



Request for Information – RFI-612-18-SMPFBW

Sustainable Management of Priority Forests and Bordering Watersheds (SMPFBW)

Description

USAID/Malawi has developed a Request for Information for the purpose of knowing: 1) ways to strengthen incentives and disincentives to counter illegal, and unsustainable firewood and charcoal production; and 2) which organizations, including the private sector, are promoting alternative, efficient energy technologies coupled with behavior change strategies to reduce demand for charcoal and firewood use for domestic and/or industrial energy needs.

USAID/Malawi seeks information to help inform interventions aimed at Sustainable Management of Priority Forests and Bordering Watersheds to increase forest cover, promote land-based emissions reductions and support livelihoods. The Request for Information is provided in the following pages. In accordance with Federal Acquisition Regulation 15.209(c), the following clause is incorporated into this RFI:

FAR 52.215-3 - REQUEST FOR INFORMATION OR SOLICITATION FOR PLANNING PURPOSES - (OCT 1997)

- (a) The Government does not intend to award a contract on the basis of this solicitation or to otherwise pay for the information solicited except as an allowable cost under other contracts as provided in subsection 31.205-18, Bid and proposal costs, of the Federal Acquisition Regulation.
- (b) Although “proposal” and “offeror” are used in this Request for Information, your response will be treated as information only. It shall not be used as a proposal.
- (c) This solicitation is issued for the purpose of obtaining information from interested parties regarding the design process of USAID/Malawi’s next forestry management activity.

This is a Request for Information. This is not a Request for Proposals (RFP) or Request for Applications (RFA) and is not to be construed as a commitment by the U.S. Government to issue any solicitation or notice of funding opportunity, or ultimately award a contract or assistance agreement on the basis of this RFI, or to pay for any information voluntarily submitted as a result of this request.

In accordance with FAR 15.201(e), responses to this notice are not offers and cannot be accepted by the U.S. Government to form a binding contract. Responses to this RFI are strictly voluntary and USAID will not pay respondents for information provided in response to this RFI. Responses to this RFI will not be returned and respondents will not be notified of the result of the review.

If a Solicitation or Notice of Funding Opportunity is issued, it will be announced on the Federal Business Opportunities website <http://www.fbo.gov> or <https://www.grants.gov>, as applicable, at a later date, and all interested parties must respond to that Solicitation or Notice of Funding Opportunity announcement separately from any response to this announcement. This RFI does not restrict the Government's acquisition approach on a future Solicitation or Notice of Funding Opportunity.

Responses

Interested parties are requested to respond to this RFI in Microsoft Word compatible formats and submitted via email to OAA-Malawi-Solicit@usaid.gov by not later than **July 6, 2018 at 17:00 hrs Malawi local time**. Please include the title **RFI-612-18-SMPFBW** in the subject line of your e-mail. Responses should be sent as email attachment in English. Please do not submit applications, proposals, resumes, promotional materials, and statements of qualifications.

Responses are limited to **five (5) pages** and shall include, at a minimum the following:

- (1) the name and address of the organization;
- (2) primary point of contact, phone number, and e-mail address.

After USAID reviews and considers any responses, a decision will be made regarding whether and how to proceed with a new activity.

Sincerely,



Paul Martin
Supervisory Contracting/Agreement Officer

Attachment 1: USAID/Malawi Sustainable Management of Priority Forests and Bordering Watersheds

USAID/Malawi Sustainable Management of Priority Forests and Bordering Watersheds (SMPFBW)

Background

In Malawi, more than 97% of households rely on charcoal and firewood as their primary cooking fuel¹. By contrast, only 2% of households use electricity for cooking, and less than 1% of the population uses other fuel sources for cooking². Even in urban areas, almost 90% of residents cook using biomass energy, and now the majority of urban households (54%) depend on charcoal³. Virtually all charcoal produced in Malawi, and much of the charcoal sold commercially in urban centers is produced illegally and unsustainably. Population growth, and rapid urbanization, means the demand for charcoal and firewood is expected to surpass sustainable supply by 2030⁴.

The impacts of the heavy reliance on biomass energy for cooking and heating in Malawian households can be seen in Malawi's forests and woodlands. An estimated 7.7 million hectares of land are either degraded or deforested; forests were lost at a rate of 0.5 percent per year between 2000 and 2015⁵. Unsustainable use of wood from forests and loss of forests reduces the terrestrial carbon storage, and thereby hinders Malawi's progress towards low emissions development goals, such as the Nationally Determined Contributions.

The Government of Malawi (GoM) has established plans to move the country's development pathways towards a green economy based on national circumstance and capabilities through its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC). The country intends to promote (1) sustainable forest management practices, (2) new and alternative renewable energy sources, and (3) sustainable agriculture activities. In addition to the NDC, Malawi has sector specific policies which have mainstreamed adaptation and mitigation activities, as well as implementation frameworks that foster development and transfer of technology and capacity building. In the Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use (AFOLU) sector, the government has developed policies to work towards these objectives, namely the National Charcoal Strategy and the National Forest Landscape Restoration Strategy. Among other outcomes, implementation of these strategies will enable the restoration of 4.5 million hectares of degraded lands by 2030⁶.

USAID seeks information on energy use, charcoal production, and timber in Malawi. Within these categories, information about available and emerging options, actors, enabling environment, market analysis, and the challenges and opportunities to adoption is of interest.

¹ Republic of Malawi. 2017. National Charcoal Strategy.

² *Ibid*

³ *Ibid*

⁴ *Ibid*

⁵ Republic of Malawi. 2017. National Forest Restoration Strategy.

⁶ *Ibid*

Questions

Stakeholders are free to submit answers to any or all of the following questions:

1) Energy Use

- a) What energy alternatives to charcoal are being promoted? What organizations are actively engaged in these efforts?
- b) What fuel-efficient bioenergy technologies are being promoted? What organizations are actively engaged in this space?
- c) What is the outlook on the viability of these alternative energy sources and fuel-efficient technologies?
- d) What opportunities and challenges exist for scaling up these alternatives to charcoal?
- e) What is the customer base for these alternative energy sources (domestic, industrial, schools, hospitals, etc.)?
- f) What are the costs and benefits of alternatives in comparison to charcoal?
- g) What are the barriers to adoption of the alternative energy source(s) that you are currently promoting?
- h) What government regulations, policies, or laws are lacking that would promote alternatives to charcoal?

2) Charcoal Production

- a) What are some potential alternative livelihoods for charcoal producers?
- b) What incentives or obstacles exist in the adoption of these alternative livelihoods?
- c) What options exist for increasing the sustainability and efficiency of charcoal production? What organizations are actively working on efficient and sustainable charcoal production?
- d) What is the political and economic context for charcoal production, including the interests of those who are apt to champion a change to alternatives or inhibit it?

3) Timber

- a) How much timber is extracted from forests?
- b) What is the contribution of timber extraction to deforestation?

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