



A STUDY ON STATUS AND READINES OF AGROECOLOGY POLICY DEVELOPMENT IN SELECTED COUNTIES IN KENYA

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE CONSULTANCY

1. Introduction

Biovision Africa Trust has rolled out a project with funding from Porticus titled **“Strengthening Agroecology Policies, Strategies, and Practices in Kenya”** that seeks to address the gaps and challenges in the development and implementation of agroecology policies at both national and county levels. The project is motivated by the dominance of conventional farming methods that have led to environmental degradation, loss of biodiversity, and declining agricultural productivity in Kenya. These challenges, compounded by the escalating impacts of climate change, threaten food security and the livelihoods of smallholder farmers, who are the primary target beneficiaries of this project.

The search for sustainable solutions points to Agroecology as offering a promising solution by integrating ecological principles into farming systems, thereby enhancing soil fertility, conserving biodiversity, and improving the resilience of agricultural systems to climate change.

The project envisions a future where Kenya’s agricultural systems are transformed to be environmentally sustainable, socially equitable, and economically viable through the widespread adoption of agroecological practices. The goal is to create resilient food systems that support improved livelihoods for smallholder farmers while conserving natural resources and biodiversity. By influencing integration of agroecology into national and county-level policies and strategies, the project aims to contribute to a society where sustainable farming practices are the norm, leading to enhanced food and nutrition security, improved rural incomes, and greater resilience against the impacts of climate change.

The project aspires to foster a supportive policy environment that promotes sustainable agricultural practices, reduces dependency on harmful chemical inputs, and empowers farmers to produce diverse, nutritious, and climate-resilient crops. Through policy advocacy, capacity building, and stakeholder engagement, the project will lay the groundwork for long-term systemic change in the agricultural sector. This transformation will contribute to achieving broader national, regional, and global objectives, such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), by supporting sustainable agricultural development, reducing poverty, and ensuring environmental sustainability. The societal change envisioned by the project extends beyond the grant duration and will require continued collaboration and investment from various stakeholders to realize its full potential.

2. About Biovision Africa Trust

Biovision Africa Trust (BvAT) is a not-for-profit organization established in Kenya in 2009, situated on the main campus of the International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology (icipe) in Kasarani, Nairobi. The Trust’s goal is to alleviate poverty and improve the livelihoods of smallholder farmers in Kenya and other African countries, through the dissemination of information and knowledge and building capacity of farmers and practitioners for uptake of appropriate technology, to improve human, animal, plant, and environmental health.

BvAT implements a Farmer Communication Programme in East Africa supported by Biovision Foundation of Switzerland and IKEA Foundation through ENVIU East Africa; the African Union Ecological Organic Agriculture (EOA) Initiative funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), and Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC). BvAT in collaboration with PELUM Uganda coordinates the Knowledge Hub for Eastern Africa (KHEA) under the global Knowledge Centre for Organic Agriculture in Africa (KCOA) covering the five regions of Africa - West, East, North, Central and Southern Africa. BvAT is also coordinating an Africa Agroecology Promotion Programme supported by SDC. Consequently, BvAT has strengthened its position as a Pan African organization championing the development of agroecology in Kenya and the African continent.

3. Consultancy

Biovision Africa Trust is seeking a qualified consultant to undertake a study on status and readiness of agroecology policy development in selected 16 counties in Kenya.

4. Purpose and Scope of the Assessment

There is growing awareness and political will among policymakers and technocrats regarding the benefits of agroecology, as demonstrated by the ongoing development of Kenya's National Agroecology Strategy for Food System Transformation. The devolution of agriculture to county governments also presents an opportunity to develop context-specific agroecology strategies that address local challenges and leverage local resources. There is also strong demand from several counties—including Makueni, Kakamega, Nakuru, Nyandarua, Bungoma, Busia, Vihiga, Kitui and Laikipia—for support in developing their own agroecology policies and strategies, which presents an opportunity to expand the reach and impact of agroecology across the country.

This study will focus on understanding the status and readiness of selected 16 counties in Kenya in the development of agroecology policies, strategies and identification of various agroecology programs/projects and budgets dedicated to Agroecology.

The specific objectives of this assessment will be:

The overall objective of the study would be to undertake a mapping exercise (desk top study) of at least 16 counties including counties that are currently in the process of implementation or development of agroecology policies/ strategies and the various stages of implementation/ and or development and identify two counties that the project should focus on.

Specific objectives:

1. From the selected counties, identify and rate by categorisation on the status and readiness of the counties to adopt agroecology policies, strategies, programs using appropriate rating scale, including the extent of political will by the county policy makers to undertake the process to its completion. – what is currently happening in the counties?
2. Analyse the limitations (gaps, incoherences, constraints, and weaknesses) and opportunities in the existing legislation and policy formulation processes related to agroecology county policies and regulatory frameworks in the selected 16 counties.
3. Make recommendations on how the current agroecology policies and regulatory framework inhibitors and barriers can be addressed. The study should identify at least 3 main inhibitors/barriers per county and context specific recommendations.
4. Share study findings in the selected counties to facilitate stakeholder engagement at the county level and introduce the project to key policy makers.
5. Develop county specific policy briefs based on the findings and recommendations for policy action on at least main identified barriers/inhibitors.

The above shall help to address the following important questions:

- a) How can the findings help us in the next steps to heighten advocacy work geared towards supporting agroecology activities in Kenya in the framework of the Porticus project?
- b) What information from the assessment shall we present to decision-makers and politicians that can make a difference in the way the decisions-makers will act after the assessment report? What perspectives are “selling” to the policy makers and politicians?
- c) What information should be included in the implementation of the project to enable counties to take concrete measures towards effective advocacy work?

5. The Deliverables

The expected key outputs of the assessment are:

- (a) **An Inception Report:** Elaboration of the assessment methodology and tools to be applied including a detailed schedule of activities to be undertaken. This should be ready within 1 week after signing the contract.
- (b) **Draft Report:** This should be ready within 45 days from the day of signing the contract.
- (c) **Final Report:** The technical report should include the executive summary, background, methodology, key findings, conclusions, lessons and recommendations, and annexes (key officials interviewed, documents consulted, and data collection instruments applied). The final report to include inputs from the project partners involved in this project (ISFAA, ICRAF and Pelum Kenya. The final report to be submitted by 15th February 2025.
- (d) **Two county specific policy briefs** contextualising the barriers and inhibitors to the development of the agroecology policies giving recommendations on how to address the barriers.

6. Background Documents

In addition to relevant documents and reports to be sought at country and Project Coordination level, various documents valuable to this study will be provided including but not limited to:

- Project Proposal
- Kenya’s National Agroecology Strategy for Food System Transformation
- Draft County Agroecology Strategies

7. The Assessment Methodology/Approach

The Consultant is expected to develop an appropriate approach/methodology to address the study tasks. Whereas this study is expected to be handled through desk review and key informant interviews, the methodology proposed will include but not limited to:

- a) Identification and review of relevant documents on general agriculture and organic and agroecology frameworks, reports, publications, etc. that analyse the policy formulation processes and structures in the selected counties.
- b) Virtual sharing meetings with authorities from the selected counties
- c) Data collection approaches and tools, focusing on key informant interviews with relevant actors.
- d) Data analysis techniques

8. Time Frame

This assessment will be conducted between December and February 2024 (45 days)

9. Consultants & Minimum Qualifications

The study will be conducted by a policy consultant as a lead with the team having the following main qualifications:

- At least a master's degree or equivalent in agriculture, sociology, development studies, economics or related social sciences.
- At least 5 years of experience in conducting policy assessment/evaluations, policy impact assessments or similar assignments in agricultural development programmes and projects.
- Demonstrated ability to assess complex situations to analyse critical issues succinctly and clearly and draw conclusions and recommendations.
- Proven in-depth understanding and consulting experiences on institutional set-up of complex development programmes.
- Substantive knowledge of participatory M&E processes and experience with multistakeholder/community development interventions.
- Excellent English writing and communication skills.

10. How to apply

Interested candidates should submit the following:

- a) A brief proposal indicating their understanding of the assignment and methodology including gender aspects and workplan for successfully conducting the study.
- b) Financial proposal showing the cost of conducting the study, breakdown of consultancy costs and any other costs associated with this assignment.
- c) At least one report of a similar assignment conducted in the past three years.
- d) A concise curriculum vitae of the consultant(s), with at least one being a woman with a gender orientation. A gender balanced team would be preferred.
- e) Names and contacts of three referees (phone numbers and email).
- f) A one-page write-up showing why you are the most suitable team for the consultancy.

If you are interested in the above consultancy and can demonstrate your ability to meet the qualifications required, then submit your expression of interest with the above mentioned documents to procurement@biovisionafrica.org with the subject heading: **A STUDY ON STATUS AND READINES OF AGROECOLOGY POLICY DEVELOPMENT IN SELECTED COUNTIES IN KENYA**

The closing date for applications is **20th December 2024** Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted for interviews.

Biovision Africa Trust is an EOE