

DIGITAL MALAWI PROJECT

PUBLIC DISCLOSURE NOTICE OF RESETTLEMENT POLICY FRAMEWORK (RPF)

Background

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is now globally recognized as an essential tool in 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.

In recognition of the foregoing, the Government of Malawi (GoM), with funding from the International Development Association, is developing a new project in the ICT sector - the Digital Malawi Project (DMP). The total available resource envelop is US\$ 70.4 million. The overall purpose of the DMP are to increase the availability of low cost broadband services in Malawi, for both the public and private sectors, and to digitize public services in furtherance of socio-economic development objectives.

Objective of the Proposed DMP

The overall objective of the proposed DMP is to extend and improve access to critical ICT infrastructure for the public and private sectors; improve ICT governance; digitize government and public sector services; improve access to government services; and reduce ICT infrastructure and services costs by providing modern and reliable government digital systems that will facilitate provision of e-services thereby enhancing public service delivery.

Project Components

The proposed DMP has four components with each component further divided into subcomponents briefly as described below:

Component A – Digital Ecosystem, aims at creating an enabling environment through legal and regulatory reform; regulatory capacity building and institutional development; and improved ICT skills development and innovation especially amongst the nation's youth. Under this component, the project will support Malawi Communications Regulatory Authority (MACRA) in developing and maintaining an appropriate regulatory framework including improved economic regulation, data collection and analysis tools, and organizational restructuring required for effective implementation of the mandates stipulated in the Communications and Electronic Transactions Acts of 2016. Improved regulation should translate into improved consumer experiences in the industry.

Component B – Digital Connectivity, is intended to increase access to connectivity nationwide by addressing connectivity gaps for government, higher education and private consumers. The component will support a long term capacity purchase and services contract to connect all priority public institutions throughout the country such as government offices, hospitals and education institutions. The component will also support deployment and scaling up of innovative broadband access networks to underserved areas especially in the rural areas;

Component C – Digital Platforms and Services, aims at creating opportunities to transform public service delivery in Malawi using digital technologies. The component will focus on development of a Shared Digital Public Services Platform, with the aim to establish a solid foundation upon which all future digital services and applications will be built and developing human and institutional capacity of the government to deliver modern digital services. The digital platform and services will provide opportunity to the public to access various services through mobile and online platforms. Such services could include processing of passports, drivers license, business registration, birth certificates and payment of utilities and school fees. The component will also focus on development of citizen-facing digital applications and services that leverage the shared platform.

Component D – Project Management is designed to support overall project management including support for an overall project manager, a digital government services coordinator and specialists in procurement, financial management, safeguards and technology. The component will also provide funding for strategic communications and partnerships, monitoring and evaluation activities as well as funding for audits, logistics and operational overheads.

Purpose of RPF

World Bank’s environmental and social safeguard policies require the recipient country to prepare an RPF consistent with national laws and policies.

The proposed project activities fall under prescribed projects (category B) of the World Bank’s Operational Policy (OP 4.12) on involuntary resettlement. This is the case because some project activities may require temporary or permanent land acquisition. Project activities may trigger a range of potential impacts (temporary and permanent) to land use, land access and land structures. This may require compensation and resettlement assistance and procedures. This RPF, therefore, has adopted applicable principles outlined in the World Bank’s Operational Policy (OP 4.12) on involuntary resettlement into local experiences and legislation to ensure fair and transparent compensation to affected persons.

The World Bank policies also require that the RPF is disclosed to the public during project preparation. This public disclosure notice serves to inform all stakeholders and members of the general public that copies of the RPF can be accessed from PPPC website and website of the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology.

Hard copies of the RPF can be viewed during working hours from **07:30hrs to 16:30hrs** at the following offices:

The Public Private Partnership Commission
2nd Floor, Livingstone Towers
Glyn Jones Road

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**The Chief Executive Officer
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