



CONNECTIVITY PROJECT FOR REHABILITATION CENTRES FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH DISABILITIES

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Malawi Government through the National ICT Policy of 2013 has a deliberate policy whose objective is to ensure that all its citizens access ICT services. This includes all people regardless of one's status. However, people with disabilities' access to ICT services remains a challenge. There exists a digital divide on ICT access among people with disabilities and the rest of the population. People with disabilities use the Internet and other types of technologies in different ways than the rest of the population. The result is that the majority of broadband-related technologies are created inaccessible and cut out some or even all users with disabilities.

The Internet and assistive devices have been recognized as having incredible potential related to promoting social inclusion of people with disabilities. An accessible Internet presents incredible potential to increase the inclusion of people with disabilities and facilitate online education, telework, participation in e-government, as well as the ability to form relationships that overcome barriers and challenges presented by the physical world.

Therefore, the importance of technology among people with disabilities cannot be overemphasized. People with disabilities need communication and ICT services for the same reasons anyone else does. It is against this background, that the Authority would like to implement a project aimed at addressing ICT access to people living with disabilities in Rehabilitation Centres.

The project cost is approximately MK 121,868,468.

2.0 PROBLEM STATEMENT AND JUSTIFICATION

Persons with disabilities lack the opportunity of self-realization and ability to live a normal life. However, provision of assistive technologies have the capability to lessen the physical challenges experienced by PWD. In fulfilling its mandate of promoting universal access to ICT services for all the population, the Authority proposes to introduce internet-based and assistive technologies to people with disabilities with the goal that they will be able to enjoy its benefits and hence address the digital divide between people living with disabilities and the rest of the population.

3.0 OBJECTIVES

MAIN OBJECTIVE

To promote universal access to ICTs for people with disabilities.

Specific objectives

1. To install and equip computer labs with ICT assistive devices in rehabilitation centers for PWD.
2. To connect to the internet and establish a hotspot in rehabilitation Centers for PWD.
3. To build ICT skills of special needs assistants in the selected centers in ICT assistive devices particularly for PWDs.
4. To improve security of the existing computer labs in rehabilitation centers for PWD.

4.0 PROJECT SCOPE:

This project will provide assistive technologies and internet access points in some targeted Rehabilitation Centres in Malawi. As part of building capacity of the users, the project will also train special needs education teachers in basic ICT skills especially the computerized assistive devices for continuity.

5.0 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

In an effort to successfully implement the project, MACRA will work with relevant stakeholders. The approach will be a consultative process, where stakeholders' involvement will be emphasized from the onset of the project.

The actual implementation of activities will be undertaken by various stakeholders as highlighted in table 1 below:

6.0 Table 1: Stakeholder Engagement

No	INSTITUTION	RESPONSIBILITIES
1	Ministry responsible for ICT	Policy direction
2	Ministry of Gender, Disability and Social Welfare	Identification of the Rehabilitation centres Identification of training needs Coordination of similar projects
3	MACRA- Universal Service Department	Financial and Technical support Coordination of activities Monitoring and evaluation
4	Beneficiary Rehabilitation Centres	Identification of structure Management of the labs Security of the project structures Identification of training needs Utilizing the computer labs
5	Telecom operators and ICT vendors	Internet connectivity and supply of assistive technologies
6	Training Institute	To provide training in the centres on computer skills

To enhance the relationships with the stakeholders the following Committees will be put in place:

- a) Project Steering Committee comprising of various stakeholders including officials from MACRA (Universal Service Department),

Telecom operators, MoICT, Ministry of Gender, Disability and Social Welfare will coordinate the activities of the project.

- b) Rehabilitation Centre Management Committee: to oversee the project at the Rehabilitation Centre.

7.0 FUNDING MODEL

The project will be funded through the Universal Service Fund.

8.0 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

OBJECTIVE	ACTIVITY	PROCESS DELIVERABLES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	FRAMEWORK
To identify sites	Project meetings with stakeholders	Site visits/verification reports	3 Site identified	July to Aug 2020
To install and equip computer labs with ICT assistive devices in rehabilitation centers for PWD.	(i) Consultation meetings (ii) Procurement process: Pre-bid meeting, Advertisement, Bid opening & Evaluation	(i) Specs for assistive technologies developed (ii) Vendor /Contractors identified	(i) Vendors/Contractors identified (ii) assistive technologies provided to the institutions/sites	July to Sept 2020
To facilitate renovation of existing computer labs in rehabilitation centers for PWD.	(i) Consultation meetings (ii) Procurement process: Pre-bid meeting, Advertisement, Bid opening & Evaluation	(i) Vendor/Contractor Identified and contract awarded	Secure computer room	July to Dec 2020
To connect to the internet in the centers for PWD.	Consultation meetings Procurement process; Pre-bid meeting, Advertisement, Bid opening & Evaluation, Identify ISP & Contract awarded	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internet specs develop ISP identified – contract signed Contract awarded 	Internet connected to the targeted sites	July to Nov 2020
To build ICT skills of special needs assistants in the selected centers in ICT assistive devices particularly for PWDs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation meetings Procurement process; Pre-bid meeting, advertisement, Bid opening & Evaluation, Identify trainer Training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training needs identified Trainer identified 	Training sessions done in the three sites	July to Dec 2020
Monitoring and evaluation	Site visits Stakeholder meetings Report writing	M&E reports	Annual Report	July 2020 to June 2021