

**.:ακΣ Consulting:.**

**An Electronic Platform for East African  
Universities to Enhance Training and Research  
in maternal health and gender.**

<p><b>FINAL EVALUATION OF TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL REPORTS</b></p>
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**To**

**AFRINIC Ltd.**

**Patricia SENGHOR – Cooperation & Project Development Manager**

**By**

**SANVI & Co.**

**Kenneth SANVI, PMP – Consultant in International Development**

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## ***I. CONTEXT AND DESCRIPTION***

FIRE is a Grant and Awards program designed by AFRINIC in order to support and encourage the development of solutions to information and communication needs in the Africa Region. It places particular emphasis on the role of the Internet in the social and economic development for the benefit of the African community.

Launched in May 2012, the program is partly funded by two donors: IDRC and SIDA International Development Agencies. In 2013, AFRINIC selected eleven grant recipients which received 10 000 USD each for their project.

The grantees are bound by several obligations, which are among other things:

- Implementation and use of the project funds solely to perform the objectives and activities of their project
- Use the funds in accordance with the budget set out in their application
- Submission of an Interim and a Final Report in accordance with AFRINIC's report guidelines outlined in the Memorandum of Grant Conditions.

## ***II. PURPOSE AND EXPECTED USE***

AFRINIC required this evaluation in order to confirm that the project is run in accordance with the following criteria:

- Quality and reliance of design
- Effectiveness
- Efficiency of implementation
- Impact and potential of sustainability
- Replicability

AFRINIC also requires this evaluation to be run on the basis of the Interim and Financial Reports sent by the project in accordance with their obligations.

### **III. OBJECTIVES**

AFRINIC requires this evaluation to ensure of the following:

- The project meets identified objectives;
- Enhance the Design and the implementation of FIRE programme;
- Demonstrate and Improve the impact of the various projects on the local community;
- Develop recommendations to improve the implementation and the monitoring of future projects;
- Ensure that funds allocated to the various projects are used efficiently and within the initial identified scope.

### **IV. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS**

This evaluation, based on the final report provided by Uganda Christian University, highlighted the lack of a clearly defined implementation strategy. Actions to mitigate various risks identified were implemented with good results. Nevertheless, some of the risks remain and may have a great impact on the global success of the project.

### **V. KEY RECOMMENDATIONS**

We recommend that a clearly define strategy be formulated and followed throughout the course of project implementation. We also recommend that a result measurement methodology be identified so as to assess the level of success of activities.

# **THE EVALUATION**

## **1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

### **1.1. PURPOSE**

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- Ensure that funds allocated to the various projects are used efficiently and within the initial identified scope.

This evaluation is also required by AFRINIC in order to help the project in its implementation in accordance with the Memorandum of Grant Conditions.

### **1.2. AUDIENCE AND USE**

The stakeholders who will make use of the evaluation reports are:

1. FIRE programme – AFRINIC
2. International Development Research Center (IDRC)
3. Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA)

4. The grantees
5. Prospective applicants to FIRE program

**1.3. OBJECTIVES**

AFRINIC requires this evaluation to ensure of the following:

- The project meets identified objectives;
- Enhance the Design and the implementation of FIRE programme;
- Demonstrate and Improve the impact of the various projects on the local community;
- Develop recommendations to improve the implementation and the monitoring of future projects;
- Ensure that funds allocated to the various projects are used efficiently and within the initial identified scope.

**1.4. METHODOLOGY**

The evaluation methodology is linked with the objectives, the evaluation questions and the type of evaluation.

<b>Evaluation criteria</b>	<b>Key Results Areas</b>	<b>Evaluation questions</b>	<b>Data sources</b>
<b>Design</b>	Assess the extent to which the project responds to priority issues and identified objectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are the project objectives still valid?</li> <li>• Has the project team put in place the appropriate strategies?</li> <li>• Are there major risks that have not been taken into account?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design documentation.</li> <li>• Project objectives.</li> <li>• Interim and final technical reports.</li> </ul>
<b>Effectiveness</b>	Assess the project major key results.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are the obtained results aligned with planed objectives?</li> <li>• Are the results in</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interim and final technical reports.</li> <li>• Project management</li> </ul>

		acceptable both in terms of the quantity and their quality?	plan. • Result monitoring report.
<b>Efficiency</b>	Assess the extent to which: - Project plan has been followed; - Project reports are up to date.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To which percentage has project plan been achieved to date?</li> <li>• Are expenses aligned with established budget?</li> <li>• Have data collected archived for future use?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project management plan.</li> <li>• Monitoring and control reports.</li> <li>• Financial reports.</li> <li>• Interim and final technical reports.</li> </ul>
<b>Impact</b>	Assess to which extent the project will have a long-term positive impact on local community.	To which extent has the project's general objectives and final goals been achieved?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project objectives</li> <li>• Interim and final technical reports.</li> <li>• FIRE programme objectives</li> </ul>
<b>Sustainability</b>	Assess to which extent the project has been socially and politically adopted by the local community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will the project contribute to long-term benefits?</li> <li>• Would the long-term benefits be materialized by the implementation of an organization?</li> <li>• What are the costs implications for scaling up impact?</li> <li>• Are there savings that could be made without compromising delivery?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project benefits report.</li> <li>• Project cost report.</li> <li>• Project monitoring report.</li> </ul>

### **1.5. TEAM**

**M. Kenneth SANVI, PMP**, is a Canadian Consultant in International Development, specialized in all areas of project management. M. SANVI is a seasoned expert with many audits and evaluations projects in several countries in Africa. He is also a trainer in many areas among which, monitoring and evaluation.

**Ms. Rebecca GIDEON, CISA** will perform the evaluation of Information Technology aspects of the reports. Ms. Gideon is an experienced Information Technology professional with over seven years of diversified experience.

## **2. THE PROJECT**

### **2.1. CONTEXT**

In Sub-Saharan Africa, mothers continue to die from largely preventable causes of maternal death with at least 32,000 dying each year. An African woman faces a 1 in 15 lifetime risk of dying from pregnancy complications. For every one woman who dies, there are another 30 who suffer permanent disabilities as a result of pregnancy. The promotion of women's rights and education along with a trans-disciplinary approach to safe motherhood, play an important role in realizing sustainable and real improvement in the lives of thousands of mothers and their dependent children. Centres of Higher Education can be vital in providing leadership to ensure significant and sustainable change for maternal health through research, training of skilled attendants, advocates for safe motherhood and policy development. The contribution of East African Universities to the attainment of Millennium Development Goal Five (improvement of maternal health) requires further investment and coordination!

Maternal mortality is high in East Africa with maternal mortality ratios that range from 550-1300 maternal deaths/100,000 live births (Hill, 2007). Universities and institutions of higher education have a social and ethical responsibility to contribute to the reduction of maternal mortality both for the future and benefit of its own constituents as well as the country as a whole. The health of mothers is critical in the health of the nation, which ultimately leads to economic and social development.

Poor maternal health is one of the very vulnerabilities that women are exposed to Universities can be an important driver to explore solutions as well as refine and educate future leaders for safe motherhood and the important development that healthy mothers contribute to society. Uganda and Kenya were chosen as representative countries of East Africa, recognizing some national differences between other East African countries but being limited by financial resources to adequately evaluate all five countries (Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi).

This project will provide for the on going promotion of an electronic information gathering and sharing platform on maternal health among East African universities and maternal key stakeholders. A baseline survey of University programs, curricula and resources related to safe motherhood was carried out under the auspices of the Mobilizing Regional Capacity Initiative (sponsored by Department for International Development) and the Association of African Universities (AAU). As part of the policy recommendations from this baseline research, a platform was developed as a result of this research and international multi-university initiative. Now in place, this established platform will be able to contribute to the capacity of Universities to share resources and information to promote safe motherhood within the curricula, research initiatives and social outreaches which are part of all East African Universities.

## **2.2. UNDERLYNG RATIONALE**

The main objective of this project is to foster and enhance an electronic information gathering and sharing platform for training and research in maternal health (Millennium Development Goal-5) and gender in East African universities. The team expects to reach that objective by achieving the following goals:

1. Increase dialogue among university faculty regarding the need for universities to engage in maternal health care training and research.
2. Provide forum for best practices for maternal health care curriculum/teaching materials to be shared.
3. Seek on going financial support for this electronic advocacy tool for safe motherhood.

## **2.3. STAKEHOLDERS AND BENEFICIARIES**

### **2.3.1. Stakeholders**

- a. FIRE programme – AFRINIC
- b. International Development Research Center (IDRC)
- c. Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA)
- d. The grantees
- e. Prospective applicants to FIRE program
- f. Students
- g. Graduates
- h. Members of universities (leaders and researchers)
- i. Members of Facebook in East Africa
- j. NGO Save the mothers
- k. Uganda Christian University
- l. Project team

### **2.3.2. Users & Beneficiaries**

- a. Mothers in East Africa
- b. Members of universities (leaders and researchers)
- c. Members of Facebook in East Africa
- d. NGO Save the mothers
- e. Uganda Christian University

## **2.4. CONCEPTUAL MODEL**

### **2.4.1. Resources and activities**

Project team projects to hold below activities:

- a. Website management and mobilization.
- b. Use of social media
- c. Optimization of MDG-5 website
- d. Participation in FIRE workshop Lusaka
- e. Formalization contracts (signed by team leader and UCU)
- f. Regular team meetings (face to face, electronic, telephone)
- g. Revamping previous MRCI website
- h. New photos and new layout
- i. Invitations to join sent to strategic university audiences in East Africa eg. Social scientists, public health, education
- j. Invitations via email and in person sent to diverse faculty and universities in East Africa

### **2.4.2. Expected results**

- a. Expected results from this project are listed below:
- b. Presentation of electronic platform to all participants
- c. Increased training in M and E and reporting
- d. Contracts signed and available
- e. New 'face' on the website with more appeal to university audiences

- f. Invitations to various researchers to post their work in website
- g. Strategic members joined
- h. Discus capacity available for discussions
- i. Invitations received

## **2.5. RESULT CHAIN AND LOGICAL FRAMEWORK**

Strengthening the partnership between various university leaders and organizations has enhanced the objectives of this project. Save the Mothers at the Uganda Christian University (UCU) is giving leadership to this initiative within UCU but is engaging other faculties within the university to participate (e.g. social sciences). Other university leaders and researchers in East Africa are contributing to the Facebook conversations and will be further encouraged to contribute to the website postings. Members of the Facebook are from all over East Africa (including Uganda, Kenya, Rwanda and Tanzania) as well as from other parts of Africa (Nigeria) and around the world (UK, US, Canada).

Beneficiaries are involved through postings (both writing and reading) on Facebook as well as engagement with the website where other resources are available. More contacts of different stakeholders are being generated and invited to the platform so that they can participate in all that takes place online. Students, Graduates of different programs and members of different Universities both Staff and students are being invited to join the platform.

## **2.6. PROJECT MONITORING SYSTEM**

Interim report indicated that periodic meetings were held to monitor the implementation of the project. Nevertheless, final report does not make any indication of same. In addition, a website was deployed and is continuously maintained but the report does not enable us to ascertain that all data collected is being properly archived.

## **2.7. EVALUATION FINDINGS**

### **2.7.1. DESIGN**

- Valid objectives

The objectives of the project remain valid. The ultimate objective of this project remains to help achieving the fifth millennium development goal in East Africa. It is our opinion that achieving set of goals identified will be quite a challenge within this project alone.

➤ Appropriate strategies

As highlighted in the interim report evaluation, a clearly defined strategy has not been articulated. The various activities engaged seem to be aligned with the overall objective but the report fails to clearly state the strategy followed so as to show the link between each activity and the global objective.

➤ Major risks not accounted for

A significant generation gap has been noticed and actions taken to mitigate that risk. The use of social media such as Facebook and the revamp of the website to better attract targeted audience seem to have yield great results.

Nevertheless, there is no indication in the report regarding the lack of course curriculum, syllabus and research (in EAST AFRICA) on safe motherhood makes it challenging to adequately fill the MDG-5 website with relevant and useful information for East African universities. In addition, there is no indication of University faculty engagement to provide health care curriculum to be shared.

### **2.7.2. EFFECTIVENESS**

➤ Results aligned with planed objectives

Results obtained seem to be aligned with the planed objectives. Final report shows regular engagement of the Facebook group and the maintenance of the website. Nevertheless, risks identified, associated with the commitment of participants and the generation gap could deviate the final results from planed objectives.

➤ Results acceptability

Though many activities were completed, this report fails to provide analysis on the impact of the results. There does not seem to be a planed process by which data is measured and adjustment implemented when results do not meet expectations.

### **2.7.3. EFFICIENCY OF PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION**

➤ Percentage of achieved project plan

Based on the report, most of the activities planed for are completed with the exception of the website maintenance and the Facebook group moderation that are continuous

- Expenses aligned with budget

The budget seems to have been cautiously executed.

- Archive of collected data

Though we can assume that data collected via the polls and the posting on Facebook are being archived, there is no clear indication in the report of the same. The fact that the project relies on new technologies makes it easier for data archiving to occur but a clear process has to be identified and followed.

### **2.7.3. IMPACT**

- General objectives and final goals achieved

Final goals of this project can be difficult to achieve though the global objectives are met. The revamp of the website and the use of social media namely Facebook proved to be quite successful in reaching the targeted audience. Nevertheless, University faculty engagement and curriculum materials remain a challenge.

- Long-term benefits contribution

This project could yield long-term benefits provided an integrated into a much broader plan. In a context where it would be considered an isolated action, it is clear that this project would not contribute to long-term benefits.

Technologically as well as academically, this project can be a great success but there are some improvements that could contribute to magnifying obtain results. Social media is an important and powerful tool to reach university audiences but due to the large amounts of IT options and messages being targeted to these individuals, it is challenging to grasp their attention about an issue that can sometimes seem unrelated to them (ie. maternal mortality and morbidity). In addition, it appears that impact from education and initiatives gained through the social media is not easily measured.

## **2.8. RECOMMENDATIONS**

We recommend that a clearly define strategy be formulated and followed throughout the course of project implementation. We also recommend that a result measurement methodology be identified so as to assess the level of success of activities.