



CONSULTANCY TO DEVELOP A FIVE YEAR (2024-2029) STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE CONSORTIUM FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND MEDIA IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA (CHARM)

Terms of Reference

1.0. Introduction.

DefendDefenders was established in 2005 as the East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project and registered as a regional Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) in Uganda. DefendDefenders exists to strengthen the work of Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) in the sub-region by reducing their vulnerability to the risk of persecution and by enhancing their capacity to effectively defend human rights. The core mandate of DefendDefenders is to promote the safety, security, and wellbeing of HRDs. To achieve this, DefendDefenders' work has to date focused on protection and security management, capacity building, technology development, as well as advocacy, research, and communications. DefendDefenders establishes and supports national coalitions of HRDs in various countries through which HRDs can come together and claim their rights at the national level. DefendDefenders also serves as host of AfricanDefenders (the Pan-African Human Rights Defenders Network) secretariat. AfricanDefenders is a network of five sub-regional organisations, dedicated to the promotion and protection of human rights Defenders (HRDs) across the African continent.

DefendDefenders is hosting the Consortium for Human Rights and Media in Sub-Saharan Africa (CHARM) that aims to promote and protect human rights and media freedoms in Sub-Saharan Africa. CHARM is a partnership of **CIVICUS, Civil Rights Defenders, DefendDefenders, Fojo Media Institute, The Wits Centre for Journalism, Réseau des Femmes Leaders pour le Développement, and Magamba Network**. The partnership acknowledges the role that a free and active media and civil society have in the protection of robust democracies and the promotion of national development. The consortium has been operating since October 2019.

DefendDefenders is seeking a qualified consultant to develop a **comprehensive strategy for CHARM**, with a primary focus on human rights, civic space, and media. The consortium is a collaborative initiative involving multiple organizations dedicated to promoting and protecting human rights, enhancing civic space, and supporting media freedom. We aim to create a robust and forward-thinking strategy to guide our efforts in these key areas.

2.0. Contextual Background to CHARM Project

The Consortium for Human Rights and Media in Sub-Saharan Africa (CHARM) aims to promote and protect human rights and media freedoms in Sub-Saharan Africa. The partnership of CIVICUS,

Civil Rights Defenders, DefendDefenders, Fojo Media Institute, The Wits Centre for Journalism, Réseau des Femmes Leaders pour le Développement, and Magamba Network acknowledges the role that a free and active media and civil society have in the protection of robust and inclusive democracies and the promotion of sustainable national development. Together as a consortium, these organisations offer a strong and unique contribution in the following areas: **Civil society building and civic space advocacy; Safety and protection of women/human rights defenders (W/HRD) and activists; Integration of gender and social inclusion; Media development and protecting/expanding media freedoms; Tech, innovation, and digital activism advancements; Inter-state and regional collaboration through consortium synergy effects.**

CHARM engages with civil society and media who support W/HRDs and their organisations and journalists, particularly those that represent constituencies with the most limited access to resources and opportunities in their unique contexts (such as women, young people, sexual minorities, people living with disabilities, racial and ethnic minority groups, Indigenous people, amongst others). Together, the consortium will contribute to change across four strategic outcome areas through **six pathways of change related to civic space, public support (to marginalised and traditionally excluded groups), coalition building, and access to better resources to sustain the work of civil society and media in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA).**

CHARM's evaluation in June 2021 found the program to be effective, relevant, appropriate, and efficient with strategic goals that are "aligned with the global commitments to protect, respect and fulfil human rights and the rights of vulnerable groups." The evaluation found that CHARM was successfully able to create an enabling environment that promotes human rights and civic and media freedoms and supports a free and vibrant civil society and media. Furthermore, through the consortium's joint activities, solidarity in the face of attacks and threats was secured and access to resources that strengthened the capacity of CSOs and media to withstand shrinking civic space were more readily accessible.

During the pilot phase, CHARM was able to achieve noteworthy successes and outcomes, including a reported 60% success rate on achieving planned objectives even during significant disruptions during the COVID-19 pandemic and related lockdowns. Consortium members were able to strengthen their advocacy capacities and have effectively advocated for more democratic policies and laws that promote civic and media freedoms and demand government accountability. A vital approach for advocacy has been the investment by the consortium in research and building an evidence base alongside active relationship building with reputable media organisations and personalities. Specific activities that have yielded significant outcomes included campaigns, investigative journalism initiatives, capacity strengthening of sub-grantees, and digital security training of trainers for HRDs.

As CHARM has been operational for more than three years, the consortium has learned a variety of lessons to improve, expand, and sustain its impact. Among the key recommendations was to develop a Consortium Strategic Compass. This compass will serve as a guiding document, outlining essential guidelines for the consortium's operation. It will address key aspects related to coordination, sustainability, and scalability. The aim is to establish a clear strategic direction that ensures the consortium's long-term success and impact.

3.0. Objectives

The primary objective of this consultancy is to develop a clear, actionable, and results-oriented strategy for the Consortium to effectively pursue its mission in the fields of human rights, civic space, and media. The strategy should aim to:

3.1. Specific Objectives

- Identify strategic priorities and long-term objectives in the areas of human rights, civic space, and media.
- Develop an actionable plan to achieve these objectives, including specific activities, timelines, and key performance indicators.
- Define the consortium's role and engagement strategies with external stakeholders, including governments, international organizations, civil society, and media outlets.
- Propose mechanisms for monitoring, evaluation, and adaptation of the strategy over time.

4.0. Scope of Work

The consultant shall undertake the following activities:

a) Needs Assessment and Context Analysis:

- Conduct an in-depth analysis of the human rights, civic space, and media landscapes, both globally and within the specific region(s) of operation.
- Identify key trends, challenges, and opportunities relevant to the consortium's mission and work.
- Review existing documents, reports, and relevant information related to the consortium's activities and objectives.

b) Stakeholder Engagement:

- Identify and engage key stakeholders, including consortium members, partners, donors, government agencies, civil society organizations, and media outlets.
- Conduct interviews, surveys, and focus group discussions to gather input and insights from stakeholders.

c) Strategy Development:

- Develop a clear and concise strategic framework that outlines the consortium's vision, mission, values, and long-term goals.
 - Formulate specific objectives, strategies, and action plans in the areas of human rights, civic space, and media.
 - Identify key performance indicators (KPIs) and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to measure the success of the strategy.
 - Ensure the strategy is realistic, adaptive, and aligned with the consortium's resources and capacity.
- d) Civic Space and Media Component:** Develop a section of the strategy dedicated to promoting and safeguarding civic space and media freedom, including specific initiatives and actions to support these objectives.
- e) Implementation Roadmap**
- Provide a detailed implementation plan with timelines, responsible parties, and budget estimates.
 - Outline a monitoring and evaluation framework to track progress and impact.
 - Propose risk assessments and mitigation strategies.
- f) Financial and Resource Planning:** Provide recommendations for financial and resource planning necessary to implement the strategy effectively.
- g) Capacity Building**
- Identify capacity-building needs within the consortium and its member organizations to effectively execute the strategy.
 - Recommend training and skill-building opportunities for staff and partners.

5.0. Key Deliverables

The consultant is expected to produce the following deliverables:

- a) **An Inception Report:** An initial report outlining the approach, methodology, and work plan for the strategy development within two weeks of contract commencement.
- b) **Draft Strategy Document:** A comprehensive draft strategy document that includes the consortium's vision, mission, objectives, activities, and performance indicators within eight weeks of contract commencement.
- c) **Final Strategy Document:** A revised and finalized strategy document, incorporating feedback and recommendations from consortium members within 12 weeks of contract commencement.
- d) **Implementation Plan:** A detailed plan for executing the strategy, including activities, timelines, responsible parties, and budgets.
- e) **A monitoring and evaluation framework.**

6.0. Timeline

The consultant is expected to complete the project within **90 (ninety) days** from the contract signing date. A tentative timeline should be proposed in the Inception Report.

7.0. Qualifications and Expertise

The consultant should possess the following qualifications and experience:

- a) A strong background in human rights, civic space, and media, with a minimum of 5 years of relevant experience.
- b) Proven experience in developing strategic plans for similar organizations or consortia.
- c) Excellent research and analytical skills.
- d) Strong facilitation and communication skills.
- e) Familiarity with the global and regional human rights landscape.

8.0. Reporting and Communication

The consultant will report to **Ms. Maria Kaddu-Project Coordinator CHARM** on email mariak@defenddefenders.org and maintain regular communication with the consortium during the consultancy period.

9.0. Evaluation Criteria

Below is the detailed summary of the Technical and Financial Evaluation:

Evaluation Criteria		Max Score
<i>Criteria and maximum scores as listed in the terms of reference</i>		
A	Methodology and Understanding of the work	35
	Understanding of the project's objectives	15
	Clarity and feasibility of the work plan	10
	Methodology and proposed approach	10
B	Relevant experience and qualifications	20
	A strong background in human rights, civic space, and media, with a minimum of 5years of relevant experience	8
	Proven experience in developing strategic plans for similar organizations or consortia	7
	A deep understanding of human rights issues and adherence to human rights principles	5
C	Skills	15
	Excellent research and analytical skills	5
	Strong facilitation and communication skills	5
	Familiarity with the global and regional human rights landscape	5
Totals		70

Financial Evaluation.

The proposal with the lowest evaluated price shall be given a full score and the other proposals shall be given financial scores that is inversely proportional to the lowest price proposal using the formula below:

$$\text{Financial score} = \text{Lowest price proposal} / \text{Proposal Price} \times 30$$

11.0. Ethical Considerations and Confidentiality

The consultant shall adhere to ethical standards and respect human rights principles during the project. The consultant shall treat all information provided by the consortium as confidential and may not disclose any details to third parties without written consent.

12.0. Prohibition of Corruption

The Consultant shall not engage in any form of bribery and corruption in relation to the services under these TORs, including but not limited to offering, giving, receiving, or soliciting any form of undue advantage, whether in cash or in-kind, to or from any person, whether within or outside the Client's organization.

13.0 Contract and Disclaimer

The selected consultant will enter into a formal contract with DefendDefenders that outlines the terms and conditions of the engagement. DefendDefenders reserves the right to accept or reject any proposal received and is not bound to accept the lowest or any proposal.
