

REQUEST FOR APPLICATION

This Request for Applications (RFA) is issued by the Makerere University School of Public Health-ResilientAfrica Network (RAN) and Gulu University Constituent College (GUCC) in Moroto, in collaboration with the **Long-term Assistance and Services for Research: Partners for University-Led Solutions Engine (LASER PULSE)** at Purdue University. LASER PULSE is a five-year program implemented by a consortium comprising Purdue University (lead institution), the University of Notre Dame, Indiana University, Makerere University, and Catholic Relief Services. LASER PULSE is funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) under Cooperative Agreement 7200AA18CA00009.

Development Sectors of Interest: Indigenous Peoples of Karamoja, and Child Trafficking

Districts of Implementation (Target Communities): Successful projects will be implemented in the following target communities/administrative units:

Target group	Sub-county	District
Ik	Timu, Kamion, and Morungole	Kaabong
Tepeth	Tapac, and Katikekile	Moroto
	Iriiri	Napak
Kadam	Moruita, and Lemsui	Nakapiripirit
Ngikuliak	Kacheri	Kotido
Child trafficking	Lopei, Lokopo, Matany, Lorengecora, and Iriiri	Napak

Award Number and Size: Through this RFA, a total of 4 to 6 awards will be funded and implemented for a period of up to nine (9) months. About 3-4 projects will be awarded under the indigenous peoples track, while 2-3 projects will be awarded under the child trafficking track. The award funds will range between \$30,000-50,000 per award; for this RFA we expect to award \$200,000 in total funding across all awards. While award(s) are anticipated as a result of this RFA, GUCC, Makerere University, and LASER PULSE reserve the right to fund any or none of the Applications submitted and for the amounts funded to vary from those described.

Application Submission Process and Timeline:

Issuance of Request for Application (RFA): March 9, 2022
 Webinar to address questions regarding RFA: March 18, 2022, at 3:00 pm EAT
 Deadline for submission of Application: April 4, 2022, at 5:00 pm EAT
 Expected award status notification: May 2022

Contact Information:

For all questions on the RFA, please email the RFA team on applications@ranlab.org



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LIST OF ACRONYMS

CDCS	Country Development and Cooperation Strategy
DDI	Development, Democracy, and Innovation
GBV	Gender-based Violence
GUCC	Gulu University Constituent College
HESN	Higher Education Solutions Network
LASER PULSE	Long-term Assistance and Services for Research Partner University-Led Solutions Engine
MUST	Mbarara University of Science and Technology
ITR	Innovation, Technology, and Research
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
RAN	ResilientAfrica Network
RCI	Regional Coordination Initiative
RSC	Regional Steering Committee
RFA	Request for Applications
UBOS	Uganda Bureau of Statistics
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

I. LASER PULSE BACKGROUND

[LASER PULSE](#) (Long-term Assistance and Services for Research Partner University-Led Solutions Engine) is a five-year, \$70M program funded through the U.S. Agency for International Development's (USAID) Innovation, Technology, and Research Hub (ITR) to deliver research-driven solutions to field-sourced development challenges in USAID partner countries. A Purdue University-led consortium with Catholic Relief Services, Indiana University, Makerere University, and the University of Notre Dame implements the LASER PULSE program through a growing network of 2,500+ researchers and development practitioners in 61 countries. LASER PULSE collaborates with USAID missions, bureaus, independent offices, and other local stakeholders to identify and fund research needs for critical development challenges and strengthens the capacity of researcher-practitioner teams to co-design solutions that translate into policy and practice.

LASER PULSE is part of the Higher Education Solutions Network (HESN) 2.0 portfolio of programs from the ITR Hub of USAID's Bureau for Development, Democracy, and Innovation (DDI). HESN 2.0 leverages a vast network of higher education institutions, local stakeholders, private enterprises, and other development actors to increase the use of scientific research for development. HESN works to refine and translate complex data, build local scientific potential, and test new and innovative development approaches.

2. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

2.1 RFA Context

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID), through the Uganda Mission, has established a Regional Coordination Initiative (RCI) that engages local governments, local universities, researchers, and the private sector as partners in development. The RCI is implemented through Regional Steering Committees (RSCs) that are formed by clusters of local governments, private sector players, and academic institutions/researchers within a region in Uganda. This research initiative is conceived by the USAID/Uganda Mission through consultations with two regional steering committees: the Karamoja RSC and the Southwestern Uganda RSC. Both Committees have raised deep concerns over what they perceive as violations of the rights of indigenous peoples, particularly the Ik, Tepeth, Kadam, and Ngikuliak in Karamoja, and the Batwa in southwestern Uganda. The Karamoja RSC also identified a complex and longstanding issue of trafficking children from the Karamoja region, especially Napak district, to faraway destinations including Kampala capital city and beyond, where they are destitute and are trapped into modern-day slavery.

USAID recently launched a [Policy on Promoting the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#) aimed at improving the impact and sustainability of programs through meaningful engagement to safeguard against harm and enhance the ability to promote the rights, determine own priorities, and advance the self-reliance of indigenous peoples. The USAID/Uganda Mission's Country Development and Cooperation Strategy's (CDCS) guiding principle #4 seeks to infuse and prioritize an inclusive development that targets empowerment of indigenous peoples among other minorities.

As such, in 2019, USAID/Uganda commissioned a development research study aimed at strengthening the voices of Uganda's indigenous peoples and communities affected by child trafficking. The research is collaboratively implemented by Gulu University Constituent College (GUCC) based in Moroto-Karamoja, Mbarara University of Science and Technology (MUST) based in southwestern Uganda, Makerere University School of Public Health-ResilientAfrica Network (RAN), and Purdue University's LASER PULSE (Long-term Assistance and Services for Research, Partners for University-Led Solutions Engine) program. The research is funded by USAID through LASER PULSE.

2.2 RFA Scope

Globally, indigenous peoples number over 370 million and occupy approximately 20 percent of the earth's territory. The Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS 2016) estimates that there are 4,023 Ik, and 23,422 Tepeth. These groups have been marginalized and often discriminated against from participating in social, economic, and political systems, or have been affected by environmental injustices. Preliminary research carried out by GUCC and RAN indicates that the culture of these groups has deteriorated over time due to marginalization and assimilation by neighboring and dominant tribes, such as the Dodoth, Jie, Matheniko, Bokora, and Pokot. For instance, very few people can fluently speak the indigenous languages. Many of them are old and the languages are not being transmitted to the young generation. As they die, they die with the language and culture. Cultural and language conservation is needed by these ethnic groups for their emancipation, as well as the government and the international community for protection and development. Notably, these IPs have a rich and unique culture that is globally marketable through cultural tourism hence contributing more revenue to the government of Uganda and less to themselves. It is therefore urgent to implement transformative projects and to involve and empower indigenous peoples in preservation, intergenerational transmission, and equitable self-representation of their languages and traditional cultural practices which are key to their heritage, livelihood benefit, and enhance their identity.

2.3 RESEARCH FOCUS AREAS

This RFA seeks applications for development interventions that addresses two research focus areas (henceforth referred to as *tracks*):

1) Indigenous peoples of Karamoja

2) Child trafficking in the Napak district

These tracks were prioritized by the Karamoja Regional Steering Committee. A team of researchers from GUCC and RAN led primary research and community consultations through surveys and interviews with two indigenous groups - the Ik in Kaabong and the Tepeth in Moroto- between August-September 2020. During the same time period, the research team engaged with communities in Napak that are affected by child trafficking through surveys and interviews. In Moroto, the research was undertaken in the five major valleys where the Tepeth dwell including Tapac, Kakingol, Loyeraboth, Lia, and Lopelpel. In Kaabong, data was collected from Kamion, Timu, and Morungole sub-counties which have a high concentration of the Ik people. In Napak, the study focused on child trafficking and therefore conducted in Lorengecora, Lokopo, and Lopei sub-counties which are the worst affected communities.

The findings from the Ik and Tepeth were disseminated to representatives from all the five indigenous peoples of Karamoja (the Ik, Tepeth, Kadam, and Ngikuliak), government officials, development partners and other stakeholders working with the indigenous peoples between October 25-27, 2021, at Mt. Moroto Hotel. Similarly, the findings on child trafficking were disseminated to community representatives, government officials, development partners and other stakeholders working with survivors/communities affected by child trafficking. The meeting was conducted between October 28-29, 2021, at Napak District Farmer's Hall. The dissemination meetings in Moroto and Napak also provided an opportunity to co-create and recommend development priority areas. These priorities, together with the research study findings, have been packaged under this request for application. Applicants are invited to submit a proposal under any of the two tracks as described in detail below. Through this RFA, we plan a total of 4 to 6 awards to be funded and implemented for a period of up to nine months. We envision about 3-4 projects to be awarded under the indigenous peoples track, and a further 2-3 projects will be awarded under the child trafficking track. The award funds will range between \$30,000-50,000 per award; for this RFA we expect to award \$200,000 in total funding across all awards.

2.3.1 TRACK ONE: INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF KARAMOJA (THE IK, TEPETH, KADAM, AND NGIKULIAK)

Through the community co-creation meetings, several development challenges and their manifestation at a community level were highlighted. These emerging issues are erosion of the languages spoken by the indigenous communities, landlessness and land wrangles, illiteracy as a result of inadequate access to education, insecurity, inadequate representation (leadership/governance), poor access to health services, poor attitude and mindset towards the indigenous communities, and poverty. The most pressing issues voted by the IPs were land ownership, lack of access to education, loss of language and culture as described below.

A. Land Ownership

Consultations with the indigenous peoples revealed that some communities have been left landless while others are entangled in land wrangles. Historically, most of the indigenous peoples occupied land in the plains. However, the indigenous peoples were driven to the mountainous areas of Karamoja by the mightier neighboring tribes (need a reference). The biggest driving force was insecurity caused by cattle raids. For instance, the Ik were often caught in the crossfire between the Dodoth and the Turkana, while the Tepeth were in the crossfire between the Matheniko and the Turkana. Secondly, the plain land which was previously owned by the indigenous people was taken over and converted into grazing fields by the dominant tribes. The Matheniko have taken over the land previously owned by the Tepeth, while the Dodoth have taken over land previously owned by the Ik. As a consequence, the indigenous groups have been displaced further upwards into the mountains. Unfortunately, these mountainous areas are gazetted either as wildlife or forest reserves. These reserves are under the protection of the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) and the National Forestry Authority (NFA) respectively.

As such, the RFA is seeking feasible, affordable, effective, and fast ideas that can lead to land reforms and bring relief to the plight of the indigenous peoples in Karamoja. Examples of interventions/research include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Community-based education and advocacy pathways and/or interventions to increase the level of knowledge on existing communal land ownership systems in the indigenous communities and boundaries with a goal of issuance of clan or subclan land ownership agreements to protect the land of the indigenous groups.
- Interventions that will support the mapping out and understanding of the existing traditional land management systems such as clans, sub-clans, and families can be used to form communal land associations and integrate communal land ownership tenure with modern land management principles.

- Projects that will lead to the formation of Communal Land Associations (CLAs) to support communal resolution of land-related conflicts, enhancing formal ownership and documentation of the agreements.
- Developing of IPs-Public partnerships and collaborations (local governments, and government agencies (National Forestry Authority and Uganda Wildlife Authority) to facilitate some livelihood activities such as commercial tree planting, apiary farming, access to cultural sites, eco-tourism, artifacts, herbal medicine extraction, artisanal mining, fuel for cooking, hay production, sand mining, and sport hunting activities, which can be carried out to improve the livelihood of the Indigenous Peoples who live in the gazetted areas.

B. Access to Education

Overall, indigenous groups are faced with poor access to basic social services including education, and this has predisposed them to very low literacy levels. Several factors contribute to poor access to education, including the mountainous terrain and poor road network, which hinders the establishment of schools within the indigenous communities, very poor staffing levels, poor attitude toward education, children are seen as sources of labor, and girls are often married off at a young age to fetch bride price for the family (Ellen, *et al.* 2017, 7, 80; Howe *et al.* 2015; GOU and UNICEF 2015: 17-8; Ministry of Gender, Labor and Social Development and UNICEF Uganda 2015: 25, 59).¹ As such, the custom of looking at girls as a source of wealth through bride price needs to be discouraged and girls should be enrolled and retained into schools, preferably boarding schools. During the co-creation in Napak, participants highlighted the importance of sensitizing parents on the benefits of education through community dialogue and enforcing punitive actions for parents who do not take their children to school, including those parents who marry off young girls. There is therefore a need to reimagine access to education by the indigenous communities, and promoting access to quality education is key to ending the marginalization and vulnerability of the Indigenous Peoples in Karamoja. Examples of interventions/research include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Advocacy for the teaching of learners in lower primary classes in their first languages/local languages (mother tongue) to encourage enrollment and retention of the children in school, and better learning outcomes.

1. See the following: (a) Mathys, Ellen; Cashin, Kristen; Sethuraman, Kavita (2017). *USAID Office of Food for Peace Food Security Desk Review for Karamoja, Uganda*. Washington, DC: FHI 360/FANTA; (b) GOU and UNICEF (2015). *The National Strategy to End Child Marriage 2014/15–2019/2020*. Kampala, Uganda; (c) Howe, K.; Stites, E.; and Akabwai, D. (2015). *"We Now Have Relative Peace": Changing Conflict Dynamics in Northern Karamoja, Uganda*. Somerville, MA: Feinstein International Center, Tufts University; and (d) Ministry of Gender, Labor and Social Development and UNICEF Uganda (2015) *Situation Analysis of Children in Uganda*. Kampala: UNICEF.

- Interventions that address the issue of school needs/requirements for learners from the indigenous communities to be able to complete primary and secondary education and further enroll in vocational training or into a university.
- Interventions that encourage and empower parents to take their children and retain them in school, and mentorship by the literate Indigenous Peoples (role models).

C. Loss of Language and Culture

Additionally, the indigenous peoples' language is gradually disappearing from the communities. For instance, it is observed that within early childhood education (ECE), the language of instruction of the children is *Ngakarimojong*, the language of the dominant neighboring tribes. The children are growing up with little knowledge of their indigenous languages and shy away from their heritage. The ideas should be tailored to the following interventions but not limited to;

- Preserve and promote the language and culture of the indigenous peoples through innovative ways to encourage the use of the language of the indigenous people. This could be achieved through the establishment of language and cultural centers, songs, traditional dances and documenting the languages for the future generation.
- Establishment of cultural centers to preserve the culture as well as act as a tourist attraction thus fetching revenue for the indigenous peoples. The indigenous people through establishing cultural centers, where stories about their history and language are taught by the elders, would preserve and pass on their culture to future generations as well as improve their livelihood through tourism. These centers and Iglu houses will create a market for the indigenous people's products such as wild honey from the tourists.
- Working with persons who fluently speak the languages of the indigenous peoples to make stories, compose songs, rhymes, and plays to empower the young people to speak their languages.

D. Inadequate Livelihoods for Economic Empowerment

The majority of the indigenous peoples live in absolute poverty. This is as a result of the absence of viable sources of income for households, food insecurity, absence of assets for wealth generation, insecurity due to armed violence (cattle rustling), general neglect, and exclusion from services by local governments. Furthermore, there is a lot of alcoholism among the adult population, which affects their ability to indulge in gainful work. There is very low access to financial services including credit. While Karamoja is largely a pastoral region, all the indigenous peoples within this region do not keep livestock but instead, depend on subsistence farming. One of the main sources of livelihood for the Ik and Tepeth is harvesting and selling of wild honey, but this is a seasonal and unreliable source of income. Therefore, this RFA seeks to bring onboard interventions that will support the indigenous peoples to generate income. In

partnership with NFA and UWA, the indigenous people can carefully utilize the gazetted land for economic empowerment ideas which may include, but not limited to the following:

- Beekeeping intervention, including value addition
- Local poultry farming
- Eco-tourism
- Commercial tree planting
- Artifacts
- Herbal medicine extraction
- Artisanal mining
- Hay production
- Sand mining

E. Inadequate Healthcare

The indigenous communities often find it difficult to access health care services due to several barriers including: few health facilities which are understaffed, inaccessible health facilities due to the poor terrain, and language barriers. For instance, during the co-creation, participants mentioned that the entire Iki County has only two health facilities - one at Kamion and another at Timu. Many of the population in the Iki territory live more than 15 km from a health facility. Furthermore, due to the mountainous terrain, there are no ambulance services, so patients who require emergency medical attention are carried on improvised stretchers. The other issues include few and poorly motivated medical staff, lack of staff accommodation, and lack of maternity wards at the two health facilities. At Timu health center three (HC III), men and women share wards. There are also reports of inadequate medicines and health supplies. Examples of interventions to increase access to healthcare for the indigenous communities may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Community innovative ways to improve ambulance services and patient referral for specialized care
- Community innovative ways to improve the stock for medicines and healthcare supplies and thereby reducing stockouts
- Promotion of good hygiene and sanitation practices to prevent common illnesses like scabies, diarrhea, and others.

2.3.2 TRACK TWO: CHILD TRAFFICKING IN NAPAK DISTRICT

During the dissemination and co-creation meeting held in Napak, stakeholders prioritized a number of challenges that are driving child trafficking in the district. These drivers included insecurity in Karamoja, peer influence, inadequate family support, and poor parenting practices, and food insecurity. The cross-cutting challenges highlighted were: poverty, gender-based violence (GBV), and inadequate access to social services, especially health and education.

A. Poverty

The biggest underlying driver of child trafficking within the Napak district is high levels of poverty at the household and community levels. Due to the chronic cattle raids, communities in Napak district have limited livelihoods and yet they depend on livestock as a source of livelihood. The frequent cattle raids lead to loss of livestock and this has driven families into extreme poverty. The loss of livestock leaves the boys and male youth redundant and in a state of hopelessness, which forces them to look for work elsewhere. Evidence from research indicates that some households cannot provide basic needs such as clothes, food, and school fees for their children. Many of the children in Napak are forced to seek work to contribute to household expenses. This exposes the children to perpetrators of trafficking.

Examples of interventions to address poverty may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Diversification of household livelihood sources while leveraging local resources and capacities.
- Engagement and training of the youth and child trafficking returnees in income-generating activities.
- Platforms to engage the Napak communities, elders and neighboring tribes to bring peace in the district and safeguard the livelihood from any insecurity.

B. Food Insecurity

For over six decades, households in the Karamoja region have been affected by hunger and famine caused by the semi-arid climate. The region experiences frequent food insecurity partly due to poor harvests as a result of long dry seasons and poor soils. This affects both crop and livestock production. To cope with this difficult situation, children, especially the girls, move far away from their homes in search of work to earn a living and provide for their families. Some parents and their children engage in food for work.

Examples of interventions to address food insecurity may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Ways to increase the food purchasing power by supporting families to improve their household income.
- Programs that empower local communities with modern farming skills and practices to improve crop yield and animal production.
- Programs that promote good post-harvest food handling practices while minimizing food waste.

C. Peer Influence

It was observed during the co-creation that peer influence plays a big role in child trafficking. Child trafficked returnees often bring back very attractive personal items like smartphones, new clothes, and body care products (vaselines, perfumes), as well as household items such as jerrycans, saucepans, suitcases, and foodstuffs. Notwithstanding the bad experiences shared by

trafficked returnees, the victims are lured into trafficking so that they too can acquire these items.

Examples of interventions to address food insecurity may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Innovative peer-to-peer counseling programs delivered to school and out-of-school children may include returnees sharing their experiences in fun-filled and interactive ways such as through drama, poems, and songs to keep children in their communities
- Document and disseminate success stories of returnees to help other youths reintegrate and adapt to the local environment
- Sensitization programs that underscore the dangers of child trafficking such as sexual abuse and exploitation, unwanted pregnancies, HIV/AIDS, poor nutrition, physical injuries, and illegal organ harvesting

D. Inadequate Family Support and Poor Parenting Practices

Across communities, the family is a primary social unit, where children are born and nurtured until they reach adulthood. Unfortunately, families and cultural structures have been disrupted within Napak and this has facilitated child trafficking. For instance, some parents harshly punish their children, marry off young girls to obtain bride price, and children, especially girls, are expected to contribute towards household expenses. There is also a high level of alcoholism in the community, and this has led to violence within homes such as quarreling, yelling, and fighting. Drunken parents insult children who end up running away from the home and end up in the hands of traffickers.

Examples of interventions to address gaps within family support and parenting while creating a positive mindset shift may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Community mobilization and sensitization of parents on their roles and responsibilities
- Approaches to foster positive parent-child interactions
- Role models or champions

3. APPLICATION INFORMATION AND PROCESS

This section provides specific information on the RFA including appendices that support the document.

3.1 Eligibility and Leadership

Only local institutions that have field offices in the districts that host indigenous peoples (Kaabong, Moroto, Kotido, Nakapiripirit, and Napak) or those affected by child trafficking (Napak) are eligible to submit an application. Eligible institutions should have a certificate of registration/incorporation and should belong to one of the following categories:

- i. Community-Based Organizations (CBOs)
- ii. Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)
- iii. Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)

Eligible participants should have demonstrated experience in working with and for the indigenous peoples (the Ik, Tepeth, Kadam, and Ngikuliak) **OR** experience working with communities affected by child trafficking. The applications should demonstrate how they will incorporate elite members of the indigenous people in their programming efforts. Partnerships are encouraged.

Note: All Applications should demonstrate how the project will collaborate with local governments, and other development partners such as NGOs, CSOs, and the private sector.

Each lead applicant (principal investigator) is limited to submitting one Application per RFA (regardless of thematic area). However, an institution can submit multiple Applications under different leads/Pis. Other persons other than the PI may be considered as Co-Pis on a research/project team and can be listed on multiple Applications to this RFA.

3.2 Submission Instructions

Researchers interested in applying for an award in response to this RFA should send their application and all associated documentation to this email, applications@ranlab.org. **All documents should be sent in a single zipped folder.** The deadline for the Application submission is April 4, 2022, at 5:00 pm EAT. Late Applications will not be reviewed. Additions or modifications will not be accepted after the submission date. LASER PULSE is not responsible for late or incomplete submissions.

3.3 RFA Question Period and Informational Webinar

Additionally, LASER PULSE will allow two weeks for prospective Applicants to submit any additional questions concerning the RFA. Questions should be sent to applications@ranlab.org.

LASER PULSE will organize a webinar on March 18, 2022, at 3:00 pm EAT to address questions submitted by Applicants. Registration for the Webinar is open and can be accessed through this **LINK:** <https://zoom.us/join/zoom/register/tjcsdOmoqD0pGdLywpcadeMgvPOSweQJPe17>

3.4 Format and Review Process

Applications have a limit of five (5) typed pages of core content, excluding the cover page and supplemental materials (e.g., workplan, budget, references). Content details are provided in the Application summary table at the end of this section. Applications must be in English, with narrative portions prepared in MS Word or Open Office format, using Times New Roman font, size 11, or similar typeset in single line spacing on 8.5x11 inch sized paper. We will only evaluate the first five (5) pages for Applications exceeding the 5-page limit of core content.

Applications will be reviewed by selected external reviewers, who are recruited worldwide and have relevant skills and experience on the topic and geographic focal areas, USAID personnel, and the LASER PULSE Management team. Reviewers will evaluate the Applications based upon specifications listed in the Evaluation Criteria section (Section 4). Successful Applications are subject to final approval by USAID before notification of award.

3.5 Strategy for Gender Inclusion

Prior to developing an Application, Applicants should review the gender analysis guidelines in [Appendix I](#). Applications should reflect that the research team is fully aware of the relevant gender considerations for the development solution proposed. The intention is not that the proposed solution be 'about gender,' but that the team should look at gender as a factor that is relevant for any work with human beings, or solutions that propose to benefit human beings.

Applications responsive to gender will 'unpack' certain nouns that can have the possibility to mask the target group but tend to default to a focus on a single sex. For example, terms such as youth, farmers, entrepreneurs, armed group actors/fighters, and head of household often default to men or boys. Other nouns, such as teachers, caregivers, and parents, often tend to default to a focus on women or girls. Applicants should ensure that the target group is clarified and that the choice of focus population is supported by evidence that this is the population group in need for this sector. The LASER PULSE gender online training will show many practical examples where an improperly targeted group can lead to missed opportunity for impact in development solutions and research translation. The Application in response to this RFA should show how these gender considerations are addressed in research design, the development of tools, the research subject selection, the collection and analysis of data, and the proposed translation of the research.

3.6 Project Duration and Funding

Subject to the availability of funds, Makerere University-ResilientAfrica Network (RAN) will issue awards in response to those Applications that best meet the objectives of this funding opportunity as evaluated by the selection criteria contained in Section 4 of this RFA. LASER PULSE anticipates funding approximately 4-6 awards for a period of up to nine months of implementation and between \$30,000-50,000 per award. For this RFA, we expect to award \$200,000 in total funding across all awards, subject to the availability of funds. While award(s) are anticipated as a result of this RFA, GUCC, Makerere University, and LASER PULSE reserves the right to fund any or none of the Applications submitted and for the amounts funded to vary from those described. Only one Application may be submitted per PI.

3.7 Research Output Reporting

Applications must include a brief narrative describing the expected outputs of the proposed award. The implementing team should identify the various outputs. These items can be listed as bullet points within the text with an estimated delivery date placed in parentheses after a given item's description, or as a Gantt chart or other formats. Note that traditional academic outputs such as journal articles, technical reports, posters, etc. should also be listed but it is anticipated that these are not the only research outputs that could be produced from the proposed work.

The Project Leader (PL) of each successful research team that is awarded will receive an Award Reporting Guidelines document describing procedures on curation and submission of award information, research products, and research datasets. These guidelines will also contain a template for the research team to develop a brief data management plan that will be required as part of the post-award process. Once the award has commenced, output data compiled and

reported by the PI shall consist of, but not be limited to: (1) the names and selected information of the PI and Co-PIs; (2) research products such as technical manuals, policy briefs, guidebooks, peer-reviewed publications, technical reports, and relevant datasets; and (3) presentations at convenings where translated research is disseminated to various development actors, including translation partner(s), policymakers, donors, or other development researchers. PIs will receive from RAN a Research Output Reporting Form (via an online survey) to facilitate the submission of required data and information for monthly reporting.

3.8 Budget Preparation for Application

The project budget must be submitted using the [LASER Application Budget Template](#) in Microsoft Excel, which includes a Budget and a Budget Narrative.

The budget and budget narrative documents should provide, in detail, the total costs for implementation of the program that the Applicant's institution is proposing using the [budget narrative template](#) provided. Generally, the applying institution will be a direct sub-award of RAN.

The following major line items must be included within the budget narrative. When available, each major line item must be supported by detailed breakdowns of each expected sub-expense under that line:

- 1) Personnel (positions and/or names, rates, etc.): An estimate of the level of effort (either as a percentage or as a ratio to full-time employment) relative to their role must be included for all personnel.
- 2) Anticipated travel (if trips are known, please provide details, if not yet known, then overall estimates and number of proposed trips would be helpful)
- 3) Supplies and services
- 4) Other direct costs: Please provide a breakdown of all anticipated other direct costs (i.e. the amount, type, and unit cost with as much detail as possible). Examples may include, but not limited to, consulting fees, participant support costs, workshop costs, maintenance or usage fees, program-specific software, etc.
- 5) Equipment
- 6) Indirect costs

Note the following;

- A. Per USAID restrictions, LASER PULSE will not allow funding to the following categories/items. Procurement of commodities listed below, but not limited to;
 - a. Agricultural commodities,
 - b. Motor vehicles,
 - c. Pharmaceuticals,
 - d. Pesticides,
 - e. Used equipment,
 - f. U.S. Government-owned excess property, or

- g. Fertilizer
 - h. Construction (e.g. alteration, or repair (including dredging and excavation) of buildings, structures, or other real property and includes, without limitation, improvements, renovation, alteration, and refurbishment). The term includes, without limitation, roads, power plants, buildings, bridges, water treatment facilities, and vertical structures.
- B. Makerere University may request additional detailed budget information following notification to an Applicant that it is under consideration for an award. If necessary, Purdue may conduct discussions to verify cost data, evaluate specific elements of costs, and examine data to determine the necessity, reasonableness, and allocability of the costs reflected in the budget and their allowability pursuant to the applicable cost principles.

3.9 Application Summary Table

Section	Description
Cover Page (<i>1 page maximum; does not count against the page limit</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project title • Lead institution applying for the Award • PI, Co-PI(s): names, titles, addresses, email addresses, and phone numbers • Sector (Thematic) Focus Area (s) • District where project will take place • Project length (months) • Total budget requested (USD) • Signature and contact information for an authorized official from the lead institution (email and phone number) • Contact information for the person responsible for negotiating the final agreement, if different from the above
Project Summary (<i>1 page maximum; does not count against the page limit.</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Summary
Project Plan (<i>4 pages</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brief background and local context of development challenge that the project seeks to address. • Description of development gaps. • Clear identification of project objective(s) and justification for the project framed in the context of local, social, cultural, and economic background. • Clear description of innovative concepts and methodology. • Project methodology and approaches • • Innovativeness and Creativity of the Project Idea

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description of how the project will leverage the team’s experience with community engagement, private sector, or local government entities. • Strategy for project sustainability • Integration of gender considerations into the project plan (see Appendix I).
Project Management (1/2 page)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualifications, roles and responsibilities of team members, including technical and administrative staff.
Research Output Reporting (1/2 page)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link project activities to outputs/deliverables: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Describe project outputs intended as deliverables
Work Plan (not included in page limit)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timeline for the entire project period by activity, indicating what, when, by whom and where, using the provided work plan template • Describe the key steps for implementing your idea for at most nine months only.
Budget (no page limits)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use provided Excel Application Budget Template • The budget must detail how the challenge funding will be applied. Please note that the average grants will range between \$30,000 and \$50,000. The total award for all the applications will not be more than \$200,000. If you already have or plan to have additional funding sources and/or expect to receive non-monetary contributions, include them in the budget. When making a budget, ineligible commodities and services must not be included. The sub-recipient is required to monitor, report, and comply with the requirements of ADS 591 - Financial Audits of USAID Contractors, Recipients, and Host Government Entities.
Budget Narrative/ Justification (no page limits)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed budget narrative that explains each cost, including cost associated with research translation activities. Use the provided Budget Narrative Template
Appendices	
List of References (Bibliography)	
PI Qualifications (maximum 2 pages each)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum vitae (CV) of the PI (use the provided CV Template)
Collaborator qualifications (maximum 2 pages each)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum vitae (CV) of any Co-PIs (use the provided CV Template)

4. EVALUATION OF APPLICATIONS

LASER PULSE and GUCC will conduct a peer review for submitted Applications, followed by Consensus Reviewer Panel meetings organized by sector/thematic area, to discuss the reviews based on the criteria listed below. Selected Applications will be recommended to USAID for final approval prior to notification of award. Applicants are highly encouraged to develop their applications with these criteria in mind.

4.1 Evaluation Criteria

Applications will be rated based on two criteria: Research Merit and Broader Impact.

4.1.1 Research Merit

The research merit criterion encompasses two sub-criteria: (1) Attention to local context and leveraging local capacity, as well as (2) Technical merit:

I. Sub-criterion 1: Attention to local context and leveraging local capacity

To what extent does the research plan take into account the local social, cultural, and economic contexts in Karamoja in framing the development challenge, research questions, and research methodology/approach? To what extent does the Application appropriately leverage the team's experience with community engagement, the private sector, or government entities in Karamoja sub-region?

II. Sub-criterion 2: Technical merit

To what extent is the technical plan for carrying out the proposed activities well-reasoned, well-organized, and based on a sound rationale? To what extent does the proposed research build off or leverage the team's ongoing or completed research projects or learning projects? To what extent does the proposed research explore innovative concepts and methodologies?

4.1.2 Broader Impacts

This criterion encompasses the potential to benefit society and contribute to the achievement of specific, desired outcomes for LASER PULSE; and will be judged based on these sub-criteria:

I. Sub-criterion 1: Embedded Research Translation

To what extent does the Application reflect LASER PULSE's Embedded Research Translation model? Key considerations for the model are:

- a. *Assessment of the appropriateness of the translation partner(s) and the extent to which the partner's (or partners') role(s) in implementing policy and/or program change is explicitly detailed.*
- b. *Extent to which the Application captures the collaborative process by which researcher(s) and translation partner(s) will work together, including how the research topic was identified.*
- c. *Assessment of the potential impact of the research translation product(s) to be developed, including feasibility of the plan for wider dissemination and any budget-related considerations for the translation strategy.*

II. Sub-criterion 2: Gender Mainstreaming

How well does the proposed research project identify relevant gender issues for the specific context and how has the consideration of these contributed to the overall research design? How will the team composition promote gender-inclusive participation and contribute to inform the research focus and implementation at all stages?

III. Sub-criterion 3: Other Societal Impacts

What is the potential of the proposed activities to benefit the community/society beyond the scope of the project?

4.2 Evaluation Process

LASER PULSE and GUCC staff will conduct a preliminary screening of Applications to ensure they are complete and conform to instructions and requirements.

The screened Applications will be separated into respective technical sector groups and reviewed by a panel consisting of technical experts assembled by LASER PULSE and GUCC in consultation with USAID. The evaluation criteria emphasize the strengths and weaknesses of each sub-criterion and the overall adjectival rating for the main criteria (RM and BI). Each Application will be evaluated based on the main criteria (RM and BI) and sub-criteria described above. Reviewers are required to provide written narratives on the “strengths” and “weaknesses” of each sub-criterion and the adjectival rating based on the scale of “Excellent (E)”, “Very Good (V)”, “Good (G)”, “Fair (F)”, and “Poor (P)”, according to the descriptions in [Table I](#). Additionally, Reviewers will also provide overall adjectival rating for the main criteria (RM and BI).

After the individual reviews have been completed, LASER PULSE will conduct a Consensus Reviewer Panel for each of the technical sectors, to deliberate on the review comments and determine a final consensus rating for each Application. The Consensus Panel will also recommend the Applications into one of three funding recommendation categories - “Fund”, “Fund if Possible” and “Do not Fund” - according to those final ratings. LASER PULSE, in consultation with USAID, will make the final selection of successful Applications based on the criteria listed above in addition to regulatory and geographic factors that may be relevant to individual Applications. USAID will provide final review and approval for the selected awards. While 4 to 6 awards are anticipated as a result of this request for Applications, LASER PULSE reserves the right to fund any or none of the Applications submitted. All proposed activities that occur outside of the United States require concurrence of the respective USAID Mission(s). Additional regulatory assessments may also be made. As such, Applicants may be asked to provide additional information to USAID if your application is shortlisted for a potential award.

Table I. Rating Definition for Research Merit and Broader Impact Sub-Criteria

Adjectival Rating	Descriptive Statement
Excellent	Outstanding Application in all aspects. Applicant fully addresses all aspects of the criterion and convincingly demonstrates that it will meet the RFA objectives. Weaknesses, if any, can be easily addressed.
Very Good	Strong Application in all aspects. Applicant fully addresses all aspects of the criterion and convincingly demonstrates a likelihood of meeting the RFA objectives. Weaknesses, if any, can be easily addressed.
Good	Applicant addresses all aspects of the criterion and demonstrates the ability to meet the RFA objectives but shows some weaknesses, yet the positives of the Application outweigh the negatives.
Fair	Applicant does not address all aspects of the criterion nor is evidence presented indicating the likelihood of successfully meeting the RFA objectives. Significant weaknesses are demonstrated and clearly outweigh any strengths presented.
Poor	Applicant does not address all aspects of the criterion and the information presented indicates a strong likelihood of failure to meet the RFA objectives.

5. APPENDICES

Appendix I – LASER PULSE Gender Analysis

Researchers responding to this RFA must consider the questions below when designing Applications. ***Please do not answer these questions as written in this Appendix. Instead, show and embed gender considerations into the research Application (focus, tools, analysis, recommendations, and translation plan) that these questions have been considered to the extent possible and relevant.***

Note that gender does not mean women. Gender refers to socially constructed norms and concepts about masculinity and femininity. These norms cut across all other aspects of an individual, as relates to his or her race, class, religion, ethnicity, ability, and age. Research has shown that gender norms are remarkably resilient across cultures [[World Bank Gender Portal](#)].

The LASER PULSE research Award Application will require Applicants to apply a ‘gendered lens’ to the research translation that they propose, so that LASER PULSE does not fund work that reinforces harmful gender norms, or fails to take advantage of opportunities to address gender norms to promote development and human rights goals.

Research Considerations²

In formulating your Application, please ensure that you have:

- 1) Discussed the relevant gendered social inequalities and/or gender gaps.
- 2) Identified any direct and indirect problem impacts and how they vary by gender.
- 3) Described how these differential impacts inform the research project design.
- 4) Described the relevance of gender considerations to any human subjects research.
- 5) Reviewed literature relating to gender differences and implications of gender to the research field.
- 6) Show that sex-disaggregated (by biological sex of subjects) and gender-sensitive data³ (contextual/ situational) will be collected and analyzed throughout the research cycle, and included in the final publication and research translation products.
- 7) Demonstrate how differentiated outcomes and impacts on women and men are considered.
- 8) Ensure that all questionnaires, surveys, focus groups, etc. (when included) are also designed to unravel potentially relevant sex and/or gender differences in your data. Particularly, describe how translation products, including policy recommendations, physical products, or practices, could result in subsequent gender-differentiated outcomes.

Resources for Gender Analysis

- [USAID's Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy](#)
- CARE Gender Marker Guidance: https://insights.careinternational.org.uk/images/in-practice/Gender-marker/CARE_Gender-Marker-Guidance_new-colors1.pdf
- <https://www.feedthefuture.gov/the-womens-empowerment-in-agriculture-index>

Appendix 2 – Glossary of Selected Key Words

Collaboration

Willingness to work together in an open and supportive manner to advance the work of LASER PULSE to achieve its goals and objectives; applies to LASER PULSE staff in their interactions with USAID and research teams (e.g. HEI researchers, development actors) that are recipients of LASER-funded awards. Also applies to HEI researchers and development translation partner(s) involved in their funded research.

Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI)

Each research team receiving an award will be composed of a Principal Investigator (PI) affiliated with the prime recipient, as well as one or more Co-PI(s). LASER PULSE defines Co-PI as a key member of the research team (who is not the PI) that also serves as the point of contact for their institution. If there is more than one team member from a given institution, said institution will inform LASER PULSE who will be their designated Co-PI.

² Adapted from <https://www.genderportal.eu/projects/gender-eu-funded-research-toolkit-and-training>

³ <https://www.oecd.org/dev/38640915.pdf>

Development Practitioner(s)

Individual persons engaged in the design, planning, and/or implementation of local, regional, national, or international development programs/projects. This definition refers to personnel of NGOs and community-based organizations; but it can also include individuals representing governments or the private sector in an implementation capacity (e.g., extension agents) as opposed to a funding capacity. Under certain circumstances (e.g., co-creation of research questions), donor staff may also fall under this definition.

Development Stakeholders

Any entity involved in international development funding, promotion, and/or implementation, as well as the intended beneficiaries (e.g. local communities and their citizens).

Higher Education Institution

Based upon USAID documents, LASER PULSE defines a Higher Education Institution (HEI) as a tertiary education institution that provides educational opportunities that build on secondary education, providing learning activities in specialized fields. It aims at learning at a high level of complexity and specialization. This may include public or private universities, colleges, and training institutes.

Embedded Research Translation

An iterative co-design process among academics, practitioner(s), and other stakeholders in which research is intentionally applied to a development challenge.

Translation Partners

In this RFA, LASER PULSE uses the term “Translation Partners” to refer to Development Practitioner (s) (see definition above) that are, or are intended to be paired with researchers as part of a team submitting an Application.

For More Information

Please reach out to the RFA team on this email: applications@ranlab.org