



THE DIGITAL MALAWI PROGRAM PHASE I: DIGITAL FOUNDATIONS PROJECT

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TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR CONSULTANCY SERVICES TO DEVELOP CONDITIONS OF SERVICE, PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK AND A SALARY STRUCTURE FOR MAREN

1. INTRODUCTION

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is now globally recognized as an essential tool for promoting competitiveness, job creation, sustainable development, and overall poverty reduction. A combination of widespread access to broadband and a robust ICT services ecosystem can offer a powerful platform for reducing poverty, improving human development and increasing government transparency and efficiency. ICTs have the potential to transform business and government - driving entrepreneurship, innovation and economic growth and breaking down barriers of distance and cost in the delivery of services. It is in recognition of these developmental advantages that the Government of Malawi is implementing a new project in the realm of ICT – the Digital Malawi Project.

2. DIGITAL MALAWI PROJECT

The overall aim of the Digital Malawi Project is to extend and improve access to critical ICT infrastructure for the public and private sectors; improve ICT governance; improve access to government services; and facilitate provision of e-services thereby enhancing public service delivery.

The proposed project has been divided into four components, namely; digital ecosystem, digital connectivity (infrastructure), digital platforms and services (e-Government) and project management:

- i. The digital ecosystem component will address capacity gaps and provide much needed technical assistance in the Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) involved in ICT policy management, sector regulation and Government operations. Technical assistance provided to the Malawi Communications Regulation Authority (MACRA) is a significant part of this component. It is envisaged that the interventions will result in reduced prices, higher quality and a wider availability of various ICT services for all the people of Malawi.
- ii. The digital connectivity component will provide affordable, high quality connectivity services to select public institutions, rural underserved areas and higher education institutions in Malawi. This component envisages providing connectivity services to Malawi's research and education institutions through the Malawi Research and Education Network (MAREN). The component further provides for operational funding for the establishing and running of MAREN (which was previously dormant). The rural broadband access initiative will leverage the universal service fund at MACRA to connect underserved areas.
- iii. The digital platforms and services component encompasses government shared services, an interoperability framework (Data Enterprise Architecture), infrastructure (such as data centers) and some demonstrative applications such as an e-procurement system.
- iv. The fourth component, project management, covers operational essentials of implementing the project such as office rentals, transport, staff wages and other requirements.

3. The Malawi Research and Education Network (MAREN)

MAREN, the National Research and Education Network (NREN) for Malawi, was established in 2007 in order to provide affordable, reliable and dedicated interconnectivity services for the research and education sectors in Malawi. Its founding members were the University of Malawi, Mzuzu University and the Department of Agricultural Research Services. To date, MAREN membership has been opened up to all tertiary education and research institutions and this has seen MAREN providing services to institutions like Malawi Adventist University, Johns Hopkins University Project, Mercy James Institute for Pediatric Surgery and Intensive Care as well as the Malawi Liverpool Wellcome Trust on top of providing services to Mzuzu University, University of Malawi, Malawi University of Science and Technology and Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

The MAREN secretariat, comprising an initial staff complement of three, has been operational since November 2018 on funding from the World Bank. The three members of staff were hired by the Digital Malawi Project as consultants to facilitate operationalization of MAREN. Now that MAREN's data network is operational, the next logical step is for MAREN to move towards employment of its own staff and therefore conditions of service, performance management and a salary structure for the staff are the next requirement.

Through the Digital Malawi Project, MAREN has received funding and intends to use part of it for consultancy services for the development of conditions of service, performance management framework and a salary structure for its members of staff.

4. SCOPE OF WORK

The HR Consultant will develop the conditions of service, a performance management framework as well as a salary structure for MAREN staff. The consultancy will be undertaken through the following activities:

4.1 INCEPTION

The Consultant and the Client will agree on a schedule of activities proposed by the consultant. The agreed work plan will form the basis of subsequent implementation activities.

4.2 LITERATURE REVIEW

The Consultant, with support from the client, will conduct literature review on the relevant government laws and acts, conditions of service, performance management frameworks and salary structures for selected higher education and research institutions in Malawi as well as those of UbuntuNet Alliance and selected NRENs in Eastern and Southern Africa and those of local ISPs and local software development houses/tech-companies.

4.3 TECHNICAL REVIEW

Following literature review the Consultant shall draw and present an issues paper for the consideration of the Client. The issues paper will include review of the following documents and laws:

- The Labour Relations Act of Malawi
- Conditions of Service, performance management systems and Salary Structures of:
 - selected MAREN member institutions
 - the UbuntuNet Alliance
 - other NRENs in the region
 - selected local ISPs
 - selected local Mobile Network Operators

- selected local software development houses/ tech-companies
- Et cetera

After the review of the above, the Consultant will draw recommendations to drive substantive and procedural matters in the drafting of conditions of service, performance management system and a salary structure. Consent will be granted to the issues paper prior to proceeding to the next phase. The issues paper will be presented to the MAREN Board for input and endorsement.

4.4 DRAFTING AND PRESENTATION

Following the acceptance of the issues paper, the Consultant will draft the conditions of service, performance management framework and a salary structure for MAREN. The draft will be presented to the MAREN Board so that s/he is able to explain the context and concepts, obtain buy-in and build consensus. Thereafter, based on the input from the Board, the Consultant will present final or revised Conditions of Service, performance management framework and a Salary Structure to the Client.

5. LEVEL OF EFFORT AND CONTRACT DURATION

The level of effort required will be 50 effort days over a five-month period.

6. QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE FOR CONSULTING FIRM

The assignment will require an individual consultant with at least three years of experience in developing HR documents including conditions of service, performance management systems and salary structures. The consultant should be a holder of at least a Bachelor's Degree in Human Resources, Law, Business or Public Administration and related fields. The Consultant will demonstrate carrying out similar assignments for at least 2 organizations in the last 5 years.