



PublicPrivate
Partnership
Commission

DIGITAL MALAWI PROGRAM PHASE I: DIGITAL FOUNDATIONS PROJECT

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TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR CONSULTANCY SERVICES TO CONDUCT A TERMINAL EVALUATION

Client: The Public Private Partnership Commission
Project: The Digital Malawi Program Phase I: Digital
Foundations Project
Contract title: Terminal Evaluation Consultant
Country: Malawi
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1. BACKGROUND

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 this that the Government of Malawi is implementing a new project in the realm of ICT – the Digital Malawi Project.

2. DIGITAL MALAWI PROJECT

The overarching aim of the Digital Malawi Project is to digitize public services while at the same time promoting the development of a resilient digital economy in the country. As such, the Digital Malawi Project aims 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 project has been divided into four components, namely digital ecosystems, digital connectivity (infrastructure), digital platforms and services (e-Government) and project management. The project started in 2017 and is expected to end in June 2024.

The Project Development Objective is to increase access to affordable, high quality internet services for government, businesses and citizens and to improve the government's capacity to deliver digital public services.

3. OBJECTIVE

The overall objective of the Digital Malawi project evaluation will be to assess the extent to which the project achieved its overall objectives and desired outputs as identified in the project appraisal document and annual working plans as well as articulate lessons

learned to inform the subsequent phases of Digital Malawi program. More specifically, the evaluation will aim to:

- a. Review the effectiveness of the overall Project interventions, its main achievements and overall impact of the project in transforming public services, society and digital economy in Malawi;
- b. Review and evaluate the extent to which project outputs have reached the intended beneficiaries;
- c. Assess the sustainability of project outputs and benefits - analyze how far has the project ensured the sustainability of the project benefits;
- d. Assess how the intervention and its results relate and contribute to the achievement of the goals of Malawi 2063, AU Agenda 2063, and the Sustainable Development Goals;
- e. Identify lessons learned and success stories from the project implementation and the interventions to inform the design of Phase II of Digital Malawi;
- f. Identify areas that need subsequent support and dedicated investments.

4. SCOPE OF WORK

The evaluation presents an excellent opportunity to assess the achievements of this project and its overall objective added value to digital transformation in Malawi. Further to this, the objectives of the evaluation will be to:

- a. Provide learning and accountability for project allocations.
- b. Assess the achievement of project results supported by evidence (i.e., progress of project's outcome and outputs targets).
- c. Assess the contribution and alignment of the project to relevant national development plans or digitalization policies.
- d. Assess the contribution of the project results towards the relevant outcome and outputs presented in the Project Appraisal Document and in restructuring paper.
- e. Assess any cross-cutting issues including gender equality and women's empowerment that the project was able (or failed) to address.

- f. Examination on the use of funds and value for money.
- g. Assess the impact of COVID19 on project's implementation.
- h. Develop a summary brief (up to 30 pages) that highlights project results with an understanding that it will be re-used for various reporting and possibly as a basis for media promotions.

4.1 THE EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR ASSESSING THE PROJECT

The following evaluation criteria should be employed to assess the Project and they are listed below:

4.1.1 Relevance

With regard to the relevance, this assessment with endeavor to respond to the following questions:

- a. Are the activities and outputs of the project consistent with the overall goal and the accomplishment of its objectives?
- b. To what extent are the chosen implementing partners appropriate/relevant to achieving the project's objectives?
- c. To what extent did the project address challenges and gaps related to the overall objectives of the project?
- d. To what extent did the designed interventions address the needs and interests of the target group and subgroups (e.g. men, women, youth, disabled under all categories)?
- e. Were the activities and outputs of the project consistent with the intended impacts and effects?
- f. Are the activities dropped in this phase of the project still remain to be relevant and shall be considered for inclusion under Phase II of Digital Malawi?

4.1.2 Effectiveness:

The assessment will address the following research questions:

- a. To what extent was the project's internal management systems and implementation arrangements effective in achieving project results?

- b. To what extent were project objectives achieved or likely to be achieved?
- c. To what extent was the target group reached and how effective was their participation?
- d. What factors were crucial for the achievement or non-achievement of the project objectives (strengths and weaknesses)?

4.1.3 Efficiency:

The assessment is expected to shed light on:

- a. Whether the relationship between input of resources and results achieved are appropriate and justifiable;
- b. The extent to which resources have been managed economically and there were alternatives for achieving the same results with less inputs/funds;
- c. Were activities, outputs and objectives achieved on time and whether the project implementation, monitoring and reporting was efficient in ensuring timely achievement of project outputs and outcomes.

4.1.4 Impact:

The assessment will address the following questions:

- a. What real difference have the interventions made to the beneficiaries of the project and digital development in general? This may also be demonstrated through end user interviews and quotes from beneficiaries.
- b. What is the potential impact of the interventions on the lives of women, men, youth and people living with disabilities? Describe the changes with specific examples?

4.1.5 Sustainability:

With regard to sustainability, this evaluation will try to provide answers to the following questions:

- a. To what extent are the benefits of the project likely to continue after funding is ceased?
- b. Do the partnering institutions, such as innovation hubs supported under the project, have the capacity to continue innovating?

- c. Is there a potential business case to continue providing the project's interventions?
- d. To what degree did the implementing partners feel ownership of the project?
- e. Does the project demonstrate a potential case for the inclusion of women and youth at scale?
- f. What are the major factors that influenced the achievement or nonachievement of the sustainability of the project outcomes and results?

4.1.6 Lessons Learnt:

Draw conclusions, lessons learned and provide recommendations for how the design of Phase II could be improved:

- a. Identify key lessons emerging from the project, implementation- articulating what has worked well and what has not worked well and why;
- b. Identify key elements that helped or hindered the success and sustainability of the project's deliverables;
- c. Provide key recommendations for improving the project's design including from technical and institutional perspectives.

4.1.7 Source and document success stories and tracer study

- d. Check the effectiveness of the project components by tracking a representative sample of beneficiaries such as those who received digital skills training, proof of concept grants, access free-Wi-Fi, higher education students accessing campus Wi-Fi, etc. to establish what they are currently doing as part of evidence of the program's relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. The beneficiaries (target number is 50), shall be associated with the following areas that have been supported by the project: Provision of 30+ WiFi zones, which provide free internet to ordinary people, which proved to be most critical during the COVID-19 pandemic and during the recent cyclone Freddy.
- e. Grants to ten (10) innovation hubs, which provided digital skills training to over 5,000 youth, which helped young people get better jobs.

- f. Provision of low-cost internet connectivity to over 40 educational institutions spread across 65 sites, through MAREN, as well as campus Wi-Fi at 7 public universities in Malawi.
- g. Provision of internet connectivity to 500 government institutions, which includes hospitals, and postal offices among others.
- h. Construction of the Green data center planned to be made operational in 2024, which is intended to host valuable government data for multiple MDAs.
- i. Development of Phase I of the e-Procurement solution for PPDA that is designed to streamline and make the procurement processes more efficient.
- j. Implementation of a data exchange platform intended to facilitate data exchange between various agencies with the aim to streamline service delivery.

5. METHOD OF ASSIGNMENT

This Evaluation will be carried out by an Independent Consultant and will engage a wide array of partners, stakeholders, and beneficiaries. The Consultant is expected to take a “Theory of Change” (TOC) Approach to determining causal links between the interventions the Project has supported and observed progress by developing a logical model of how the projects interventions are expected to lead to long-term sustainability and durability of results.

5.1 METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES

Methodological approaches may include employment of a combination of both qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods and instruments such as:

5.1.1 Desk Review

A desk review of all relevant documentation should be carried out of the key strategies and documents underpinning the work of the Digital Malawi Project and analysis of other data sources and methods. This would include a review of inter alia:-

- a. Project documents

- b. Results framework
- c. Project reports.
- d. Annual Work Plans and Budgets.
- e. Monitoring reports.

This would entail collection, analysis and presentation of Project M&E data from inception to closeout.

5.1.2 Field Data Collection

Following the desk review, the evaluator will build on the documented evidence through an agreed set of field and interview methodologies, including:

- a. Semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders including key government counterparts, donor community members, representatives of key civil society organizations, and implementing partners:
- b. Field visits to project sites and partner institutions for on-site validation of key tangible outputs and interventions
- c. Survey questionnaires where appropriate
- d. Participatory observation, and rapid appraisal techniques when needed
- e. Key informant and focus group discussions with beneficiaries including youth, men, women, and stakeholders.
- f. Other methods such as outcome mapping, observational visits, group discussions, etc.

All interviews should be undertaken in full confidence and anonymity. Special attention will need to be paid to preserving the privacy of individuals. At conclusion of the study, all data collected should be anonymized before turning it over to the Government of Malawi (represented by PPPC), in a format that does not allow for tracing answers to individuals.

The target number of beneficiaries to be interviewed shall be a minimum of 50 or more. The final report should not assign specific comments to individuals.

Consultant will ensure triangulation of the various data sources, ensure maximum data validity, and reliability of data (quality).

The consultant shall compute a statistically representative sample size based on a 5% margin of error, 95% confidence level and 50% response distribution. Gender representativeness of the sample should also be enforced.

The final methodological approach including the interview scheduling, field visits, and data to be used in the Evaluation should be clearly outlined in the inception report and be fully discussed and agreed upon.

6. DELIVERABLES

The consulting firm will produce the following specific outputs:

- a. An inception report (maximum 10 pages) outlining the approach/methodology (including sampling techniques and data analysis plan) roadmap of activities to be implemented and survey tools including questionnaire/survey, guide for focus group discussions, and key informant interview guides. The inception report shall also include an annotated outline of the final evaluation report.
- b. A draft report to be reviewed, validated and approved by the PPC and stakeholders;
- c. A final project evaluation report (the report should be logically structured, contain evidence-based findings, conclusions, lessons and recommendations);
- d. A final compilation of success stories and learning brief with impact stories (maximum of 30 pages) that could be published and shared with external audiences
- e. Electronic copies of all quantitative data collected as well as the transcripts of the qualitative sessions conducted.

7. EXPECTED DURATION AND LEVEL OF EFFORT

The study is expected to take 100 man-days over a four-month period. The indicative effort and timelines are presented below:

No.	Activity	Effort Days	Delivery Timeline
1	An Inception Report with a Desk review of documents and reports	10	Within two (2) weeks after effective date
2	Field data collection, interviews with key stakeholders and beneficiaries and analysis of project documents, reports and other data sources	70	Within ten (10) weeks after effective date
2	Data Compilation, Cleaning Analysis, and Preparation of the Draft Report	20	Within fourteen (13) weeks after effective date
3	A final compilation of success stories and learning brief with impact stories	10	
4	Review and Validation Meeting	7	One Week after Circulation of Draft Report
5	Final Evaluation Report	12	Within sixteen (16) weeks after effective date
Total Effort Days		120	

8. DURATION OF SERVICES

The assignment is expected to be conducted over a period of four months.

9. CONSULTANT QUALIFICATIONS

To be qualified, the firm must demonstrate to have capacity to execute the detailed tasks. At a minimum, the proposed team for the assignment must possess the following qualifications: -

a) Team Leader

- An advanced degree in Economics, Development Studies, Statistics, Project Management, Development Evaluation, ICT, or Data Science

- At least 5 years' experience in conducting evaluations work or research with evidence of at least three (3) similar evaluations conducted. Prior experience in Malawi is a plus.
- Extensive knowledge of results-based management evaluation, as well as participatory M&E methodologies and approaches.
- Demonstrate previous experience in developing and evaluating M & E systems for development programmes nationally or internationally.
- Experience in applying SMART indicators, reconstructing or validating baseline scenarios, and technical expertise in setting up databases and dashboards.
- Knowledge on mainstreaming gender and youth affairs in projects and programmes

b) Technical Expert – ICT

- An advanced degree in Information and Communications Technology, Communications and Telecommunications Engineering, Economics, or Data Science
- At least 5 years' experience in conducting ICT research. Prior experience of conducting similar work in Malawi is a plus.
- An understanding of IT, knowledge of digital technologies and ecosystems
- Experience in analyzing and evaluating business processes, portfolio management & information system needs.

c) Communications and Documentation Expert

- A degree in Languages, Communications, Journalism or related field
- At least 5 years' experience in writing research reports, written documentaries, success stories and articles
- Excellent language and proofreading skills

d) Research Assistants

- Holder of a diploma or enrolled in degree studies in Social Sciences, Development Studies, statistics, ICT, environmental sciences or related fields.

10. CLIENT RESPONSIBILITIES

The obligations of the PPPC shall be as follows:

- a. The PPPC shall provide access to reference materials and any relevant existing reports, data and information that may be required by the Consultant
- b. Providing the Consultant with a list of all relevant stakeholders
- c. Coordinating and providing location/venue for meetings, etc.
- d. Review documentation submitted and give feedback within a timeframe of two weeks

11. CONSULTANT'S RESPONSIBILITY

All information, data and information obtained from the client shall be properly reviewed and analyzed by the consultant. All such information, data and reports shall be treated as confidential. The consultant shall make their own arrangements for document reproduction, printing and reproduction of all reports during the assignment.

12. REPORTING

The Consultant report to the Chief Executive Officer of the PPPC but shall work under the direct supervision of the Digital Malawi Project Manager. The firm shall be required to provide an update on the progress made every four weeks. Consultancy reports shall be submitted in the official Standard English Language. The reports shall be submitted electronically in both Microsoft Word and PDF formats. The Final Evaluation Report must be presented with a thorough executive summary and must be accompanied by a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation containing all the key features of the Report.

13. EVALUATOR ETHICS

The evaluation team will be held to the highest ethical standards and **is required to sign a code of conduct upon acceptance of the assignment.** This evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the World Bank Group Code of Ethics. The evaluator must safeguard the rights and confidentiality of information providers, interviewees and stakeholders through measures to ensure compliance with legal and other relevant codes governing collection of data and reporting on data. The evaluator must also ensure security of collected information before and after the evaluation and protocols to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of sources of information where that is expected. The information knowledge and data gathered in the evaluation process must also be solely used for the evaluation and not for other uses without the express authorization of the World Bank and partners.