a male profession. Hence women fall well behind men in achieving paid employment in natural resource management and forestry sectors.</p>	<p>Foster an enabling environment for indigenous peoples and empower them, their women and their representative organizations to advocate for, and practice self-determined development through training in leadership skills per their needs after engaging with them.</p> <p>Give them the ability and confidence to engage and participate effectively in decision making, and to get their voice heard and included in forest and biodiversity conservation.</p> <p>Beyond equity, enabling women’s and tribal communities full engagement in decisions is critical to ensure that forest and biodiversity conservation and sustainable use efforts are successful in the long term. This is especially true for indigenous/tribal communities and rural women, who are often more marginalized in decision-making processes despite their cultural knowledge of how to manage, live in harmony</p>

<p>1.3 Establish systems to monitor ecosystems and forest health, climate impacts, and management actions</p> <p>1.4 Support development and implementation of action plans on improving connectivity between protected areas and the resultant climate benefits</p> <p>1.5 Address human-wildlife conflict</p> <p>1.6 Support awareness raising and behavior change on the benefits of ecological integrity for human well being, climate benefits, and preventing emerging zoonotic diseases at the source</p>	<p>Loss of biodiversity and its consequences affect women and men in different ways. In human-wildlife conflicts, for example, women are often the most vulnerable, and therefore their attitudes and behavior towards wildlife differ from men.</p> <p>Men and women differ in their exposures to zoonotic diseases which can be acquired from either domestic or wild animals because of their different gendered roles and responsibilities.</p>	<p>with, and make sustainable use of the forest plants and animals in these forests.</p> <p>A cohort of women protected area managers or women working in protected areas can be trained with an emphasis on gender based violence. Mission can outreach other Missions that have worked on this (Zambia) for examples that may be adaptable for this activity.</p> <p>Activity should understand, consider and address the potential for GBV within parks or protected areas.</p> <p>Targeted research to improve understanding of differences between men and women from loss of forests and biodiversity before designing solutions to address them may be needed.</p> <p>Information, education, and communication (IEC) messages for awareness and behavior change should be designed for indigenous/tribal communities, especially women, after assessing their different needs and in a language relatable to them. These interventions should be designed after sufficiently understanding the governance, culture, and cosmovision of the communities that are culturally pertinent. This will help to support the communities in their own efforts to inform, educate, strengthen their own identity, values, social cohesion, and development.</p>
<p>Objective/Outcome 2: Enhanced understanding of and benefits received from ecosystem services</p> <p>2.1 Strengthen systems for monitoring of carbon, water, and other ecosystems services from ecological landscapes</p> <p>2.2 Assess (and test) the factors that limit or contribute to health of target wildlife population</p>		<p>Skill development programs should build on the existing knowledge women have about natural resources, and the traditional knowledge of biodiversity that Indigenous/tribal peoples possess through their experience as shifting cultivators, pastoralists, nomadic herdsman, hunter-gatherers and rural cultivators, and their expertise in resource extraction, processing and use.</p> <p>Support for natural-resource-based enterprises (e.g., NTFPs, ecotourism) could include activities and training programs aimed at improving the skills of women, and indigenous peoples/tribal as entrepreneurs.</p>

<p>across a pattern of intact to degraded ecosystems to reduce the risk of zoonotic spillover</p> <p>2.3 Strengthen capacity to conduct valuations of carbon, water, and other ecosystem services</p> <p>2.4 Assess, prioritize, and implement actions to incentivise forest and wildlife conservation that increases income for forest dependent communities</p> <p>2.5 Support the development of payment for ecosystem services or carbon market projects (e.g. REDD+) in selected landscapes.</p>	<p>Women and the Indigenous/tribal population have little access to land, credit, skills, and information to begin with, their ability to adapt to climate change is more limited, and they are also the less likely to benefit from relief and compensation measures</p>	
<p>Objective/Outcome 3: Support the Government of India to diffuse learning from on the ground activities to other protected areas, corridors and communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Knowledge platform ● Stakeholder networks ● Looking to institutionalize and maybe dependent on which landscapes are selected ● Communication and outreach 	<p>Many women and marginalized groups mostly do not have access to pertinent information regarding the laws, policies and regulations, applicability and associated consequences if violated because of mobility, language barriers, and other systematic barriers. hence are always excluded.</p>	<p>The program will work with the communities and families to encourage women and the socially marginalized, including the Indigenous/tribal to participate in all meetings, training programs, and consultations.. The venue, dates and times of meetings, transportation, and facilities (e.g., toilets) should be conducive of their participation. Decisions on when and where to hold such meetings and training programmes should be decided in consultation with these stakeholders prior to the event; where needed, separate consultations and training should be held for them.</p> <p>Build their confidence to engage and lead the stakeholder networks that the activity will create.</p> <p>Develop gender-inclusive outreach materials to communicate information in a way that is most accessible and relatable to indigenous communities and their women.</p>

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