

Terms of reference (ToR) for the procurement of services below the EU threshold

CONFIDENTIAL

**Implementation of Social Protection Communication and
Advocacy Campaigns in Malawi**

Project number:

G-100301-001

Tender number

10036805.1

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0. List of abbreviations

AG	Commissioning party
AN	Contractor
AVB	General Terms and Conditions of Contract for supplying services and work
FK	Expert
FKT	Expert days
IEC	Information, Education and Communication
KZFK	Short-term expert
MNSSP	Malawi National Social Support Programme
PRSP	Poverty Reduction and Social Protection Division
SPP IV	Systems Strengthening for Social Protection Programme
ToRs	Terms of reference

1. Context

Malawi has set itself ambitious development goals through the implementation of the Malawi Vision 2063 agenda, which seeks to transform the country into an inclusively wealthy and self-reliant nation. Achieving this vision requires sustained investments in human capital, resilience, and inclusive economic development. In this context, social protection is not merely a welfare intervention; it is a strategic public investment that contributes to poverty reduction, economic productivity, social cohesion, and resilience to shocks.

The importance of social protection is particularly evident in Malawi. Despite progress in recent years, the country remains one of the world's poorest and most vulnerable nations. A large share of the population faces chronic poverty, food insecurity, and exposure to recurrent shocks, including climate-related disasters such as droughts, floods, and cyclones. These challenges are expected to intensify as the impacts of climate change become more severe. At the same time, Malawi's demographic growth and development ambitions require policies that enable people to invest in their livelihoods, health, education, and productive capacities. Effective social protection systems help households protect development gains and build the resilience necessary for long-term economic and social transformation.

Recognising this, the Government of Malawi has reaffirmed its commitment to reducing poverty and vulnerability through the adoption of the Malawi National Social Support Programme (MNSSP) and related strategies. Social protection is in the Agenda 2063, the MNSSP as well as in strategies recognised as a key pillar of national development and an essential component of adaptive responses to economic, climatic, and social shocks.

However, the potential of social protection can only be fully realised if its purpose, benefits, and contribution to national development are widely understood and supported.

Most often, Social Protection is narrowly understood and discussed mainly as the “Social Cash Transfer Programme”, which supports the poorest households with monthly cash transfers. Yet, social protection extends far beyond social cash transfer programmes. In Malawi, this is also anchored in the new Malawi Social Protection Policy and Strategy, that focuses on a “lifecycle approach” to social protection and also includes social security in the form of insurance. It encompasses a broad range of policies and interventions designed to prevent and reduce poverty and vulnerability, including livelihood support, public works, school feeding, and complementary services like Savings and Loan Groups that strengthen resilience and human development.

While social protection programmes have demonstrated positive impacts on poverty reduction, food security, human capital development, and resilience, public and political understanding of these contributions remains uneven. Social protection is often perceived primarily as a cost rather than an investment, and its broader developmental benefits are not always sufficiently recognised by policymakers, public institutions, the media, or the wider public. This can limit political commitment, public support, and the prioritisation of social protection within national policy and budget processes.

Strategic communication and advocacy therefore play a critical role in strengthening the enabling environment for social protection in Malawi. It can help increase awareness and understanding among key decision-makers and other intermediaries, such as journalists and media professionals, to communicate effectively and based on positive narratives on social protection. A broader public understanding of how social protection contributes to national development and individual wellbeing can hold politicians accountable. Effective communication and advocacy can help position social protection as a development priority,

strengthen public trust and ownership, and increase political and societal support for sustained investment in social protection systems.

So, the overall goal of this assignment is to contribute that political decision makers in Malawi rank social protection as a key policy domain for Malawi's development. Moreover, the objective is to achieve that social protection is widely recognised as an essential investment in Malawi's future and is - in consequence - accorded greater political priority, public support, and sustainable financing.

The Poverty Reduction and Social Protection Division (PRSP) within the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Decentralisation, as the lead institution responsible for social protection policy and coordination in Malawi, is working with the German Development Cooperation through Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH under the "Systems Strengthening for Social Protection Programme" (SPP IV) to further strengthen social protection systems. The overall objectives are that social protection in Malawi is strengthened in terms of coordination, efficiency and adaptiveness. The areas of work are (1) to strengthen the institutional framework of social protection; (2) to strengthen district authorities in their capacity to steer and implement social protection and complementary services in four partner districts in Malawi, (3) to strengthen the household Database "Malawi Social Registry" and (4) to establish social protection, including adaptive social protection more thoroughly as a key policy domain.

The Government of Malawi invested into the development of a Social Protection Communication and Advocacy Strategy in 2026 to strengthen and harmonise communication efforts across the social protection sector. The strategy, that will be shared by the project, focusses on a communication, advocacy and behaviour change approach for different target groups. It aims to move beyond programme-specific messaging and establish a more coherent approach that communicates social protection as an integrated system, highlighting its importance and contribution to poverty reduction, resilience building, and inclusive development. By providing a common framework and key messages for stakeholders, the strategy promotes consistent communication and more effective advocacy for social protection as a national development priority.

Against this background, the programme seeks to engage specialised support to design and implement advocacy and communication activities that promote a stronger understanding and visibility of social protection among political decision-makers, government institutions, media actors, and the general public.

2. Tasks to be performed by the contractor

The contractor is expected to design and implement a comprehensive communication and advocacy approach at national, district and community level in Malawi, building on the Social Protection Communication and Advocacy Strategy that will be provided by the project. The approach should include activities, that strengthen the capacities of key stakeholders at national and sub-national levels, promote informed public and political discourse on social protection, and enable government institutions to sustainably lead and implement communication, advocacy, and outreach activities beyond the duration of the assignment. Moreover, the contractor is expected to contribute to strengthened awareness, understanding and ownership of social protection among key stakeholder groups (e.g. government representatives like principal secretaries, directors, head of departments, deputy directors, parliamentarians and other political decision-makers, media actors, representatives

from government institutions including district councils and local and traditional authorities as well as the general public, communities and direct recipients) to effectively communicate, advocate for, and promote social protection policies and programmes.

Overall, the approach should lead to:

- Strengthened capacities of government counterparts at national and district levels to design and deliver coordinated social protection communication and advocacy activities. This should enable them to engage decision-makers effectively, promote investment in social protection, ensure consistent messaging, and increase public understanding of social protection programmes and their benefits.
- Strengthened institutional processes for social protection communication and advocacy within government structures, including the development of success stories and the implementation of outreach approaches that remain operational beyond the assignment period.
- Enhanced engagement of local leaders in promoting social protection at the community level, increasing awareness of available programmes and how to access them.
- Increased quantity and quality of media coverage on social protection beyond the Social Cash Transfer Programme. Journalists and other media practitioners should have a broader understanding of social protection and produce accurate, evidence-based stories.
- Strengthened commitment of political decision-makers, including parliamentarians and parliamentary committees, to support and advocate for social protection. This should be reflected in informed policy dialogue that recognises social protection as a key investment in poverty reduction and economic resilience.

In summary, the programme seeks to engage specialised support to design and implement advocacy and communication that promotes stronger understanding and visibility of social protection among political decision-makers, media actors, and the general public.

The following work packages give examples of how the above presented goals could be reached with exemplary activities that could be conducted. These are not extensive but should be used as guidance to understand the framework and scope of work. However, the proposal should clearly outline how the contractor seeks to reach the above explained goals and tasks and which activities the contractor would suggest being best suited for these. These can explicitly diverge from the exemplary activities below and should include a broader range of activities as well as innovative methods and approaches on how to reach the explained goals.

Capacity development

The contractor shall strengthen the communication and advocacy capacities of government institutions through hands-on learning and implementation of outreach activities. This work package shall provide government officials with opportunities to learn and apply newly acquired skills and foster institutional ownership of social protection communication and advocacy activities.

Example activities:

- Support government institutions in leading and coordinating outreach activities, gradually transferring responsibilities and strengthening institutional ownership.

- Integrate learning-by-doing approaches into outreach activities, enabling government to apply communication, advocacy, stakeholder engagement, and public awareness-raising techniques acquired through implemented capacity development interventions.
- Facilitate practical experience in planning and implementing district level events involving local authorities, traditional leaders, civil society organisations, community representatives, beneficiaries, and other relevant actors.

Content development

The contractor shall support the development of evidence-based and audience-centred content that (1) strengthens public awareness and (2) fosters understanding of social protection for the main target groups of this assignment, namely parliamentarians, political decision-makers, media actors, government institutions, including district councils and local and traditional authorities as well as the general public. The work package shall ensure that communication efforts are well coordinated and based on harmonised messages and approaches.

Example activities:

- Continue to build a common communication framework, including agreed key messages, terminology, narratives, and communication priorities for different target audiences, building on the Social Protection Communication and Advocacy Strategy.
- Support the capacities of relevant social protection actors in developing hands-on target group specific communication content and products for a range of communication channels, including newspaper articles, newsletters, websites, social media platforms, radio programmes, video productions, and other digital and traditional media formats.
- Support the design, production, and dissemination of Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials in English and relevant local languages, ensuring accessibility and appropriateness for different target audiences.
- Document compelling success stories and evidence of impact from social protection programmes for use in advocacy, stakeholder engagement, media outreach, and high-level communication activities.

Media engagement

The contractor shall strengthen the capacity of media professionals to report accurately and consistently on social protection issues and support constructive engagement between the media and key social protection stakeholders.

Example activities:

- Design and deliver orientation and capacity-strengthening sessions for journalists, editors, and media practitioners on social protection concepts, policies, programmes, and evidence-based reporting approaches.
- Develop a media toolkit containing key messages, factsheets, programme information, success stories, communication materials, and relevant data to support accurate and informed media coverage.
- Facilitate and support media engagement and orientation meetings that promote dialogue between media representatives and social protection stakeholders, strengthen understanding of current social protection priorities, and encourage quality reporting on social protection issues.

Stakeholder Engagement and Policy Dialogue

The contractor shall strengthen advocacy on social protection so that political decision makers, traditional and local leaders as well as district councils are better informed about social protection and recognize social protection as a cornerstone of sustainable development that is worth investing in.

Example activities:

- Design and facilitate sensitization and advocacy activities on social protection using innovative approaches and methodologies targeting key stakeholders at national and district levels, including policymakers, district councils, government ministries, departments and agencies, local and traditional leaders, civil society organisations, development partners, community representatives, and beneficiaries.
- Implement multi-stakeholder dialogues or round tables on national level to strengthen ownership, support evidence-based decision-making, and foster increased commitment to social protection.

The contractor is responsible for selecting, preparing, training and steering the international and national, short and long-term experts assigned to perform the tasks. The contractor provides equipment and supplies and assumes the associated operating and administrative costs. The contractor manages costs and expenditures, accounting processes and invoicing in line with the requirements of GIZ. The contractor sets up regular exchanges with Government of Malawi and GIZ and reports regularly to GIZ.

In addition to the reports required by GIZ in accordance with the AVB, the contractor submits the following reports:

- Inception report
- Contributions to reports to GIZ's commissioning party
- Brief quarterly reports on the implementation status of the project

Certain milestones, as laid out in the table below, are to be achieved during the contract term:

Milestones	Deadline
Development of a target group specific implementation- and time plan including 6 mayor milestones	1 month after signature
Agreement on target group specific work plan with GIZ and political partner	2 months after signature
Facilitate a media orientation training	4 months after signature
Refining of IEC Material	6 months after signature
Implement capacity development measures focussing on planning and executing advocacy and sensitisation activities	10 months after signature
Implement an advocacy meeting with key stakeholders	10 months after signature
Conducting communication and outreach activities on district level	15 months after signature

Achievement of agreed milestones of the implementation plan	19 months after signature
Publish finalised materials	20 months after signature

Period of assignment: **from 09.12.2026 until 30.11.2028** .

3. Concept

In the tender, the tenderer is required to show **how** the objectives defined in Chapter 2 (Tasks to be performed) are to be achieved, and what activities are to be suggested, focusing on new methods and approaches, if applicable under consideration of further method-related requirements (technical-methodological concept). In addition, the tenderer must describe the project management system for service provision.

Note: The numbers in parentheses correspond to the lines of the technical assessment grid.

Technical-methodological concept

Strategy (1.1): The tenderer is required to consider the goals and tasks to be performed with reference to the objectives of the services put out to tender (see Chapter 1 Context) (1.1.1). Following this, the tenderer presents and justifies the explicit strategy with activities, with which it intends to provide the services for which it is responsible (see Chapter 2 Tasks to be performed) (1.1.2).

The tenderer is required to present the actors relevant for the services for which it is responsible and describe the **cooperation (1.2)** with them.

The tenderer is required to describe the key **processes** for the services for which it is responsible and create an **operational plan** or schedule (1.4.1) that describes how the services according to Chapter 2 (Tasks to be performed by the contractor) are to be provided.

Project management of the contractor (1.6)

The tenderer is required to explain its approach for coordination with the GIZ project. In particular, the project management requirements specified in Chapter 2 (Tasks to be performed by the contractor) must be explained in detail.

The tenderer is required to draw up a **personnel assignment plan** with explanatory notes that lists all the national and international experts proposed in the tender; the plan includes information on assignment dates (duration and expert days) and locations of the individual members of the team complete with the allocation of work steps as set out in the schedule.

4. Personnel concept

The tenderer is required to provide personnel who are suited to filling the positions described, on the basis of their CVs (see Chapter 7), the range of tasks involved and the required qualifications.

The below specified qualifications represent the requirements to reach the maximum number of points in the technical assessment.

Team leader

Tasks of the team leader

- Overall responsibility for the advisory packages of the contractor (quality and deadlines)
- Coordinating and ensuring communication with GIZ, partners and others involved in the project
- Personnel management, in particular planning and steering assignments and supporting local and international experts
- Regular reporting in accordance with deadlines

Qualifications of the team leader

- Education/training (2.1.1): university degree (German 'Diplom'/Master) in Communication, Development Studies, Public Policy, Social Sciences, Social Protection, Journalism, or related fields
- Language (2.1.2): C1-level language proficiency in English
- General professional experience (2.1.3): 10 years of professional experience leading large-scale communication / advocacy (5 out of 10 points), thereof behaviour change campaigns in social protection, governance, or development sectors (5 out of 10 points)
- Specific professional experience (2.1.4): 5 years in coordinating multi-stakeholder processes involving government, development partners, civil society, media, and communities
- Leadership/management experience (2.1.5): 7 years of management/leadership experience as project team leader or manager of a multi-cultural team in a company
- Regional experience (2.1.6): 5 years of experience in projects in the southern African region
- Other experiences (2.1.8): 5 years in developing national communication strategies, advocacy plans, and stakeholder engagement approaches

Key expert 1

Tasks of key expert 1

- Provide technical expertise on strategic communication, advocacy, and behaviour change approaches on the topic of social protection
- Support the development of key campaign messages tailored to different stakeholders, including policy makers, development partners, district councils, traditional leaders, communities, and beneficiaries
- Develop awareness raising materials for use at national and district levels
- Train national and district stakeholders on communication, advocacy, and public engagement approaches
- Support the design of media engagement strategies, including radio, print, digital, and community outreach
- Advise on monitoring and evaluation approaches to assess the effectiveness and reach of the activities
- Ensure approaches align with national cultural norms and standards as well as with international good practices and inclusive communication standards

Qualifications of key expert 1

- Education/training (2.2.1): Strategic Communication, Public Policy, International Development, Social Science, Social Protection or related field
- Language (2.2.2): C1 -level language proficiency in English as well as C1-level language proficiency of local language Chichewa (10 points if both languages have C1 level)
- General professional experience (2.2.3): 7 years designing and implementing communication and advocacy campaigns in development contexts
- Specific professional experience (2.2.4): 5 years in total in social and behaviour change communication (SBCC) (4 out of 10 points), public awareness campaigns (3 out of 10 points), and advocacy for social sectors (3 out of 10 points),
- Regional experience (2.2.6): 3 years of experience in projects in the southern African region
- Other (2.2.8): 5 years' experience in designing training curricula (2 out of 10 points) and conducting capacity-building workshops for government institutions (3 out of 10 points for 1 workshop), media (3 out of 10 points for 1 workshop), and communities (2 out of 10 points for 1 workshop)

Key expert 2

Tasks of key expert 2

- Develop and produce communication and advocacy materials for print, radio, digital, and community outreach platforms
- Coordinate and facilitate community sensitisation and awareness activities on national level as well as in targeted districts
- Coordinate media engagement activities, including press briefings, journalist trainings, radio discussions, and media campaigns
- Support the preparation of inputs, policy briefs, talking points, newsletters, and social media content
- Support the adaptation of communication materials into user-friendly and culturally appropriate formats and local languages
- Document campaign activities through photography, video, interviews, and testimonies
- Manage dissemination of campaign messages across media channels and communication platforms
- Support translation and adaptation of communication products into local languages where necessary
- Monitor media coverage and public engagement related to the campaign and prepare media monitoring reports

Qualifications of key expert 2

- Education/training (2.3.1): Strategic Communication, Public Policy, International Development, Social Science, Social Protection, Community Development, Communication, Social Work, Adult Education, or related fields
- Language (2.3.2): C1 -level language proficiency in English as well as C1-level language proficiency of local language Chichewa (10 points if both languages have C1 level)
- General professional experience (2.3.3): 3 years of experience in total in media engagement (3 out of 10 points), public information campaigns (3 out of 10 points), and content production (4 out of 10 points)

- Specific professional experience (2.3.4): 3 years in developing communication materials such as brochures, radio programmes, social media content, videos, advocacy briefs, IEC materials etc.
- Regional experience (2.3.6): 3 years of experience in projects in Malawi
- Other (2.3.8): 3 years in total of experience working with district-level governance systems (4 out of 10 points), traditional leadership structures (3 out of 10 points), and community engagement approaches (3 out of 10 points)

Soft skills of team members

In addition to their specialist qualifications, the following qualifications are required of team members:

- Team skills
- Initiative
- Communication skills
- Socio-cultural skills
- Efficient, partner- and client-focused working methods
- Interdisciplinary thinking
- Creativity and innovation in campaign and messaging design
- Adaptability and ability to work in multicultural and resource-constrained environments
- Strong community mobilisation and relationship-building skills
- Ability to work collaboratively within multidisciplinary teams

5. Costing requirements

Assignment of personnel and travel expenses

Per diem allowances are reimbursed as a lump sum up to the maximum amounts permissible under tax law for each country as set out in the country table in the circular from the German Federal Ministry of Finance on travel expense remuneration (downloadable from the [German Federal Ministry of Finance – tax treatment of travel expenses and allowances for international business travel as of 1 January 2026 \(GERMAN ONLY\)](#)).

In addition, the local harmonized DSA Guidelines must be adhered to and implemented at all times.

Accommodation allowances are reimbursed as detailed in the specification of inputs below.

With special justification, additional Accommodation costs up to a reasonable amount can be reimbursed against evidence.

All business travel must be agreed in advance by the officer responsible for the project.

Sustainability aspects for travel

GIZ has undertaken an obligation to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (CO₂ emissions) caused by travel. When preparing your tender, please incorporate options for reducing emissions, such as selecting the lowest-emission booking class (economy) and using means of transport, airlines and flight routes with a higher CO₂ efficiency. For short distances, travel by train (second class) or e-mobility should be the preferred option.

CO₂ emissions caused by air travel must be offset. GIZ specifies a budget for this, through which the carbon offsets can be settled against evidence.

There are many different providers in the market for emissions certificates, and they have different climate impact ambitions. The [Development and Climate Alliance \(German only\)](#) has published a [list of standards \(German only\)](#). GIZ recommends using the standards specified there.

Specification of inputs

The price offer should contain only the cost items and quantities recorded in this chapter. No rows must be added or deleted in the price schedule. Please be aware that this is a procurement for a service below the EU-threshold.

Fee days	Number of experts	Number of days per expert	Total	Comments
Designation of TL	1	38	38	Thereoff 23 in home country and 15 in country of assignment
Designation of key expert 1	1	85	85	All of them expected in country of assignment
Designation of key expert 2	1	85	85	All of them expected in country of assignment

Travel expenses	Quantity	Price in EUR	Total in EUR	Comments
Fixed travel budget	1		31.000,00	A budget is earmarked for travel to and in the following countries: Malawi. A fixed budget of EUR 31.000,00 is earmarked for settling travel expenses against evidence. You can find further information on the travel expense budget in the 'Price schedule' document. Please use the 'Explanations' column in the price schedule to break down the individual items. Settlement is possible only until the budget is depleted.
CO₂ compensation for air travel	1	280,00	280,00	A fixed budget of EUR 280,00 is earmarked for settling carbon offsets against evidence.
Other costs	Number	Price in EUR	Total in EUR	Comments
Flexible remuneration	1	14.000,00	14.000,00	A budget of EUR 14.000,00 is foreseen for flexible remuneration. Please incorporate this budget into the price schedule. Use of the flexible remuneration item requires prior written approval from GIZ. It can be used for additional expert days, travel, workshop costs, procurement of material or similar against evidence.
Workshops	up to 10	To be calculated by the bidder		The budget must contain the following costs: Venue and Refreshments, Allowances for Fuel and Lunch for Partner, Accommodation for Partners, if needed.
Operating costs in country of assignment <i>Procurement of materials, photography and videography</i>	1	To be calculated by the bidder		The budget must contain the following costs: Refreshments, IEC Materials, Radio Broadcastings etc., to be specified and used if needed and agreed between Contractor and Project

6. Requirements on the format of the tender

The structure of the tender must correspond to the structure of the ToR. In particular, the detailed structure of the concept (Chapter 3) should be organised in accordance with the positively weighted criteria in the assessment grid (not with zero). The tender must be legible (font size 11 or larger) and clearly formulated. It must be drawn up in English (language).

The complete tender must not exceed 15 pages (excluding CVs). If one of the maximum page lengths is exceeded, the content appearing after the cut-off point will not be included in the assessment. External content (e.g. links to websites) will also not be considered.

The CVs of the personnel proposed in accordance with Chapter 4 of the ToRs must be submitted using the format specified in the terms and conditions for application. The CVs shall not exceed 4 pages each. They must clearly show the position and job the proposed person held in the reference project and for how long. The CVs can also be submitted in English (language).

Please calculate your financial tender based exactly on the parameters specified in Chapter 5 Quantitative requirements. The contractor is not contractually entitled to use up the days, trips, workshops or budgets in full. The number of days, trips and workshops and the budgets will be contractually agreed as maximum limits. The specifications for pricing are defined in the price schedule. **The price offer should contain only the cost items and quantities recorded in this chapter. No rows must be added or deleted in the price schedule. Please be aware that this is a procurement for a service below the EU-threshold.**