

# KENYA CONSERVANCIES FUND

## Call for Concepts 2025

**“Catalytic Small Grants for Community-Led  
Conservation and Climate Resilience”**

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### Funding Information

**Concept Note Submission Deadline: 19 October 2025**

#### Contact & Application Details

Apply online at: [grants@kwcakenya.com](mailto:grants@kwcakenya.com)

Inquiries: [grants@kwcakenya.com](mailto:grants@kwcakenya.com) Mobile: +254 708-418-522

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by the German Bundestag

# KCF: Application Information

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# Funded by IKI Small Grants “Funding Institutions” Programme

## 1. Introduction

Kenya Wildlife Conservancies Association (KWCA) is announcing a call for proposals through the Kenya Conservancies Fund (KCF) - a dedicated Fund designed to deliver catalytic funding directly to conservancies. The Fund offers simplified, accessible grants that enable conservancies to advance biodiversity conservation, strengthen governance systems, and build climate resilience within their landscapes.

To implement this initiative, KWCA is partnering with the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH under the International Climate Initiative (IKI) Small Grants – Funding Institutions programme, a strategic financing mechanism of the German Federal Government. Through this collaboration, IKI provides both financial and technical support to help KWCA operationalize the KCF, ensuring that catalytic funding reaches community conservancies and enables them to deliver measurable impacts in biodiversity conservation, good governance, and climate resilience.

### Purpose of the Kenya Conservancies Fund (KCF)

KCF is a dedicated financing mechanism hosted and managed by KWCA. Its purpose is to:

Provide small grants to conservancies to enhance biodiversity conservation, improve areas under effective management, and strengthen climate-change adaptation efforts.

Support governance improvements, financial sustainability, and inclusive leadership across Kenya’s conservancy network.

Serve as a locally led, transparent, and accessible fund, ensuring that conservancies especially those often overlooked by traditional donors can secure resources to conserve wildlife and support sustainable community livelihoods.



## Call Objectives

The KCF - Small Grants Call seeks to strengthen community-led conservation and climate resilience across Kenya's emerging and nascent conservancies. Hosted and managed by the KWCA with support from the IKI Small Grants – Funding Institutions programme and implemented through GIZ, the call invites proposals that will expand conserved landscapes, empower local governance, and create sustainable nature-based livelihoods.

This funding opportunity will establish an accessible Fund that will support 12 new and emerging conservancies for a funding period not more than 18 months.

The main objectives of this call are to:



### **Enhance Biodiversity Conservation**

Support community-led interventions that improves land under conservancy management, strengthen wildlife conservation, and promote ecosystem restoration.



### **Strengthen Governance and Management**

Build institutional capacity, leadership, and transparency within conservancies to achieve inclusive and equitable governance.



### **Promote Climate-Resilient Livelihoods**

Develop and diversify nature-based enterprises that help communities adapt to and mitigate climate change impacts.

## 2. Eligibility and Selection Criteria

### 2.1 Eligibility of Applicants

**Who may apply:** Registered community conservancies in Kenya that demonstrate legal recognition for example but not limited to Registrar of Societies or Community Land Act registration.

#### Requirements:

- Valid governance structure and functional board/management committee.
- Proven ability to implement small-scale conservation and livelihood projects.
- Capacity to co-finance or provide in-kind contributions is an added advantage.

#### Ineligible Applicants

- Government agencies.
- For-profit entities.
- Individuals or unregistered groups.

### 2.2 Eligible Activities

#### Eligible Activities

The project will finance capacity building, small-grant implementation, and learning activities that strengthen governance, conservation, and financial sustainability of emerging conservancies.

Key interventions include:

**1 Capacity & Governance** – Training and mentorship in leadership, financial management, and policy development; preparation of constitutions, by-laws, and management plans.

**2 Biodiversity Conservation** – Rangeland restoration, ecological monitoring, wildlife and habitat protection, and community awareness initiatives, supported by basic non-permanent infrastructure (e.g., signage, shade structures).

**3 Sustainable Livelihoods** – Development of nature-based enterprises such as bee-keeping, eco-tourism micro-ventures, and value-chain activities (e.g., honey or craft products), including limited start-up equipment and market-linkage support.

**4 Knowledge & Learning** – Monitoring visits, data collection, and dissemination of lessons through reports and workshops; review and strengthening of KWCA's small-grant mechanism.

Please be informed that the eligible costs must be in line with your submitted budget and must be according to [\*GIZ guidelines\*](#). All expenditures will comply with GIZ procurement rules, avoid ineligible costs (e.g., permanent construction, medicines, or chemicals without prior approval).

### 3. Funding Tiers & Conservancy Categories

KCF will provide tiered grant support aligned to a conservancy's growth stage and specific needs. Funding is available for Emerging (New), Nascent, and Early-Mature conservancies, with grant amounts ranging from EUR 47,625 to EUR 70,000 (about KES 6.5 million to KES 9 million).

This stage-based approach ensures that each conservancy receives resources appropriate to its governance capacity, operational maturity, and conservation priorities.

| Conservancy Type                           | Tier 1 – Emerging   | Tier 2 – Nascent   | Tier 3 – Early-Mature   |
|--|---|--|---|
|  | Newly established, high-potential conservancies ready to scale  | Conservancies with foundational systems and early project experience   | Conservancies with established governance and proven conservation impact  |
| Key Characteristics (Minimum Requirements) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legally registered with an active board or interim committee providing strategic direction.</li> <li>• Foundational governance documents (constitution/by-laws) and at least one Annual General Meeting completed.</li> <li>• Dedicated financial account and basic bookkeeping that can produce clear financial records.</li> <li>• Initial management or grazing plan highlighting priority conservation actions and community benefits.</li> <li>• Demonstrates strong community commitment and clear vision for growth.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Functioning board with regular, minuted meetings and emerging policy framework (finance, procurement, conflict-resolution).</li> <li>• Annual budget and financial statements with basic internal controls; at least one year of successfully managing partner or donor funds.</li> <li>• Dedicated staff member or structured volunteer management team.</li> <li>• Active community engagement and benefit-sharing mechanisms.</li> <li>• Early implementation of habitat management or wildlife monitoring initiatives.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experienced board and management team with clear roles and performance oversight.</li> <li>• Audited financial statements and robust internal controls; demonstrated capacity to co-manage multi-year donor funding.</li> <li>• Approved management or business plan guiding conservation, tourism, and livelihood activities.</li> <li>• Proven results in biodiversity conservation, climate-resilient livelihoods, and inclusive governance.</li> </ul> |
| Grant Range                                | EUR 47,625<br>(≈ KES 6.1 M)   | EUR 55,000<br>(≈ KES 7.2 M)  | EUR 70,000<br>(≈ KES 9 M)   |



## 4. KCF Capacity Development Approach

KWCA will deliver a comprehensive support package to strengthen each grantee's governance, financial, and conservation capacity:

- **Targeted Training:** Structured modules on financial management and compliance, inclusive governance and leadership, monitoring & evaluation, and climate-biodiversity management.
- **Mentorship:** Pairing grantees with mature conservancies for practical coaching, site visits, and strategic guidance.

- **Peer Learning:** Regular forums and field exchanges for knowledge sharing, innovation, and partnership building.
- **Ongoing Technical Support:** Continuous on-site and remote backstopping to help conservancies implement plans and meet grant standards.

This blended approach equips emerging, nascent, and early-mature conservancies with the skills and systems needed to manage grants effectively and achieve lasting conservation impact.



## 5. Selection Criteria

### 5.1 Evaluation Process

The review process will be **fair, transparent, and free of discrimination:**

- An **independent Review Committee** of technical and financial experts will screen and score concepts and proposals using a standardized rubric.
- A **Conflict of Interest Policy** requires all reviewers to declare and avoid conflicts.
- Selection criteria include:
  - o Financial sustainability and feasibility of the proposed project.
  - o Governance and management capacity of the conservancy.
  - o Conservation impact and alignment with KCF objectives.
  - o Community benefits and inclusivity, with attention to gender and youth engagement.

## Concept Evaluation Matrix

(Total Possible Score: 130 points)

| Criteria   | Description of What Is Assessed  | Score       |
|--|--|-------------|
| <b>Conservancy Capacity</b>                            | Evaluates legal registration, governance, staffing, financial systems, and community engagement to confirm the institution can manage and report on grant funds. | /60         |
| <b>Conservation Performance &amp; Community Impact</b> | Assesses ecological significance, past achievements, community participation, and inclusion of women and youth in conservation and decision-making.              | /30         |
| <b>Project Description</b>                             | Reviews clarity, feasibility, and relevance of proposed activities, including realistic budgeting, timelines, and expected measurable outcomes.                  | /30         |
| <b>Total Score:</b>                                    |  | <b>/120</b> |

## Full Proposal Evaluation Matrix

(Total Possible Score: 130 points)

| Section                    | Key Focus                | What is Assessed   | Max Score |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|--|-----------|
| <b>Project Description</b> | Clarity & Relevance      | Problem definition with evidence; SMART goals; logical and eligible activities; realistic and measurable outcomes; identification of direct/indirect beneficiaries including women & youth; engagement of relevant partners; alignment with conservancy management plan and Fund objectives; clear monitoring indicators and responsibilities. | /45       |
| <b>Project Workplan</b>    | Implementation Readiness | Completeness of activity schedule; realistic durations; alignment of timeline with budget and staffing; identification of resource gaps.   | /20       |
| <b>Project Budget</b>      | Financial Soundness      | Budget within funding ceiling; cost realism and justification; efficient allocation across activities; cost-effectiveness and compliance with budget guidelines.   | /20       |



|  |                        |  |             |
|--|------------------------|--|-------------|
| <b>Execution Capacity &amp; Sustainability</b> | Institutional Strength | Adequacy of qualified personnel; active board oversight; track record of successful projects; identification of technical support needs; long-term sustainability through revenue streams, community ownership, partnerships, and potential co-funding or in-kind contributions. | /20         |
| <b>Risks &amp; Challenges</b>                  | Risk Management        | Identification of environmental, financial, or operational risks; clarity of monitoring/reporting mechanisms; actionable mitigation measures and stakeholder engagement for conflict resolution.   | /15         |
| <b>Total Score:</b>                            |                        |  | <b>/130</b> |

## 5.2. Due Diligence & Capacity Assessment

To set everyone up for success, **shortlisted applicants will take part in a supportive due-diligence and capacity check.** This is designed to understand each conservancy's current systems and identify areas where the grant can help strengthen capacity not to exclude anyone. The purpose is to highlight strengths, spot gaps early, and offer tailored capacity-building where needed whether a conservancy is just starting out or already well established.

- 1 Legal Readiness** – Confirm basic registration, tax status, and any key permits.
- 2 Organizational Capacity** – Look at governance structure, staffing, and core policies

(finance, procurement, HR) at whatever stage they currently stand.

- 3 Financial & Management Practices** – Review existing budgeting or record-keeping and any experience handling donor or community funds, with flexibility for young conservancies still building systems.
- 4 Risk Awareness & Support** – Jointly identify potential financial, operational, or environmental/social risks and create a simple risk register that can be updated together during the grant period.

## 5.3. Key Policies & Compliance

- **Ethics & Code of Conduct:** Zero tolerance for corruption.
- **Safeguards:** Adherence to IKI Environmental & Social Standards.
- **Grievance Mechanism:** Complaints via [complaints@kwcakenya.com](mailto:complaints@kwcakenya.com)

## 6. Call Application Process

### 6.1 Concept Note Submission

**Deadline:** 19 October 2025 at 11:59 p.m. EAT

**Submission:** Via KWCA Grants Email Address:  
[grants@kwcakenya.com](mailto:grants@kwcakenya.com)

**Inquiries:** Applicants may send questions or clarification requests to [grants@kwcakenya.com](mailto:grants@kwcakenya.com) on or before 12<sup>th</sup> October 2025.

### 6.2 Full Proposal (Shortlisted Applicants Only)

Proposal, detailed budget and work plan.

**Deadline:** 24<sup>th</sup> November 2025  
at 11:59 p.m. EAT.

### 6.3 Download Application Templates:

Concept Note Form

Full Proposal Application Templates -  
by shortlisted conservancies

- Full Proposal Template
- Budget Template
- Workplan Template





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