## Terms of Reference for the Mid-Term Evaluation, Public Sector Capacity Development Program

1. **Background:**

The Government of Malawi (GoM) recognizes that improved capacity in the public service will make an important contribution to the achievement of its national development goals. To this end, in 2008, the Government, with financial assistance from the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), conducted a comprehensive capacity assessment of six functional areas: (i) administrative common service (ACS); (ii) human resource management (HRM); (iii) public financial management and audit; (iv) program and project management; (v) public procurement; and (vi) information communication and technologies. Capacity assessments were also conducted in four key ministries namely Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MoAFS), Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST), Ministry of Health (MoH) and Ministry of Irrigation and Water Development (MoIWD).

These assessments culminated in the design of the Public Service Capacity Development Program (PSCDP). Primarily, the Program focuses on developing capacities within the *“common service”* of the public service.

1. **The Program in a Broader Context**

PSCDP supports Theme Five of the MGDS: “Good Governance”, Sub-Theme Two: “Public Policy Formulation, Expenditure Management and Corruption”. Under this Sub-Theme, Government’s long-term goal is for Malawi to have *“an affordable, highly motivated, results oriented and productive civil service”*. This is expected to be achieved through:

1. providing adequate and appropriate training in the public service in order to enhance capacity for the delivery of public goods and services;
2. appointing and promoting staff based on merit and performance;
3. continuing the wage policy reforms in order to raise incentives in the civil service;
4. rationalizing the civil service to ensure cost effectiveness of the delivery of public goods and services; and
5. implementing non-salary incentives performance management systems.

The Program also contributes to Output 5.2.1 of UNDP’s 2008 – 2011 Country Program Action Plan (CPAP) which, by 2011, aims at *“Strengthening capacity of central and local government to formulate policies and strategic plans, deliver services and be more visibly accountable to the populace”*. This was expected to be achieved through strengthening public sector management, nurturing accountability in procurement, financial management, information and communication technology, human resource and program/project administration and building national capacity in audit.

1. **Goal, Purpose and Objectives**

The goal of the Program is to be establish *“an effective public service able to deliver the goals of the National Development Framework, currently the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS)”*. The purpose is *“to strengthen capacity in public sector management and administration for sustained performance improvement in service delivery”*. The overall objective is to increase the capacity of key functional areas in the Government in order to:

1. *provide a stronger basis for implementing the MGDS;*
2. *help improve performance in public service delivery;*
3. *strengthen Government ownership in managing development projects; and*
4. *re-enforce public sector accountability.*

The Office the President and Cabinet (OPC) has the overall responsibility for the management of the Program. However, implementation of specific capacity development strategies for each functional area is the responsibility of the respective institution. For example, leadership and management strategies are implemented by OPC while human resource strategies are the responsibility of the Department of Public Service Management (DPSM). Similarly, program/project management activities are managed by the Ministry of Development Planning and Cooperation (MDPC). The Department of Information Systems and Management Services (DISTMS) is responsible for issues pertaining to information, communication and technology, the Departments of Accountant General and Auditor General (accounting and audit issues), and the Office of the Director of Public Procurement (public procurement strategies).

**III. UNDP Support**

Realizing the importance of public procurement functions, in 2005, UNDP started supporting the Office of the Director of Public Procurement (O/DPP) under the Building National Procurement Capacity Project No. 00050061. Focus was on development of guidelines for procurement entities (PEs); training and sensitization of PEs on the use Standard Bidding Documents (SBDs), training technical staff in PEs on how to develop technical specifications and evaluate procurement proposals, sensitizing leaders of PEs, politicians and parliamentary committees on good procurement practices and engaging audit functions under the different ministries and departments on how to enforce procurement compliance and sanction non-compliance.

Support was also provided to integrate procurement plans into the national budget formulation, scale-up short-term and long-term training in public procurement, develop a joint strategy and action plan for establishment of Internal Audit Committees (IACs) as a way of enhancing public procurement compliance.

In October 2008, the Building National Procurement Capacity Project was integrated into a broader PSCDP to cater for other functional areas. Under leadership and management, key interventions related to clarifying the political and administrative interface between ministers and principal secretaries in the day-to-day management of the public service, improving leadership and management skills, and putting together policy framework for the public sector, particularly as it relates to the administrative common service.

UNDP’s support to implementing human resource management strategies included reviewing policies and regulations for effective management of the human resource function, reducing the recruitment period and improving placement criteria to reduce high vacancy rates in the civil service, re-invigorating HR planning functions in key ministries, and improving coordination between the DPSM and HRM Units in ministries.

Under public financial management and audit, intervention was towards improving the capacity of the Central Internal Audit Unit (CIAU) to carry out risk-based audit, increase financial audit coverage and operationalize IACs in various Government ministries and departments, particularly in the central and key ministries.

In the area of economic common service, focus was on improving knowledge and skills in program/project management, establishing linkages between the various planning systems, e.g. national planning systems with sectoral planning systems with district planning systems. In addition, efforts were made to increase the use of the Public Sector Investment Program (PSIP) process into the line ministries.

Areas of intervention under ICT included improving the reliability of the Government-Wide Area Network (GWAN), strengthening ICT skills in areas such as networking, web development, systems analysis to mention a few.

1. **Evaluation Purpose**

The purpose of the evaluation is to:

* determine the impact, both positive and negative, from contribution of the project to the achievement of the program outcome;
* assess and analyze the achievement of the Program outcome and its related outputs and determine the efficiency and effectiveness in the implementation;
* assess relationship between the program outcome and its outputs (conceptual and design issues), effectiveness of institutional arrangement, partnership strategies and sustainability of the results;
* document lessons learnt during the course of implementation of the Program.
* make recommendations and propose future directions for 2012-2016 programming.

**V. Evaluation Scope**

Broadly, the evaluation is expected to focus on the following major strategic area:

1. Assess the relevance of the Program concept and design;
2. Assess the suitability and efficacy of the implementation arrangements
3. Measure performance towards achieving impact, outcomes/ results and outputs using the criteria of effectiveness, efficiency; and sustainability;
4. Provide an outline of what the next program should address.

Specifically, the evaluation will address the following questions:

VI Program Conceptualization/Design

1. Whether what the program was meant to address was clearly identified and the approach soundly conceived;
2. Whether the end-users of the results of the Program were clearly identified;
3. Whether the objectives, outcome and outputs of the Program were stated explicitly and precisely in verifiable terms with observable success indicators;
4. Whether the relationship between objectives, outcome, outputs, activities and inputs of the Program were logically articulated and;
5. Whether the Program started with a well-prepared work-plan and reasons, if any, for deviations.

*VII Program Relevance*

1. Whether the Program is relevant to the development priorities of the country; and
2. Given the objectives of the Program, whether appropriate assistance to the implementing partners under the Program has been rendered.

*VIII Suitability and Efficacy of Program Implementation Arrangements*

1. The evaluation team will examine the quality and/or timeliness in regard to:
2. The delivery of inputs specified in the Program document, including institutional arrangements, the scheduling and actual implementation
3. Whether the management arrangements of the Program were appropriate and adequate;
4. The responsiveness of the Program management to significant changes in the environment in which the Program functions (both facilitating or impeding program implementation);
5. Lessons from other relevant programs if incorporated in the Program implementation.
6. The monitoring and backstopping of the Program as expected by the Government and UNDP;
7. The delivery of Government counterpart inputs in terms of personnel, premises and equipment; and
8. Interest of other development partners in the Program other than UNDP.

*IX Program Performance*

1. Whether the Program resources (financial, physical and manpower) were adequate in terms of both quantity and quality;
2. Whether the Program resources were used effectively to produce planned results (Were the disbursements and project expenditures in line with expected budgetary plans)?
3. The role of UNDP Country Office and its impact (positive and negative) on the functioning of the Program.
4. Whether there is evidence to support accountability of the Program and for UNDP to use in its accountability requirements to its partners;
5. The effectiveness of financial arrangements of the Program; and
6. Identify challenges to implementing the Program.

*X Next Steps*

* Given the lessons learnt, what are recommended actions for UNDP and Government with regards to future interventions in public sector capacity development? What about Development Partners?

**XI Evaluation Methods**

Evaluation methods to be employed include the following but not limited to:

* Desk review of all major documents ( Program Document, progress and monitoring reports, budgets, audit reports, Program Board minutes);
* Interview with all key stakeholders (OPC, MDPC, O/DPP, MoF, DISTMS, DPSM, CIAU, NAO, Department of the Accountant General, Department of the Auditor General, MoEST, MoAFS, MoH, MoIWD, UNDP and other development partners); and
* Use of inductive qualitative evaluation approaches to show causal linkages between interventions and outcomes.

The evaluator to be contracted is, however, expected to develop and present detailed statement of evaluation methods to show how each of the evaluation questions will be answered, among other evaluation requirements.

**XII Evaluation Required Competencies**

The selected Consultancy Team envisaged for this assignment will ensure impartiality and validity of the evaluation. The consultant will therefore not represent any of the participating institutions within the Program. Qualifications and experience of the sought Team are as follows:

post-graduate degree with excellent team leadership and coordination abilities, detailed knowledge of capacity development initiatives at all levels – policy, institutional and individual.

solid understanding of institutional functional areas of capacity development as they relate to public sector management --human resource administration, project/program management, public procurement, public financial management and audit, information communication technologies -- ICT);

* a minimum of 5 years of extensive working experience in the area of project/ program evaluations, project design and monitoring preferably in the public sector will be an added advantage;
* experience in conducting end of project/program evaluation or similar assignments;
* knowledge and command of the local capacity issues, preferably in the field of public sector management;
* excellent management and communication skills;
* strong conceptual, analytical and writing skills; and
* demonstrate strong oral and written communication skills in English.

**XIII Expected deliverables**

The following are expected from the evaluation team:

* An Inception Report;
* An analytical outlining major issues and emerging conclusions and recommendations;
* Draft evaluation report to be presented to relevant stakeholders; and
* Final evaluation report with recommendations after incorporation of stakeholder comments

**XIV Planning and Implementation Arrangements**

Assuming that the selected Consultancy Team is international, he/she will be required to team up with national consultants to carry out the assignment. The Team will report to the Program Coordinator at the OPC and PSCDP Program Analyst who will be supported by the Evaluation focal point within UNDP. The role of the Coordinator and the Analyst will include management of the selection and recruitment of the consultant; manage contractual arrangements, budget and the personnel involved in the evaluation; provide coordination support to the reference group; provide required data; connect the evaluator with key evaluation stakeholders and ensure fully inclusive and transparent approach to the evaluation; review the inception report and the draft evaluation report.

A reference group that consists of key stakeholders will also be an integral part of the management arrangements that will work with the program manager in guiding the evaluation and quality assurance of expected results. Annex 1 provides the terms of reference for the reference group. The Group will also be responsible for evaluating the proposals. Members will be identified from each of the implementing partners.