



**MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING LIBERIA:
GOVERNANCE REFORM AND ACCOUNTABILITY
TRANSFORMATION (GREAT) PROJECT**

TERMS OF REFERENCE

**Consultancy for the Development of
“Requirements and Bidding Documents for the Improvement of the County Service Centers
ICT Infrastructure”
LR-MFDP-412634-CS-CQS**

1. Background

The County Service Centers were established as the preliminary phase to the implementation of the National Policy on Decentralization and Local Governance (NPDLG) prepared in 2011 and officially issued in 2012. Sections 1.0 and 1.1 of the NPDLG called for the decentralization of the government through the devolution of power and authority to the counties. Under this arrangement, the central government would retain authority over the administration of justice, law enforcement, defense and national security, post and telecommunications, financial, industrial, and economic policies and regulations, as well as policies on social services. The other functions of the government outside of these reserved authorities were to be devolved to counties, districts, and municipalities.

However, the implementation of this decentralization policy required legal, regulatory, and administrative reforms, not least of which were:

- an enabling legislation to give effect to the NPDLG; and
- constitutional amendments to define the structure and scope of local government authority.

While authorities in both the Executive and Legislature were pursuing these reforms, the consensus among the Government of Liberia and its partners was to maintain the momentum generated by the activities leading to, and including, the publication of the NPDLG. This led to the adoption of another policy called Deconcentration Implementation Strategy (DIS).

The DIS policy document envisioned an interim arrangement prior to full devolution that would decentralize government services that grant legitimacy and authority to social, commercial and economic interactions. The policy and regulatory authorities were to be retained by the central government ministries, agencies, and commissions (MACs), until such a time when the required legislation would have transferred full regulatory and policy functions to the county administrations.

Units or staff from the responsible MACs were to provide these services from the County Government Centers and District Government Centers under the supervision of the County Superintendents and District Commissioners. This framework later morphed into the National Deconcentration Platform of 2015, which lent additional political support to the NPDLG and DIS.

The National Deconcentration Platform listed the establishment of County Service Centers (CSC) as one of the “immediate next steps” in the implementation of the decentralization policy.

The first CSC was opened in Buchanan in June 2016. By the end of 2017, all fifteen (15) counties had service centers operating in their capital cities offering a menu of over fifty different services consisting mostly of registration, licensing, permits, and certificates. This arrangement provided two useful outcomes that are essential characteristic of decentralization: a) bringing government services

closer to where they are needed thereby reducing time, distance and financial costs for the users; and b) boosting local revenue mobilization by bringing more fee payers into the revenue collection database and reducing administrative costs.

Despite the reform program and ongoing efforts, foundational public services are still not reaching all citizens and businesses, and lack of efficiency and inclusivity are key issues. The CSCs were intended to provide citizens with access to over fifty services (including services for those affected by gender-based violence) provided by fourteen (14) Ministries, Agencies and Commissions (MACs). Currently, only about sixteen (16) administrative services are available. In addition, most of the services are paper-based and require further processing in Monrovia.

The establishment of the CSCs have come with several challenges including the following (a) it is expensive and challenging to build and maintain infrastructure in remote areas. The delivery of services is often impeded due to unstable electricity or connectivity or malfunctioning of the equipment; (b) it is difficult to train and deploy the government staff from MACs to remote CSCs and keep them motivated; this leads to frequent staff rotation and extended absences; (c) citizens are not aware of which services are available in the CSCs and which services require them to travel to Monrovia; (d) MACs are reluctant to devolve their authority to CSCs and most processes still have to come to Monrovia for approval, which can be lengthy and defeats the objective of enhancing access outside of the capital; (e) there is insufficient monitoring for compliance with the service charters, lack of coordination, and limited accountability on performance; (f) public service delivery records are not digitalized and there is a reliance on manual paper-based records and physical movement of those between the CSC and Monrovia; and (g) there are perverse travel incentives for staff based in counties to visit Monrovia, that causes absence from the CSCs and promotes centralization.

To address these challenges, the Government of Liberia has sought funding from the World Bank through the Governance Reform and Accountability Transformation (GREAT) Project. The Project's Development Objective is to enhance access to selected digitally-provided public services, raise tax revenues, and improve the openness of selected accountability institutions. Component one of the Project, under which this activity falls, is geared towards enhancing access to selected public services through multi-channel service delivery with increased emphasis on public services digitalization. This includes enhanced access to services delivered through the 15 County Service Centers (CSC) and access to online services. It comprises two inter-related sub-components including 1.1, Digitalizing selected public services; and sub-component 1.2, Strengthening the capacity of County Service Centers to provide more and better services.

Sub-component 1.2 will finance technical assistance and phased investment in ICT infrastructure for the CSCs with a view to increase the number of services available for citizens and businesses at the CSCs, improve remote access to online services, and enhance efficiency of service delivery. This will also involve the digitalization of selected CSCs processes, staff training and capacity development. Specifically, the following activities will be implemented: (i) improving the connectivity of the CSCs to the e-Liberia Portal for access to reengineered services with a focus on life events, (ii) providing the necessary IT equipment, network connectivity, and logistics needed for the digitalization of services provided through the CSCs, (iii) establishing coordination mechanisms between central ministries' deconcentrated offices and MACs/Counties to plan and jointly implement services, (iv) enhancing regulation and service delivery standards (charters) for digitalized and other services delivered in CSCs, (v) researching options to increase service delivery channels through partnerships with private-sector agents and non-government stakeholders, (vi) staff training and capacity development to support CSC operations and online service delivery, and (vii) capacity development through peer-learning and partnerships with other countries on good practices in operating citizen

service centers. The sub-component will also support the GoL to identify bottlenecks to the lack of resources of the CSCs, in particular allocation of budget.

This assignment is linked with another consultancy focused on the enhancement of the e-Liberia portal and shared digital infrastructure in Monrovia. About 20 priority online services will be identified for digitalization and all CSCs will have access to the e-Liberia portal for the provision of these online (transactional) services. Therefore, the activities included in this assignment will be closely coordinated with the e-Liberia enhancements to avoid duplication of efforts and ensure that all priority online services will be accessible to the CSCs to improve the scope and quality of services provided to all citizens and businesses at the county level.

To successfully implement the aforementioned activities, the GREAT Project is seeking the expertise of a consulting firm (hereinafter referred to as “the Consultant”) to develop the technical and functional requirements and the bidding documentation for the improvement of the ICT infrastructure of the County Service Centers. Another procurement process will be launched for the competitive selection of a solution provider for the supply and installation of ICT infrastructure components in all CSCs using the bidding documents to be prepared during this assignment. The Consultant selected for this assignment will not be able to participate in the bidding process for the supply and installation of ICT infrastructure components.

2. Objectives

The objective of this consultancy is to identify the business needs of government services to be provided through the CSCs (in line with the e-Liberia enhancements) and prepare the functional and technical requirements and bidding document for the improvement of the County Service Centers ICT Infrastructure for improving access to online (or onsite) services throughout the country. The Consultant will coordinate the needs assessment with the e-Liberia expansion consultancy to ensure that all CSCs will provide access to priority online services through network connections to be established with the e-Liberia portal, in addition to the services already available onsite (those administrative services not digitalized yet).

3. Scope of Work

The Consultant will undertake the following tasks and deliverables:

- a. Conduct a thorough assessment of the existing Information and Communication Technology (ICT) environment (hardware, peripherals, software, network connections/Internet, power supply, etc.) of the County Service Centers, identify the gaps impeding effective service delivery (both online and onsite), document the requirements of each CSC and its related MACs in central office, to have an efficient and effective citizen centric service delivery environment [Deliverable #1]. The requirements will include but not be limited to:
 - i. Application software and information systems used for service delivery
 - ii. Number and specs of existing computers and peripherals
 - iii. Existing power supply and alternative power requirements (green power)
 - iv. Servers, data storage units and system software
 - v. Network equipment and Internet connection
 - vi. Security requirements etc.

- b. Conduct a thorough assessment of the existing administrative services, which will cover the mapping of existing business processes (“as-is”), the recommendations for possible improvements towards digitization (“to-be”) with payment facilities, and the identification of priority services for digitalization with high demand and impact. This activity will be closely coordinated with the e-Liberia enhancement consultancy that is also focused on the identification of 20 priority online (transactional) services. The CSCs will eventually provide access to all priority online services through direct links to the e-Liberia portal. Additionally, the CSCs will continue providing existing onsite services benefiting from the enhanced ICT infrastructure. The total number of online and onsite services to be provided by all CSCs will be determined after this assessment [Deliverable #2].
- c. Prepare bidding documents for the supply and installation of necessary network equipment, software, hardware, and other ICT components that are required at the various County Service Centers for access to the e-Liberia portal for online services (digitalized) as well as the provision of onsite services (not digitalized yet) [Deliverable #3]. Additionally, prepare a transition plan, risk assessment and stakeholder analysis, together with detailed cost and duration estimates for all ICT solutions included in the draft bidding document;
- d. Research and recommend options to increase service delivery channels through partnerships with private-sector agents and non-government stakeholders to achieve greater awareness of the workings of the CSCs [Deliverable #4].
- e. Prepare capacity building requirement of CSC stakeholders based on the assessment results to support effective CSC’s operations and online service delivery [Deliverable #5].
- f. Present the findings of the above-mentioned assessments and solutions to the GOL and World Bank team.
- g. Perform any other tasks deemed necessary to complement the above activities for the successful accomplishment of the assignment’s objective.

4. Deliverables and Reports

The Consulting firm shall produce the following deliverables:

No	Deliverable	Deadline*	Payment
1	The Inception Report presenting the methodology, meeting requirements with stakeholders, presenting the work plan of the assignment with clearly defined deadlines, covering the period of consulting services indicating the expected amount of work and results, acceptable for the GOL.	Week 2	10%

2	The Interim Report #1 (Deliverables 1, 2) covering the assessment of existing County Service Centers ICT components and the review of CSC service delivery needs and possible process enhancements together with local stakeholders, as well as the definition of functional and technical requirements for the improvement of each CSC ICT infrastructure. All results documented in an informative manner	Week 10	35%
3	The Interim Report #2 (Deliverables, 3, 4, 5) covering the draft bidding documents, options to increase service delivery channels, and CSC capacity strengthening requirements, together with a transition plan, risk assessments and stakeholder analysis to be given to the GOL and the World Bank team.	Week 14	
4	The Final Report covering the final versions of all deliverables.	Week 16	55%

(*). All dates are after the signature and effectiveness of the contract.

5. Duration and Timeline

The consultancy firm is expected to commence on and conclude within a period of four (4) months. The Consultant will provide a detailed work plan and timeline as part of the inception report, outlining key milestones and deliverable due dates within three (2) weeks of signing the agreement/contract.

The Consulting firm is expected to provide minimum Eight (8) person-months (p-m) of total input within the implementation period through four (4) key experts with required qualifications to complete the activities listed above through in-country assistance, coordination, reporting and presentations of the analysis and recommendations, including: KE-1: Team Leader and System Architect; KE-2: Digital Government Expert (CSC Administrative Services); KE-3: Digital Public Infrastructure Expert (CSC ICT infrastructure); KE-4: Network Specialist (CSC network connectivity). The team should work in Liberia for a minimum of seven (7) person-months in total during this assignment.

6. General Qualifications and Expertise

The Consultant firm must possess, at the minimum, the following qualifications:

- a. The Consultancy firm must be a legally established and registered entity.
- b. The Consultancy firm should demonstrate at least 10 years of relevant experience.
- c. The Consultancy firm must have successfully completed the development of requirements and bidding documents for improving/upgrading ICT infrastructure of at least three (3) large organizations/government agencies within the last five (5) years (as the main solution provider or main contributor in a joint venture). Successfully completed projects will be presented through a table listing the name of the relevant assignments, short scope of work, contract start and end dates, country/region, contact reference (name, e-mail, phone number), and

operational acceptance certificates. Additional references may be requested directly from the clients of completed projects, if necessary.

- d. Proposed technical approach and methodology should be suitable for the assignment.
- e. The Consultancy firm must be able to mobilize at least four (4) key experts with the necessary skills and experience presented below as well as the project management and backstopping capacity, to ensure the successful completion of this assignment.

The Consultant firm will be selected based on the Consultants' Qualifications (CQS) method set out in the World Bank's Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers September 2023.

The identification of the best consultant (based on the EoIs) will be based on the following criteria:

- (i) General qualifications of the company to REOI (30%)
- (ii) Relevant experience with similar assignments (40%)
- (iii) Availability of key experts (30%)

The minimum passing score for short-listing is 70 %.

The Consultant firm must ensure that the key experts who will perform the listed activities possess the following qualifications:

KE-1: Team Leader and business analyst (3 person-months; 2.5 p-m onsite and 0.5 p-m remote)

- At least Master's degree in systems engineering, computer science, computer engineering, digital government, information technology, management information systems or an equivalent combination of academic qualifications and work experience.
- International expert with at least ten (10) years of relevant experience in the region or other parts of the world, preferably in countries with transitional economies.
- Certifications and continuing professional learning demonstrating subject matter expertise in digital government solutions with a focus on online service delivery, ICT infrastructure, network and information systems governance, information security and vulnerability and risk management.
- At least three (3) relevant projects completed over the past eight (8) years.
- Minimum five (5) years of project management experience.
- At least five (5) years of work experience in business process mapping and reengineering for online service delivery and ICT infrastructure improvements.
- Technical/Team Leadership Experience.
- Excellent communication skills (both written and oral).
- Strong interpersonal skills.
- Ability to be flexible and work analytically in a problem-solving environment.
- Strong organizational & multi-tasking skills.
- Ability to handle ambiguity and make decisions and recommendations with limited data.
- Solid analytical/problem-solving skills with capability to identify solutions to unusual and complex problems.
- Experience working with senior government or enterprise leadership regarding information network strategy and governance.

- Fluency in English.

KE-2: Digital Government Expert (CSC Administrative Services) (2.0 person-months; 1.5 p-m onsite and 0.5 p-m remote)

- At least Bachelor's degree in information and communication technologies, systems engineering, computer science, computer engineering, digital government or an equivalent combination of academic qualifications and work experience.
- At least eight (8) years of relevant experience in the region or other parts of the world, preferably in developing countries.
- At least two (2) relevant projects completed over the past seven (7) years.
- At least five (5) years of work experience in the design and implementation of online public service (multichannel access including mobile devices) improvements.
- Demonstrated experience with practical application of leading digital solutions, in particular related to online service delivery enhancements.
- Experience in the design of online service portals and the development of detailed requirements, and bidding documents for the procurement of related digital solutions in the public/private sector.
- Good inter-relational skills and ability to interact with an international team of experts and government officials at all levels;
- Excellent writing and presentation skills in English.
- Fluency in English.

KE-3 : Digital Public Infrastructure Expert (CSC ICT infrastructure) (1.5 person-months; 1 p-m onsite and 0.5 p-m remote)

- At least Bachelor's degree in systems engineering, computer science, computer engineering, information technology, digital government or an equivalent combination of academic qualifications and work experience.
- At least eight (8) years of relevant experience in the region or other parts of the world, preferably in developing countries.
- At least two (2) relevant projects completed over the past five (5) years.
- Demonstrated experience with the design and implementation of ICT infrastructure (hardware, peripherals, software, network equipment, power supply, etc.) to connect local service centers to centralized online service portals and data centers.
- Experience in the design/implementation of ICT infrastructure, and the development of requirements and bidding documents for the procurement of ICT infrastructure components in the public/private sector.
- Good inter-relational skills and ability to interact with an international team of experts and government officials at all levels;
- Excellent writing and presentation skills in English.
- Fluency in English.

KE-4: Network Specialist (CSC network connectivity) (1.5 person-months; 1 p-m onsite and 0.5 p-m remote)

- At least Bachelor's degree in information and network technologies, systems engineering, computer science, computer engineering, digital government or an equivalent combination of academic qualifications and work experience.
- At least eight (8) years of relevant experience in the region or other parts of the world, preferably in developing countries.
- At least three (3) relevant projects completed over the past five (5) years.
- Demonstrated knowledge on network design and implementation in large heterogeneous organizations.
- Demonstrated knowledge on network design and implementation in using zero trust technologies and protecting publicly exposed networks.
- Recognized certifications on network design.
- Experience in the design of communications network solutions and the development of detailed requirements, and bidding documents for the procurement of network components for ICT infrastructure in the public/private sector
- Good inter-relational skills and ability to interact with an international team of experts and government officials at all levels;
- Excellent writing and presentation skills in English.
- Fluency in English.

7. Institutional Arrangement

The consultant will report to and will be supervised by the Deputy Minister for Research and Planning at the Ministry of Internal Affairs and is expected to work in close collaboration with the GREAT Project Implementation Team Lead at MFDP who will arrange consultation. In addition, GREAT PIT will be responsible for the management of the contractual and accordingly the consultant will communicate PIT on all contract management issues.

8. Restrictions

In addition to the standard conflict-of-interest restrictions specified in the consultancy contract, any tangible or intellectual output created under this contract will remain the sole property of the Government of Liberia (GoL), who will make them available to the concerned development partner including the World Bank for comments. The terms of reference and the correlated products are to be handled confidentially. Re-use of the materials will require the formal, written approval of the GoL.

The Consultant shall have no material interest in any of the outputs of this assignment and technologies or related ICT services/solutions and will not be eligible to participate in future contracts for the implementation of the proposed solutions.

On the commencement of the assignment, the Consultant will jointly prepare with the GoL a statement of confidentiality that will bind the Consultant to nondisclosure of any sensitive information that the Consultant may become knowledgeable of during the course of the assignment. The terms of this agreement shall be made consistent with the relevant privacy laws of Liberia.

The contract will be signed after the effectiveness of the project. The Client (GoL) have the right to terminate this activity at any time of this process.

9. Resources Provided

The GoL shall be responsible for all basic logistics including staff office accommodation, and internal administration, required to perform the assignment.

The GoL will also provide administrative and communications assistance (except cellular), meeting/conference logistics and space, and other such resources, required to perform the assignment. International calls will be paid by the Consultant.