



Ministry of Energy
Malawi Electricity Access Project

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

for

**Consultant (Individual) for Website Development of Malawi Off-Grid
Market Development Fund (Ngwee Ngwee Ngwee Fund)**



04 March 2024

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1.CONTEXT

Malawi is a landlocked country in southeastern Africa, bordered by Zambia, Tanzania and Mozambique, with a population of about 21 million people. Malawi has one of the lowest electricity access rates in the world. Currently, the electricity access rate stands at 18 percent, with 11.4 percent grid access and 6.6 percent off-grid solar. There are severe disparities between urban (42 percent) and rural areas (4 percent) for those accessing electricity from the grid.

A market assessment for off-grid solar energy supported by The World Bank suggests that up to 3.7 million households are unlikely to be connected to the grid by 2030 and thus, represent a potential market for pre-electrification solutions, such as off-grid solar. This translates to a potential market of about US\$ 265 million.

There is also an emerging off-grid solar sector, which has the potential to develop Malawi into a significant OGS market and contribute significantly to electricity access. There are over 80 companies currently operating in Malawi and an increasing trend towards selling high-quality VeraSol-certified solar home systems. However, the country is facing challenges in scaling up the OGS market. Affordability and limited access to finance are the primary factors preventing the solar companies from significantly expanding their businesses and customer base.

Many solar home system companies are providing consumer financing through a pay-as-you-go (PAYG) model, allowing installment payments for up to 36 months (with only 20 percent up-front payment), in order to make products more affordable and to expand their customer base across market segments. This makes access to adequate finance critical. However, companies have been relying on a mix of limited equity, grants and, for those who can access it, debt from specialized impact investors, to support and grow their business.

In addition to funding constraints, many off-grid solar companies have recently faced currency convertibility issues. Due to the macro-fiscal challenge in Malawi, it has become difficult for companies to convert their revenue denominated in local currency to USD or other foreign currencies, which hampers their ability to import products typically designed and manufactured in the US and China.

1.2.THE NGWEE NGWEE NGWEE FUND

The Government of Malawi (GoM) has prioritized the development of the energy sector as an enabler to the achievement of Malawi 2063 and to accelerate access to reliable energy for the socio-economic development of the country. To help the GoM to achieve this access target, the World Bank has provided financing for the implementation of the Malawi Electricity Access Project (MEAP) with the objective of increasing access to electricity from 18% to 30% of the population in Malawi. MEAP is implemented by both the Ministry of Energy (MoE) and ESCOM. The MoE is specifically responsible for establishing and operating an Off-Grid

Market Development Fund or the Ngwee Ngwee Ngwee Fund (hereafter “the Fund” or “NNNF”), which is to drive the urgent provision of energy access and to scale up the off-grid solar market. The Fund will address the challenges to scaling up the off-grid market by providing debt financing in both local and foreign currency, an RBF grant window to provide end-user subsidies, a Market Catalyst Fund (MCF) grant window and a technical assistance window.

NNNF is currently offering a USD 6 million Results-based Financing (RBF) Grant and a USD 14 million Debt facility for Off-Grid Solar (OGS) companies to reach at least 200,000 new households with OGS products in Malawi by June 2024. A minimum of USD 0.5 million of grant funding has been earmarked from the RBF Grant for market innovation initiatives from Malawian organizations or Malawian subsidiaries of international organizations.

2. SCOPE OF WORK

The Fund is seeking an Individual Consultant (hereafter “The Web Developer”) to closely work with the MoE and Fund Manager of NNNF (hereafter “Fund Manager”) to develop an interactive website for the Fund. The Web Developer would work cross-functionally with the Fund Manager to review the websites and web applications standards, infrastructure requirement and security benchmarking.

Duties and Responsibilities:

The Web Developer is responsible for:

- designing, coding and modifying websites, from layout to function according to the needs of the Fund Manager and MoE and other functions/complex specifications;
- creating visually appealing sites that feature user-friendly and clear navigation;
- Ensuring cross browser compatibility, general web functions and standards;
- Ensuring user upload process – improve design, functionality and automation of user content upload process (documents, links, projects, events, videos and practices) to increase and facilitate wider usage, including providing frontend design and styling to all web forms.
- Enhancing Search Engine Optimization (SEO) to increase visits and ensure high, relevant traffic from the main global search engines.
- Ensuring user-friendly upload process, as well as bulk upload functionality by administrators from Excel and inputs from other websites.
- Updating design to reflect and highlight new content and ensure the dynamism of the pages.
- Integrating the website with external platforms and enable the display of tagged content from external platforms
- Applying strong and effective security principles for the website and ensure application for external/public hosted platforms.
- Optimizing the website for low-bandwidth users
- Providing training to the MoE and Fund Manager staff on website operation

- Providing ongoing technical support and security maintenance and bug fixing for the website including all required module updates and development.
- Link the website with the OGS database for ease of retrieval by specific backend users and visualization of key statistics on the frontend.
- Propose infrastructure and security requirements to enable safe operation of the website.

The Web Developer would also review the MoE website and conduct the activities mentioned above as required to update and make it fully functional.

3. DELIVERABLES AND DEADLINES

- 3.1. **Design and launch of website:** The launch of the website should be ready in two-months' time starting from the date of signing the contract.
- 3.2. **Technical documentation:** The user manual, the maintenance and training for the new web pages should commence from the third month of the contract and to be delivered within the sixth month of the contract period. The technical documentation will include operating parameters, user manual, and maintenance requirements. The Web Developer shall conduct two online training sessions in two batches for the MoE and Fund Manager staff to fully acquaint them with the operation and maintenance of the website.

4. CONTRACTING ARRANGEMENTS

A reference website can be found here: <https://www.kosap-fm.or.ke/>

The above website is for reference only and the design of the website will be determined as per requirement of Fund Manager and MoE. Full source code including all developed libraries shall be handed over to MoE and Fund Manager after the contract period.

The Web Developer will be recruited by the MoE upon recommendation from the Fund Manager through a competitive process. The Web Developer is expected to have expert knowledge in understanding off-grid solar business process or systems, assessing the business model and its integration with technology.

The Fund Manager will have overall responsibility for the Web Developer's delivery and reporting of the scope of work outlined in this Terms of Reference (ToR) in form, substance and cost satisfactory to the Fund Manager and will therefore be required to seek the Fund Manager's approval of the Services. In the event that the Web Developer partially or wholly fails to provide the Services in the required form, substance or cost required by the Fund Manager, the Fund Manager reserves the right and will exercise its discretion to re-evaluate, revise or recommend termination of the contract for the Services to MoE. The Web Developer will be required to seek the Fund Manager's approval of the Services under these Terms of Reference.

5. QUALIFICATIONS OF THE WEB DEVELOPER

The ideal candidate should have strong experience in web design, development and application management. Applicants should clearly demonstrate the following qualifications while submitting their CVs:

- Bachelors degree in information technology management or any other relevant field;
- Minimum of two similar assignments of Web Development and Application Management;
- Familiarity and minimum of three years' of experience in using different Content Management Systems (CMS), particularly WordPress;
- Have a broad knowledge of current web development technologies and design tools in the field, and new software and other web programming languages and programs including use of HTML, XHTML, CSS, XML, XSLT, JavaScript, JQuery, PHP, MySQL and APIs;
- Have proven knowledge of recent trends in graphic design, web sites, including online video publishing, and social media networking; provide evidence of having undertaken 2 assignments for each previously.
- Deep functional knowledge or hands on design experience with web services REST, JSON and SOAP. The proposal should demonstrate evidence of this qualification;
- Strong understating of UI, cross browser compatibility, general web functions and standards.
- Demonstrate the ability to create innovative and visually appealing design;
- Experience in, and understanding of, the off-grid solar market including PAYGO solar;
- Fair knowledge in understanding off-grid solar business processes or systems, assessing the business model or its integration with technology;
- Provide evidence on 2 assignments related to the foregoing subsectors.

6. DURATION AND LOCATION OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The duration of the assignment is expected to be 100 days over a 6 month period from signing of the contract. The Web Developer will be required to provide no cost technical support for updates and development for six months after the end of the contract period.

The location of the task is remote from the applicant's country of residence. The Web Developer should make him/herself available as and when the MoE and Fund Manager requires regardless of working hours in his/her country of residence.

7. PROPOSAL EVALUATION

The Fund Manager will score applicants based on both expertise of the applicant and the price. The evaluation criteria are as follows:

- a. Profile and experience of the applicant (40%)
- b. Professional capacity and experience in similar tasks (40%)
- c. Price (20%)

8. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

All outputs and intellectual property created during this assignment, including but not limited to system code, system design, data, findings, results, solutions, recommendations and any other documents and designs developed throughout the project shall be owned by the Fund Manager. The Web Developer shall develop materials and recommendations assuming current business processes and retention of current duties, accountabilities and responsibilities but may make recommendations for changes. Documents provided to the Fund Manager shall be considered “draft” until the Fund Manager provides feedback and comments which the Web Developer shall incorporate, as appropriate; at that point, the document will be considered “final” by the Web Developer.

This Request for Proposal is based on the understanding that the review of and response to this Request for Proposal by the Web Developer will not entail any cost or obligation for Fund Manager.

9. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSAL

Interested candidates need to submit the following in electronic format only:

- a) CV of the expert in World Bank format (if not available, the format can be asked in the below mentioned email).
- b) A proposal describing the previous work done in this area in accordance with Section 5 of this RFP.
- c) A description of approach and methodology to carry on the task.
- d) A financial proposal to address the work. The fee which is proposed for the consultancy should indicate the breakdown of all costs and inclusive of all VAT and taxes. The fee should be denominated in US\$. The fee should include all the costs related to functionality of the website site (e.g., domain pricing, website hosting etc.)

Proposals should be delivered not later than 1600hrs on 20 March 2024 at the address below:

Attention:

Fund Manager for Off-Grid Market Development Fund
Golden Peacock House, Level-2, Room no. 217-219,
City Center, Lilongwe, Malawi.
Email: ogmdf@idcol.org

Only shortlisted applicants will be contacted