



MALAWI UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANT SELECTION)

COUNTRY: Malawi

NAME OF PROJECT: Skills for A Vibrant Economy -SAVE

PROJECT ID: P172627

ASSIGNMENT TITLE: PROVISION OF CONSULTANCY SERVICES FOR MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT NEEDS ASSESSMENT AT MUST

REFERENCE NUMBER: MW-MUST-414634-CS-INDV

DATE OF ISSUE: 13th April 2026

1.0 Background

The Government of Malawi through Ministry of Education and Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training, with funding from World Bank, is implementing the Skills for a Vibrant Economy (SAVE) project, of which the Malawi University of Science and Technology (MUST) is one of the implementing agencies. The project aims to improve access to market-relevant skills programs in priority areas of the economy, ensuring equity in skills training with empowerment of women and girls and vulnerable youth through targeted skills in priority areas of the economy and creating a conducive policy environment and strengthening systems and institutional capacity for skills development, which will centre on: Technical, Entrepreneurial, and Vocational Education and Training (TEVET) and Higher Education Reforms, Student loans, Industrial links, Digital technology and Safeguards, Capacity Building, and Technical Assistance, among other systemic issues.

MUST now intends to apply part of the proceeds of this financing to eligible payments for the Individual Consultancy for the Provision of Mental Health and Psychosocial Support needs assessment (MHPSS) at MUST.

2.0 Objective of the Assignment

The primary objective of the consultancy is to understand the existing MHPSS and wellness needs at MUST and draw relevant recommendations that can be addressed over a short period of 2 years and longer period of 5 years and those requiring a longer period. The consultant shall appraise and familiarize themselves on the requirements of the SAVE project, the Government of Malawi, the World Bank and the various relevant legislations and policies that will be associated with the implementation under the Project.

3.0 Terms of Reference

The detailed terms of reference containing the scope of the assignment and required qualifications and skills; and all relevant information are attached to this invitation.

4.0 Mode of Application

The attention of interested consultants is drawn to Section III, paragraphs 3.14, 3.16. and 3.17 of the World Bank's "Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers" July 2016 Revised February 2025 ("Procurement Regulations"), setting forth the World Bank's policy on conflict of interest.

A Consultant will be selected in accordance with the Individual Consultant (INDV) selection method set out in the Procurement Regulations.

Further information can be obtained at the address (a) below during working hours from 09:00 – 12:00 and 13:00 – 16:00 hours' local time (Monday to Friday) except National Public Holidays.

Expression of Interest (Eoi), including updated curriculum vitae and copies of academic and professional qualifications must be emailed to procurement@must.ac.mw copy save-project@must.ac.mw by 16:00 hours on 27th April, 2026.

Address for clarifications and Eoi submission:

Internal Procurement and Disposal Committee,
Malawi University of Science and Technology,
P.O. Box 5196,
Limbe
Malawi.
Email: procurement@must.ac.mw
Copy: save-project@must.ac.mw

Skills for A Vibrant Economy -SAVE

MALAWI UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE PROVISION OF MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT NEEDS ASSESSMENT AT MUST

COUNTRY- Malawi

NAME OF PROJECT- Skills for A Vibrant Economy (SAVE)

ASSIGNMENT TITLE: Provision of Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Needs Assessment at Must

TERMS OF REFERENCE: MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT NEEDS ASSESSMENT AT MUST

1.0 BACKGROUND

The Government of Malawi with support from the World Bank is implementing the Skills for a Vibrant Economy Project (SAVE) at an estimated cost of **US\$100 million** through the International Development Association (IDA) financing. The project is expected to run over a period of five years from 2021 to 2026. Key implementing agencies are the Ministry of Education as lead and the Ministry of Labour.

The Project Development Objective (PDO) is *“To increase access, particularly for females, to labor market-relevant skills development programs, in participating institutions, targeting priority areas of the economy.”*. This will be achieved by (a) improving access to market-relevant skills programs in priority areas of the economy; (b) enhancing equity in skills training with empowerment of women and girls and vulnerable youth through targeted skills in priority areas of the economy; and (c) creating a conducive policy environment & strengthening systems and institutional capacity for skills development. It is anticipated that the impact of the project will support Malawi’s human capital development for a vibrant economy, equitable growth, and development through improved youth skills in key areas of the economy.

The project has three main components. The first component is supporting Increased Access to Skills Development Programs in Higher Education targeting 9 higher education institutions namely: University of Malawi (UNIMA), Kamuzu University of Health Sciences (College of Medicine and Kamuzu College of Nursing) Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (LUANAR), Malawi University of Science and Technology (MUST), Mzuzu University (MZUNI), Malawi University of Business and Applied Science (MUBAS), Domasi College of Education (DCE), and Nalikule College of Education (NCE). The component has two sub components i. Performance

Agreements for Skills Development Results in Higher Education and ii. Higher Education Student Financing to Improve Equity.

The second component is Supporting Increase in Access to TEVET Skills Development targeting 7 public National Technical Colleges namely Lilongwe, Nasawa, Livingstonia, Namitete, Soche, Salima, and Mzuzu. The component has three sub components: i. Performance Agreements to Support Increased Skills Development through National Technical Colleges ii. Increased Access to Market-oriented TEVET Programs through Competitive Grants and iii Increased Equity in Formal TEVET through Scholarships.

The third component is Tertiary Education System Strengthening, Project Management, M&E and Communications. The project supports central level institutions including Ministry of Education, Ministry of Labour, TEVETA, Higher Education Students Loans and Grant Board, and National Council for Higher Education. This component has four sub components: i. Higher Education System Strengthening ii. TEVET System Strengthening iii. Strengthening the ODeL Directorate and Support to Continuity of Learning in Tertiary Education and iv. Project Coordination, M&E, and Communications.

The Malawi University of Science and Technology (MUST) is situated in Thyolo district, some 27 kilometres East of Blantyre City. It was established on 17th December 2012 by the Malawi University of Science and Technology Act No. 31 of 2012 as the fourth public university in Malawi. MUST was established to promote the development, adaptation, transfer and application of science, technology and innovation (STI) for macro- and micro-economic development of Malawi.

The then State President of the Republic of Malawi, His Excellency Prof. Bingu Wa Mutharika, conceptualized the University; he donated part of his Ndata farm to accommodate the University and he laid the foundation stone on 9 April, 2011 to fulfil his vision of a university of science and technology for the people of the Republic of Malawi. The University was built with financial support from the Chinese Government and was officially opened on 24 October 2014 by the State President of the Republic of Malawi, His Excellency Prof. Arthur Peter Mutharika.

MUST has four schools, namely:

- a) The Malawi Institute of Technology (MIT)
- b) Ndata School of Climate and Earth Sciences (NSCES)
- c) Academy of Medical Sciences (AMS);
- and, d) Bingu School of Culture and Heritage (BISCH)

The University offers undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in various disciplines including science, medicine, technology and innovation, engineering,

entrepreneurship, arts and humanities, and has the capacity to enroll over 5,000 students.

MUST is currently implementing the SAVE Project for over a period of 5 years (2021 - 2026). The project is expected to deliver a variety of activities. At present the project is behind by a full year as it was officially signed in June 2021 and then activated in October 2021. The project has 10 key areas of impact that are being monitored through the PDO indicators. Among the key areas of support is the action to support Equity. At MUST, this area will be partly achieved by improving campus life. MUST recognizes that psychosocial support is an important part of improving campus life and services for both its staff and students. The impact of Cyclone Freddy on the MUST community, be it the loss of loved ones, property, COVID-19, current economic hardships and other vulnerabilities, require students and staff to have well-rounded and holistic support to ensure that they can learn and teach and enjoy being at MUST. To promote this holistic and relevant/conducive learning environment, MUST would like to better understand its position with regards to issues of MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT (MHPSS). They may also include wellness in general (social, emotional and psychological)

2.0 OBJECTIVES OF THE CONSULTANCY

The MHPSS needs assessment aims to:

- a. understand the existing MHPSS and also wellness needs at MUST
- b. draw relevant recommendations that can be addressed over a short period of 2yrs and longer period of 5 years and those requiring a longer period.

The assessment will:

- a) explore the MHPSS and wellness challenges expressed by student and staff experiences, and
- b) identify priorities and needs emanating from academic pressure, COVID-19, Cyclone Freddy, economic hardships and other
- c) identify gaps and strengths, so that the assessment will lead to
- d) a practical set of recommendations to inform the design of activities and interventions for the integration of MHPSS at MUST

Along with the above, the MHPSS needs assessment will identify the perceived MHPSS problems, examine the psychosocial distress at MUST, its impact on daily functioning on staff and students – including a focus on vulnerable students (poor, ultra poor, disabilities), female students and staff members.

Additionally, the needs assessment may explore traditional and existing coping mechanisms, help-seeking behaviors among the staff and students, stigma and barriers to accessing support in this context, as well as existing MHPSS resources and community/school priorities regarding MHPSS issues at MUST. Community perceptions, knowledge and behavior on aspects of mental health and psychosocial support will also be explored through the needs assessment that will link the existing strengths and gaps to community-based support systems on MHPSS aspects.

The MHPSS assessment will also provide insight into perceived MHPSS needs of MUST student and staff during the COVID-19 pandemic and cyclone Freddy aftermaths

Specific objectives include:

- How substance abuse, the COVID-19 pandemic and cyclone Freddy, has affected the mental health and psychosocial wellbeing of staff and students at MUST
- How distress is expressed and experienced in the local context (e.g. local terminology used and relevant cultural beliefs about mental health)
- Local ways of coping and seeking help, especially among staff and students
- Existing MUST community (lecturers/staff, students, and surrounding communities) strengths and resources that can be reactivated or strengthened to respond to heightened levels of distress, including both formal and informal sources of support
- Propose possible responses to address each need/problem identified, including on how to make sure the support given by SAVE meets with local and International high standards

3.0 METHODOLOGY

- Ideally a mix of both quantitative and qualitative approaches will be utilized to conduct the assessment and derive information. The consultant will employ key data collection approaches to target the key respondents that will inform the needs assessment.
- Ensure obtaining input from staff, students and the immediate community via safe, do no harm, participatory approaches.
- A review and utilization of existing secondary data and information, where possible and relevant to inform the assessment.
- Include the sampling technique for the assessment,

4.0 DELIVERABLES

- Inception Report
 - A comprehensive MHPSS Needs Assessment method that outlines how the key assessment areas will be achieved outlining the target respondents

and the approach for each. The methodology to also highlight the sampling approach for adequate representation.

- Suggested work plan that outlines details of training of enumerators, data collection tools, report, milestones and deadlines.
- Report Draft 1
 - Preliminary findings of assessment
- A full report
 - that is clearly structured, documenting and analyzing the findings, conclusions and recommendations as per the aims and objectives in the TORs
 - A report summary in the form of PowerPoint presentation of the findings that can be shared with different stakeholders/implementing partners, including government officials and representatives of the affected community/schools.
- Deliverables will be subject to MUST approval

No.	Deliverable	Timeline
1.	Inception Report with comprehensive assessment methods and workplan	Within 1 week of contract signing
2.	Draft of Mental Health and Psychosocial Support	Within 3 weeks after inception
	MUST task team to review and feed Back	5 working days
3.	Final MHPSS Report & Handover	Within 1 weeks after review comments received

5.0 DURATION OF ASSIGNMENT

Timeline:

Anticipated Consultant Start Date: 1st May – 30th May 2026.

Total Consultancy duration: 22 working days

6.0 TEAM COMPOSITION & QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR THE KEY EXPERTS

- The Applicant should have at least 5 years of relevant MHPSS experience
- The applicant should have a minimum of a relevant mental health Master's degree or public health

- Relevant experience in project evaluation; quantitative and qualitative data collection, analysis and report writing assignments.
- Applicant should have excellent English writing skills and analysis
- Fluency in Chichewa

MUST role:

The final reports should consider the comments received from MUST. The work plan developed by the Applicant in collaboration with MUST will outline mutual responsibilities and timelines for review.

The consultant will be supervised by the MUST task team on MPHSS in regard to his / her deliverables and will be supported by SAVE M&E Coordinator

7.0CONSULTANCY BUDGET:

The selected consultant is expected to cover all the costs related to the assessment including the ones related to transportation in the field, accommodation, food, translation, extra human resources, etc. SCl will only provide administrative and logistic support to the extent possible.

A financial proposal should be submitted, including a budget with detailed section (i.e. all costs related to the assessment, namely airline and other transportation expenses tickets, visa costs, medical coverage expenses and insurance, the cost of food and accommodation, logistics and human resources needed, as well as remuneration of expertise...).

Expression of Interest (Eol), including updated curriculum vitae and copies of academic and professional qualifications must be emailed to procurement@must.ac.mw copy save-project@must.ac.mw by 16:00 hours on 27th April, 2026.