



MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND DIGITALIZATION

GHANA DIGITAL ACCELERATION PROJECT (GDAP)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

FOR

**ENGAGEMENT OF A CONSULTING FIRM FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF AN
ONLINE GRIEVANCE/COMPLAINTS MECHANISM SYSTEM (GRM) PORTAL
AND A GRM TOLL FREE NUMBER FOR MoCD.**

July 2024

INTRODUCTION

The Government of Ghana has successfully secured funding from the World Bank to implement the Ghana Digital Acceleration Project (GDAP). GDAP's primary goal is to expedite access to digital services, promote innovation, and foster inclusive digital transformation.

This project aims to empower citizens, startups, Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), and the Government by enhancing their access to digital services. The expected outcomes include sustained digital growth, job creation, and improved digital operational efficiency.

GDAP also offers an opportunity to address the digital gender gap and improve internet access in both urban and rural areas. While the exact scope of civil works is still being defined, it is anticipated to involve moderate-scale projects with temporary, site-specific impacts.

Throughout the project's preparation phase, we will implement measures to identify, address, and mitigate potential risks and adverse impacts on the environment and vulnerable populations. Our approach aligns with the World Bank Group's Environment, Health, and Safety Guidelines (EHSGs) to systematically assess and manage environmental and social risks and impacts.

The project has five (5) components, namely:

Component 1: Ensuring Inclusive and Safe Digital Transformation

This component is dedicated to assisting the Government of Ghana (GoG) in enhancing the strategic, policy, and regulatory framework to facilitate a dynamic, secure, and inclusive digital transformation. This component encompasses four additional sub-components, namely (a) Enabling Environment for Broadband Development and Greening ICT Enablers; (b) Digital Connectivity in Lagging Regions; (c) Safeguards for Cybersecurity and Data Protection; (d) Skills for Digital Inclusion and Digital Jobs

Component 2: Modernizing Digital Government Services

This component centers on the public sector's role in digital transformation and seeks to aid Ghana in establishing an adaptable and citizen-centric digital government model. The second component comprises three sub-components: (a) Change management is moving towards strengthened digital governance. (b) Digital Government - Enhancing User-Centric Service (c) Future of Work in Government

Component 3: Support for Digital Transformation of Productive Strategic Sectors

This component is focused on the private sector side of digital transformation and aims to boost the digital innovation ecosystem. Its sub-components include.

(a) Scaling up Ghana's Digital Entrepreneurship and Innovation Ecosystem; (b) Digital Transformation in Selected Sectors (c) Skills for Digital Businesses

Component 4: Project Management and Implementation Support

This component plays a pivotal role in supporting the management and execution of project-related activities. Its funding allocation is dedicated to facilitating the recruitment of consultants across various essential domains, including project management, project coordination, fiduciary expertise (e.g., procurement and financial management), Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E), Environmental and Social Safeguards (E&S), project communication, and citizen engagement.

Component 5: Contingent Emergency Response Component

In light of the COVID-19 crisis, the Government has incorporated a Contingent Emergency Response Component (CERC) into the project's framework. This component is designed to facilitate rapid government intervention in the event of qualifying crises, including those related to climate, natural disasters, and public health emergencies.

The introduction of these interventions is likely to lead to complaints and concerns from the agency and communities benefiting from them. Therefore, to address the issues raised by stakeholders who may have reservations about the GDAP implementation, it is essential to establish a Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM). This GRM should be created, made public, and put into operation to provide a transparent avenue for stakeholders to express their grievances and resolve them amicably. The Ministry of Communication and Digitalization, working through the Project Coordinating Unit (PCU) of GDAP and relevant units of the project, will handle these grievances.

The Ghana Digital Acceleration Project (GDAP) commences in 2023, spanning a five-year duration with an anticipated conclusion in 2028. The Ministry of Communications and Digitalisation's Project Coordinating Unit will be responsible for the day-to-day execution of the GDAP, collaborating with over fifteen (15) beneficiary agencies.

SCOPE OF WORK

The consulting firm will, among others, undertake the following activities:

- Collaborate closely with a wide array of stakeholders and the World Bank team to meticulously gather comprehensive requirements for the GDAP GRM information system.
- Conduct a thorough assessment of the existing systems and business processes within the coordinating agency to serve as a foundation for designing various features and functionalities for the GRM.
- Methodically document requirements and specifications to serve as a definitive guide for the development of the GRM.
- Present a meticulously detailed project implementation plan that outlines clear timelines for each deliverable.
- Execute the construction of the GRM information system in strict accordance with the agreed-upon specifications to accomplish the following objectives:
 - Capture general grievances submitted by Project Affected Persons (PAPs).
 - Integrate Gender-Based Violence (GBV) risk management procedures, including the establishment of a secure and encrypted pathway for the

- reception and confidential handling of GBV grievances, with a focus on protecting survivors and victims.
- Empower Safeguard Officers to classify complaints based on standardized risk levels.
- Support GRM-related matters by providing secure access and comprehensive management capabilities to staff of the Coordinating Agency (CA), governed by a clearly defined permission structure.
- Assure the utmost integrity and confidentiality of all grievances stored within the GRM.
- Develop a monitoring tool to oversee the progress of the grievance resolution process and analyze data for report generation.
- Implement robust security protocols to safeguard the online portal's integrity.
- Utilize the Ministry's official website as the hosting platform for the portal, ensuring uninterrupted access through the necessary subscriptions.
- Create a comprehensive training manual and conduct training sessions for designated Coordinating Agency (CA) staff on how to effectively operate the web-based platform.
- Collaborate closely with CA personnel and other stakeholders to enhance existing components, introduce new features, conduct user acceptance testing, perform system integration testing, and finalize acceptance testing.
- Offer technical guidance concerning the sizing requirements for storage, network, and computing resources, ensuring the seamless deployment of the information system.
- Guarantee the secure hosting and optimization of the web portal to accommodate high volumes of concurrent users.
- Maintain the information system by promptly addressing detected bugs and ensuring timely delivery of requested improvements and optimizations when needed.

Structure of Grievance Mechanism

The Grievance Redress Mechanism operates within the framework outlined as follows:

The GRM system encompasses two toll-free telephone lines, facilitating direct communication for complainants, commonly referred to as Project Affected Persons (PAPs). These toll-free numbers also accept text and WhatsApp messages for submitting complaints to the call center at the Ministry of Communications and Digitalisation. Complaints can also be conveyed through written correspondence, email, or in-person submissions. The contact information for the GRM, including telephone numbers and mailing addresses, will be transparently communicated to all beneficiary agencies. The GRM remains accessible to all stakeholder groups.

Each grievance is diligently recorded in the official complaints log, and all telephone calls are meticulously registered. The GRM system exercises vigilant oversight over complainants' affiliations with beneficiary agencies, ensuring that, in cases where grievances cannot be swiftly resolved and require further attention, the feedback is appropriately routed to the Ministry's Grievance Redress Committee (the 2nd level of GRM). If the problem is not resolved, all levels are employed until there is a consensus between the complainant(s) and the Ministry.

Upon receipt of a complaint, the GRM is committed to providing an initial response within 48 hours and endeavors to achieve resolution within 21 working days through the dedicated Project Coordination Unit (c).

The toll-free telephone lines are connected to the Project Coordinating Unit (PCU) as part of the Ghana Digitalization Acceleration Project (GDAP). This PCU operates within the Ministry of Communication and Digitalization and is staffed by trained professionals responsible for handling these dedicated phone lines. They are trained to answer calls from Project Affected Persons (PAPs), document the details provided, and forward them to the Environmental and Social Safeguard office.

In addition, our GDAP team maintains a Grievance Register or Log to keep a record of interactions with complainants, ensuring proper documentation for further actions. When complaints come in, they are promptly directed to the relevant departments for resolution. For those who prefer to communicate in local languages or are not comfortable with English, our unit offers interpretation services to facilitate effective communication.

Our beneficiary agencies play a vital role in addressing these concerns. Therefore, complaints received by the Environmental and Social Safeguard Office from PAPs are promptly shared with these agencies through email, a dedicated platform, or in person by the Safeguard Specialist or Project Coordinator (PC).

At the project management team level, we conduct a comprehensive monthly review of all complaints. Additionally, our safeguards specialists at the Ministry of Communication and Digitalization conduct random surveys of complainants on a quarterly basis to assess their satisfaction with the resolution process.

We regularly provide updates on the implementation of the grievance mechanism to the public while ensuring the strict confidentiality of individuals who report grievances. This confidentiality is crucial to protecting the interests and identities of both victims and beneficiary agencies involved in the GRM process.

A dissatisfied complainant, after exhausting the first three levels of the grievance redress mechanism structure of the project, may appeal to the Minister of Communication and Digitalization. The complainant can then proceed to the final level of the GRM, which is the law court. In all cases, complainants are reassured of their legal rights under their national judicial process to go to court.

Outputs from the website

The system would be designed to automatically generate the following reports:

- The total number of received grievances.
- The source of grievances (e.g., beneficiary agency, complainant name (if he/she permits))
- Breakdown of grievances by gender (male or female), disability, and other relevant categories

- Securely handle cases of sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment using encryption.
- Provide an overview of grievances filed by the institution.

The web application should be able to support the following features for the physically challenged, especially the blind and the deaf.

1. Screen Reader Compatibility

- **ARIA (Accessible Rich Internet Applications):** Implement ARIA roles, states, and properties to make web content more accessible to screen readers.
- **Text-to-Speech Support:** Ensure that text content is readable by screen readers, and provide alternative text (alt text) for images.
- **Semantic HTML:** Use proper HTML tags (e.g., headings, lists) to enhance the document structure for screen readers.

2. Keyboard Navigation

- **Tab Index Management:** Ensure that interactive elements (buttons, links, forms) are navigable via the keyboard using the Tab key.
- **Skip to Content Links:** Provide a "skip to content" link that allows users to bypass repetitive navigation elements.
- **Focus Indicators:** Ensure that focusable elements have visible focus indicators to guide users through the interface.

3. Voice Recognition Integration

- **Speech-to-Text:** Allow users to interact with the application via voice commands using APIs like Web Speech API.
- **Voice Navigation:** Enable users to navigate through the application using voice commands, improving accessibility for those with motor impairments.

4. Captioning and Subtitles

- **Closed Captioning:** Provide captions for audio and video content to assist users with hearing impairments.
- **Transcripts:** Offer text transcripts for audio and video content to provide an alternative for users who cannot access audio content.

5. High Contrast and Color Adjustments

- **Customizable Themes:** Provide high-contrast themes or the ability to adjust colors to accommodate users with visual impairments.
- **Color Blindness Support:** Use color palettes that are distinguishable by people with various types of color blindness.

6. Text Resizing and Magnification

- **Responsive Text:** Allow users to resize text without losing content or functionality. Implement text resizing options within the application.
- **Zoom Compatibility:** Ensure that the application remains functional and visually clear when magnified.

7. Alternative Input Methods

- **On-screen Keyboard:** Offer an on-screen keyboard for users who cannot use a physical keyboard.
- **Gesture Controls:** Integrate gesture recognition for users who rely on touch-based or motion-based inputs.

8. Accessibility Testing Tools

- **Automated Testing Tools:** Integrate tools like WAVE, Axe, or Lighthouse to check for accessibility issues during development.
- **User Testing:** Engage users with disabilities in testing the application to identify and address real-world accessibility challenges.

9. Assistive Technology Compatibility

- **Braille Displays:** Ensure compatibility with refreshable braille displays for users with severe visual impairments.
- **Switch Devices:** Support switch access technology for users who navigate interfaces using switches instead of traditional input devices.

10. Multimedia Accessibility

- **Captions and Transcripts:** Provide captions for all video content and transcripts for audio content to accommodate users with hearing impairments.
- **Sign Language Interpretation:** Where possible, offer sign language interpretation for video content.
- **Audio Descriptions:** Include audio descriptions for video content to describe visual elements for users with visual impairments.

11. Web Accessibility Standards Compliance

- **WCAG (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines):** Adhere to the WCAG 2.1 guidelines to ensure that the application meets international accessibility standards.
- **Section 508 Compliance:** Additionally, kindly refer to Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act as a general guidelines.

This design ensures the system is user-friendly and efficient and respects confidentiality while offering detailed reporting options.

Warranty and Maintenance Agreements

Warranty and maintenance coverage ranging from Basic up till June 30, 2027

Platform Specifications:

- PHP Laravel Framework
- AngularJS & Twitter Bootstrap Front-end
- MySQL Database
- Android SDK

Hosting Specifications:

- Cloud-based Linux server running on 2.4 GHz Intel Xeon® E5-2676 v3 (Haswell) processors
- 2 vCPU
- 8 Gig Mem with EBS-Only SSD storage with 1 TB
- Dedicated EBS Throughput of 450MBps
- Linux (CentOS 5+, Debian Wheezy+ or Ubuntu 14.04+)
- Outbound TCP ports: All open
- Inbound TCP ports: 80, 443, 22, 7658 with admin access
- Maintenance & Technical Support
- Technical support expected on 8x7 on-call basis.
- Labor for any troubleshooting, maintenance and replacement

Duration:

The assignment spans an initial period of 4 months working days, dedicated to the development of the GRM system for GDAP. Over the course of the project, the Ministry's IT team and NITA will consistently provide support, ensuring the system's maintenance. This support extends to activities such as staff training and implementing portal enhancements on the website.

Qualifications/Experience of the key staff

Team lead

- a. At least a master's degree in Computer Science, or other related field with strong focus on system development;
- b. At least 5 years of relevant work experience on system development in developing countries;
- c. Experience in designing and developing multi-tier distributed information system.
- d. Experience in working with Database Management Systems and Software Development technologies such as ASP.NET/C#/Microsoft SQL Server
- e. Solid knowledge on website security and website hosting service
- f. Demonstrated expertise in the development of Grievance Redress Systems.
- g. Ability to work in a team and to respond to short deadlines by governments and other counterparts; and
- h. Excellent verbal and written communication skills in English are essential.

ICT Expert

- a. Should at a minimum have a Master's Degree in computer science, IT Management or related field from a recognized university.
- b. Should have working knowledge and experience with Grievance Redress Systems in the public sector.
- c. Should possess at least 5 years' experience in public sector ICT including knowledge of applications, networks, databases and infrastructure.
- d. As a member of the team of experts, he/she will be required to report to the Team Leader for the coordination of all the required assignment outputs.

Grievance Systems Expert

- At least a first degree in the field any related field;
- Should have participated in the implementation of the proposed solution with atleast two client.
- At least 5 years proven experience in information systems planning and implementation and support
- Excellent Customer service skills

Experience and qualification of the consulting Firm

- The firm must be a legal entity registered in Ghana with certificate of incorporation and Certificate to Commerce Business
- The vendor/firm must be a reputable company with at least 5 years' experience in hosting complex online platforms adhering to the specs mentioned above.
- Experience in providing similar services to local and international organizations
- Able to develop user manual and provide user training on all documents in English
- Solid knowledge on website security and website hosting service
- The Vendor/firm should provide a proposal and methodology for delivering the task which will include a brief implementation plan
- Expertise in hosting websites on cloud-based servers (such as Amazon Web Services, Valcato) as well as on in-house servers.
- Expertise in maintaining full backups of the platform and associated data
- Expertise in monitoring the server logs to see most popular pages and downloads and generating regular reports.
- The firm must demonstrate experience in implementing similar web applications with features for the physically challenged, especially the blind and the deaf.

Reporting and Coordination

The consulting firm will report directly to the GDAP Coordinator and collaborate closely with relevant stakeholders throughout the project.

Client Input

The GDAP Project Coordinating Unit of the Ministry of Communication and Digitalization will furnish the consulting firm with the following documents to facilitate the execution of the work:

- Ghana Digital Acceleration Project (GDAP) Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP)
- GDAP Project Appraisal Document
- GDAP Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF)
- GDAP Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP)
- Other documents the IT Department might need to obtain information from stakeholders.
- Any other support required by the IT Department

The structure of GRM will be used throughout the lifespan of the project. It will therefore deploy a toll-free number, SMS, and online web system for receiving grievances.

Expected delivery and payment schedule

	Description	Payment Schedule¹	Expected Delivery
1.	Inception Report	10%	1 week from contract signing
2.	Development of the GRM system	30%	10 weeks from contract signing
3.	Deployment and Commissioning	30%	2 weeks from contract signing
4.	User Acceptance	20%	2 weeks from contract signing
5.	Final Report	10%	1 week from contract signing
