



**DIGITAL MALAWI PROGRAM PHASE I:
DIGITAL FOUNDATIONS PROJECT**

PROJECT NUMBER : P160533

CREDIT NUMBER : 60500MW

**TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR COUNTERPART ADVISOR ON DIGITAL
CONNECTIVITY**

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

The implementation agency for the project is the Public Private Partnership Commission (PPPC).

2.0 Background

20. The Project Development Objective (PDO) for Digital Malawi Program Phase I: Malawi Digital Foundations Project 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, and targets three core enablers of digital development: (i) **Digital Ecosystem**: strengthening the laws, regulations and institutional and human capacity needed to promote ICT infrastructure investment, market competitiveness, digital engagement, job creation and innovation; (ii) **Digital Connectivity**: promoting affordable, high quality internet access for all citizens by incentivizing private sector network infrastructure development and service provision nationwide, including provision of connectivity for public institutions, and (iii) **Digital Platforms and Services**: building the technical capacity, institutions and IT infrastructure for the government to deliver services to citizens and conduct its own business digitally.

3.0 Counterpart Advisor on Connectivity

The main objective for recruiting the Counterpart Advisor is to ensure that the Public Private Partnership Commission gets sound and high quality advisory services on a need basis through the entire project cycle. It is envisaged that the Counterpart Advisor will be particularly critical during the implementation phase of the three sub-components comprising the Digital Connectivity Component of the Project. Sub-component (i) **Connectivity for Public Institutions** will support high-speed connectivity for priority public institutions throughout the country, including government offices, public services centers ('one stop shops'), primary and secondary schools, and health centers; sub-component (ii) **Connectivity for Higher Education** will support high speed connectivity and access to online academic content for higher education institutions through the Malawi Research and Education Network (MAREN), and sub-component (iii) **Innovative Rural Broadband Access Solutions** will be needed to ensure availability of affordable internet access in some rural areas and among the most marginalized populations.

The Counterpart Advisor will carry out studies to scope the activities of the component or to provide other advice in written form on these components as may be requested by the PPPC from time to time. This will include leveraging recent and emerging technological and business model innovations in broadband service delivery and the financial resources of the Universal Service Fund (USF) to incentivize and enable the private sector deploy affordable broadband Internet services in rural areas.

The advisor will support (a) a gap analysis to better understand the areas of poor coverage in the existing mobile networks; (b) the design and institutional setup of the USF; (c) financing of least-cost subsidy 'reverse auctions' for private sector deployment of shared infrastructure and mobile broadband services (3G/4G) in targeted rural areas; and (d) partnerships with the private sector, MACRA, and academia for piloting and scale-up of innovative technologies or business models for rural broadband deployment, through a challenge fund offering matching grants.

4.0 Scope of the Assignment

The transaction advisor will need to be conversant with the Government strategies in the ICT areas such Universal Service Access (Including Universal Service Fund), National Broadband Strategy, The National ICT Policy, The Digital Government Strategy, the Malawi Enterprise Architecture and Interoperability Framework, etc.

The advisor's duties will include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Support The Public Private Partnership Commission with technical expertise in the Digital Connectivity design and preparation of terms of reference and key project documentation for the whole project cycle.
 - (a) Design and implement a robust and relevant USF programme;
 - (b) Engage with MACRA and private operators on USF matters;
 - (c) Support the MACRA and task team to implement the related activities under the USF;
 - (d) Develop and implement a universal access public free WiFi model(s) that can be used by government including those with a Public-private partnerships (PPP's) that fosters investment in free WiFi infrastructure.
 - (e) Define PPP models for innovative broadband technologies or business for suburban and rural broadband deployment that boasts superior network performance, low cost, fast deployment, easy maintenance, and rich services.
2. Monitor developments in the ICT market on an ongoing basis and analyse the implications for the Digital Malawi project and for the Malawi ICT sector.
3. Validate recommendations and deliverables produced by the Transaction Advisors, other consultants and ministries and department and agencies (MDAs).
4. Assist The PPPC in coming up with an early warning system to determine potential risks likely to deter the achievement of project performance indicators at every key

stage during the project implementation and providing advice on measures to counter the potential risks.

5. Assist The PPPC to assess each milestone as to whether it leads to achievement of performance indicators and project development objective as contained in the “Malawi Technical Annex”.
6. Prepare progress report with appropriate recommendations at the completion of each task order documenting all important lessons learned so far.
7. Develop and maintain Digital Connectivity high-quality map products and online services; maintain a repository of spatial data and ensure that the data are documented and accessible.
8. Provide any other general support on Connectivity to MACRA, MAREN and eGovernment as may be required. General support could among other things include The PPPC’s efforts of public awareness programmes and targeted stakeholder interactions.
9. Besides the standard task order scheduled work, the consultant will also be expected to provide adhoc advice and support on demand to the Malawi Government.

5.0 Contract Implementation Plan

Though the services of the advisor will be required for a three year period, the actual contract implementation will be phased in three stages. The initial contract will be carried out over a one year period and work for this phase will be executed within 150 days. The second year contract will also cover a period of 70 days while the third year contract has been allocated 30 days. This contract at the end of each one year period will be renewable for the next year subject to mutual agreement by both parties.

In total the Advisor will be required to work for 250 days over a 3 year period from the signing of the first contract. Over the three year period, the Advisor will be required to make a total of 9 trips to Malawi and will be required to spend 150 of the 250 days in Malawi or working as part of this assignment in the region. The financial proposal should therefore encompass the whole three year period but should provide a breakdown of proposed costs associated each year.

The scheduling of work within each contract will be subject to agreements between the Government team and the Advisor through issuance of task orders whenever the advisors’ services are required. During each contract the client will issue task orders

requiring the consultant to assist in carrying out various tasks including ad-hoc advice and support on demand as will be outlined in each task order. Payment will be based upon delivery outputs of the tasks outlined in each task order.

6. Deliverables

Deliverables from the Advisor will be required on a Task Order basis throughout the project execution and at the end of contract. Output expected from the advisor will include:

1. Continued quality technical input in the form of various reports, charts and infographics, for all activities of the project based on approved task orders.
2. Skills transfer- strong in-house skills and adequate resources for The PPP Commission to monitor progressive implementation of the project.
3. Periodic reports at the completion of each assigned task
4. Time sheets that should clearly indicate how much time was allocated for each subtask and the actual work that has been carried out during each period.
5. Final report at the end of the contract

Qualification of the consultant

The consultant will be expected to have:

1. A Master's degree in IT, telecommunication Engineering or related field.
2. Experience providing advice and implementing USF programmes and activities in Sub Saharan Africa.
3. Experience in providing technical support in similar communication related PPP projects.
4. Minimum 10 years post qualification working experience in the communication sectors.
5. Strong interpersonal and communications skills, particularly within the region.
6. Demonstrated capacity of project team-orientation work.

8.0 Reporting

The Consultant will work under direct supervision of The Public Private Partnership Commission as an implementing agency, and will report to The Chief Executive Officer of The Public Private Partnership Commission through the Project Manager.

9.0 Obligation of the consultant

The Consultant is expected to be fully self-sufficient in terms of office space, supplies, communications, computers and transport during the assignment.

10.0 Obligation of the client

The PPC will provide access to reference material and existing reports at its premises.