**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**RESEARCH STUDY INTO OPEN DEFECATION FREE (ODF) SUSTAINABILITY**

1. **SUMMARY**

United Purpose (formerly known as Concern Universal), with support from UNICEF, seeks to hire a research consultant or consultancy team to identify factors affecting the sustainability of Open Defecation Free (ODF) status in rural Malawi. The research aims to examine the extent to which Community-Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) has thus far created long-term changes in sanitation and hygiene behaviour, improving understanding on what influences that behaviour change and contributing factors to slippage. Furthermore, the study seeks to highlight the conditions (enabling environment, supply, demand, quality) needed to sustain improved sanitation and hygiene practices, as well as identify the bottlenecks to achieving such conditions and necessary measures to counteract or overcome these bottlenecks. This study will make appropriate recommendations at sectoral level to inform national ODF programming and policy, such as the new ODF Malawi National Strategy (currently under review). The research will be conducted in 4 districts across Malawi.

1. **BACKGROUND & RATIONALE**

United Purpose (UP) is an international NGO working to create opportunities for lasting improvement in people’s lives. UP is one of Malawi’s largest NGOs, working in partnership with local government and communities across fifteen districts, mainly in central and southern Malawi. In 2016, UP reached over 1,200,000 rural people to improve their lives through a range of projects including Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), microfinance and income generation, livelihoods, climate change and disaster risk management food security, health and nutrition, and sustainable energy. CU’s WASH programme has grown to be the biggest implementer of quality and sustainable rural water supply and sanitation programs after the Malawi government, specialising primarily in rural water access, supporting communities to become open defecation free, improving hygiene behaviours, school WASH and ensuring sustainably managed water and sanitation services and facilities.

Since 2013, UP and UNICEF have collaborated closely and achieved tremendous impacts on sanitation through the CLTS approach, having verified and certified 8 TAs with Open Defecation Free (ODF) status in Dowa and Kasungu Districts in line with the National ODF strategy. In addition, CU’s ongoing partnership with Plan Malawi, with support from the Global Sanitation Fund, has contributed to the certification of an additional 5 TAs, resulting in a cumulative total of 13 TAs out of 39 ODF TAs nationally.

Despite the significant progress in sanitation as a result of national efforts throughout Malawi, with 39 TAs declared ODF within five years of the establishment of the National ODF Taskforce (NOTF), little research exists to show sustainability rates for ODF communities and what is needed to sustain improved sanitation practices. This lack of evidence and knowledge could potentially undermine the long-term impact of improved sanitation and open defecation status, as an understanding of the factors affecting durability and ways to mitigate against

and counteract slippage is essential to inform and improve sanitation and ODF policies and programming. This is a great concern among villages that have been declared ODF. It is against this background that UP, with funding from UNICEF, is commissioning research into ODF sustainability in Rumphi, Dowa, Kasungu, and Phalombe Districts.

1. **OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF THE ASSIGNMENT** 
   1. **Objectives of the Research study**

The main objective of the research study is to assess ODF sustainability[[1]](#footnote-1) status once a community has been verified and certified as ODF. The research will consist of a thorough analysis of the existence and use of latrines in TAs that were declared ODF in selected districts over one year ago as part of a re-verification exercise, as well as ODF communities in non-ODF TAs and villages that were triggered but failed to become ODF. The study will further conduct an in-depth analysis of factors that contribute to households either maintaining their ODF status or reverting to Open Defecation (OD; slippage). The research, upon presenting findings, will make practical, evidence-based recommendations to inform future policy and programming initiatives on what is necessary to prevent slippage, maintain positive behaviour change and sustain ODF communities.

* 1. **Specific objectives of the study**

The following specific objectives are envisaged:

* To determine the percentage of households and communities still ODF (by national definitions), one or more years after ODF declaration, and look at common factors/conditions, including external support approaches taken
* To establish the primary causes of communities and households reverting to OD (ODF slippage)
* To determine what motivates communities and households to remain ODF (maintain sanitation facilities and hygiene practices) – conditions for an appropriate: enabling environment, supply, demand and quality
* Provide specific recommendations at sectoral level for programmatic approaches and policy, including for a new ODF Malawi National Strategy

UP therefore seeks to engage the services of an external consultant or firm with extensive knowledge and experience in WASH and health behaviour research and programming in a Sub-Saharan African setting.

* 1. **Scope of work**

The consultant will work in close cooperation with CU’s WASH team, Study Peer Review Group (SPRG)[[2]](#footnote-2) and NOTF Chair, who will provide guidance throughout the research study, particularly during the inception phase regarding the design, methodology and tools, and providing feedback on the draft report and findings.

The consultant is expected to undertake the following tasks:

Inception

* Present the technical proposal to the UP WASH team and SPRG before the research commences for input into the methodology
* Develop an inception report, detailing design, methodology, indicators, tools and work plan to carry out the assignment. This will be developed and finalized in consultation with the WASH team, SPRG, National ODF Taskforce (NOTF) and National M&E Coordinator
* Develop a Sampling Design, Data Collection and Management Protocol

Data collection and analysis

* Carry out a desk review of relevant project documents, including project concept documents, WASH strategies of organisations conducting CLTS in study TAs, National ODF Strategy, National Hand Washing With Soap (HWWS) Strategy, NOTF verification forms and NOTF ODF verification reports for relevant TAs, in addition to other relevant documents which will be agreed upon and made available prior to the implementation of the analysis
* Carry out literature review of other research in similar contexts to synthesise other key learning and recommendations
* Coordinate field data collection and entry for cleaning and analysis
* Conduct key informant interviews with WASH stakeholders, including WASH programme managers for NGOs supporting ODF status in study TAs; field facilitators conducting triggering; government; UNICEF WASH unit members and other relevant stakeholders
* Share daily fieldwork debriefs to UP WASH team
* Analyse and interpret the findings
* Make evidence-based, appropriate recommendations at sector level to inform national ODF programming and policy

Documentation, peer review and dissemination

* Develop and submit the first draft of the report to SPRG, CU, UNICEF and NOTF. The report should be comprehensive and provide detailed specific findings within each result area, providing key practical recommendations for implementation.
* Present key findings, incorporating feedback from the first round of comments, to WASH National Stakeholders, including government, district and NGOs for consensus building and validation
* Submit final draft, incorporating stakeholders’ comments and input, to United Purose, UNICEF and SPRG for final review
* Submit the final reports[[3]](#footnote-3) to United Purpose (three hard copies and a soft copy via email) on the last day of the consultancy as per contractual agreement. The raw data (qualitative and quantitative, including original field notes for in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and recorded audio material), the cleaned database, and data collection tools used in the analysis should be submitted together with the report. A simple inventory of material handed over will be part of the record.
* Present the findings at a half-day dissemination conference to national WASH stakeholders
  1. **Key Outputs from the research study**

The outputs expected from this consultancy are as follows:

1. An inception report, incorporating feedback and inputs from broader study team, including the design, methodology, data collection tools, work plan and budget (submitted within first month of consultancy period)
2. Draft report and power point presentation for stakeholder validation
3. Final reports, including the full report, 10 page summary report, 2 page policy brief and Powerpoint presentation (30 slides maximum), updated to incorporate stakeholders’ comments
4. Soft and hard copies of original and cleaned data sets, including field notes, interview transcripts, recorded audio material and any other related materials

Please note that the contents of the report will be analyzed and final payment will only be made upon agreement on the final analysis report from the SPRG, UP and UNICEF as per contract terms.

1. **MANAGEMENT AND LOGISTICS** 
   1. **Role of UP WASH team**

CU’s WASH team will provide the overall coordination, logistics, supervision and programme documents, acting as the link between the consultant and the project sites. The WASH team and national M&E coordinator, with support from the RSPG, will provide technical and logistical support. The WASH team will mobilize partners, including the DCT, to support community mobilisation and access to the required persons for interviews. The consultant will be responsible for providing their own transport, the necessary resources/facilities and the required support personnel or enumerators for data collection and analysis, as well as guiding the entire analysis process and all other specific responsibilities as stipulated in this Terms of Reference.

* 1. **Role of Study Peer Review Group**

The review group, comprising esteemed WASH academics and practitioners, will provide insights and guidance for each stage of the research study, particularly during research inception (the design, methodology and tools) and providing feedback on the draft report.

* 1. **Time frame**

The assignment is expected to commence on 15th March 2017 and be completed by 30th July 2017. This eighteen-week period includes desk-review, preparation, orientation of staff, field work and data collection, data analysis, report-writing, submission of draft report, presentation to national WASH stakeholders for validation and submission of final draft to United Purpose. It is expected that there will be 25 days of field work.

* 1. **Location of the assignment**

The research is expected to be conducted in five TAs across 4 districts (Rumphi, Dowa, Kasungu and Phalombe). Supervision and overall management will take place in Lilongwe, where office space will be provided for the lead consultant during the entire period of the assignment. The study will investigate the Community-Led Total Sanitation implemented by United Purpose (with funding from UNICEF and Plan Malawi/GSF), Kasungu District Council (with funding from UNICEF) and Feed the Children (with funding from Plan Malawi/GSF).

1. **ELIGIBILITY AND APPLICATION PROCESS**
   1. **Expected Profile of the Consultant**

The consultant (or consultancy team) must hold the following qualifications in order to be eligible for the role:

* A recognised postgraduate degree in health sciences; preference will be given to PhD holders in public health-related field for the consultant/team leader
* Sound knowledge of public health issues, particularly within the fields of sanitation and hygiene
* Applicants with publications in peer reviewed journals will be given preference
* Demonstrated statistical analysis skills and advanced proficiency in statistical packages (SPSS, STATA and so forth)
* At least 10 years of progressive consultancy experience in community or public health programming at national or international level
* Proven experience in conducting Sanitation and Hygiene research in the last 5 years with traceable references
* A demonstrated high level of professionalism and an ability to work independently and in high-pressure situations under tight deadlines
* Strong interpersonal and communication skills
* High proficiency in written and spoken English; enumerators collecting data must be fluent in Chichewa, Tumbuka and Lomwe (with Chichewa for field work).
  1. **Application Specifications**

Those interested in the consultancy must include in their application a detailed technical and financial proposal with the following components:

*1. Technical*

* Understanding and interpretation of the TORs
* Methodology detailing data collection tools, sampling strategy and data analysis tools to be used in the assignment
* Time and activity schedule
* CVs and profiles of the proposed study team, including data collection persons and enumerators, and associated team structure

2. *Financial (submitted separately)*

* Consultancy rate (in Malawi Kwacha)
* Other costs, including data collection/entry clerks

*3. Organisational and Personnel Capacity Statement*

* Contracts, ToRs and **three** verifiable examples of research reports conducted by the consultant in sanitation and hygiene research
* Referee contact details for previous research assignments
* Curriculum Vitae of the team leader and key areas of expertise.
  1. **Submission of Proposals**

Interested consultants who meet the requirements stated in this ToR should submit their technical and financial proposals to the address below. The envelope containing the proposals should be clearly marked ‘**UP-USHAPE ODF Sustainability’** and submitted to:

The Chairman, National Procurement Committee

United Purpose

P. O. Box 159

LILONGWE

Email: Amos.Nyambo@united-purpose.org

Applications should be received by 20/02/2017. Only shortlisted applicants will be acknowledged.

1. ODF sustainability is defined as how well communities maintain their ODF status beyond verification and certification. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. This Review group will include three WASH Experts, representing UNICEF, academia and a WASH practitioner, and will be tasked to critique the design, tools and methodology as well as proof read all draft reports prior to wider dissemination [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Final reports to include the full report, 10 page summary report, 2 page policy brief and Powerpoint presentation (30 slides maximum) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)