CALL FOR REGIONAL CONSULTANT

LANDSCAPE MAPPING ON DIGITAL SECURITY IN WEST AFRICA

Type of contract	External research consultancy
Contractor	West Africa Civil Society Institute (WACSI)
Project Title	Landscape mapping on digital security in West Africa
Published date	8 August 2022
Deadline for submission	31 August 2022
Start date of the project	20 September 2022
End of project	31 January 2023

About WACSI

WACSI is a civil society organisation established by the Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA) in 2005 to reinforce the capacities of civil society in the region towards a peaceful and prosperous West Africa where development is driven by its people. The Institute seeks to strengthen civil society in West Africa to be responsive, collaborative, representative, resilient and influential through knowledge sharing, learning, connecting and influencing. WACSI operates in the fifteen ECOWAS member states, including Cameroon, Mauritania, and Chad. The Institute has been at the forefront of championing the contribution of civil society organisations towards the region's development.

Summary of services

WACSI wishes to hire a consultant to conduct regional landscape mapping study on civil society digital security threat in West Africa. This research will focus on identifying major digital security trends in the region and analysing related policies.

Background

Technology has with no contest influenced the way organisations across the globe design and deliver services. Many organisations in West Africa have come to understand the importance of technology and are increasingly investing in their technology infrastructure. This realisation of non-profit organisations to use technology to achieve their mission with greater impact has been felt when the world was hit by the coronavirus pandemic and organisations had no choice but to shift from their traditional ways of working.

Even though technology has been key in helping organisations work with much greater impact it also exposes them to dangers in the digital world. Most organisations in West Africa have a low

awareness of the existing digital security risks as well as lack the knowledge and skills to approach such issues. However, organisations and actors engaged in social justice work seem to be more aware of their digital security since they have been more frequent targets of online attacks. This low level of awareness, knowledge and skills in digital security reflects in pervasive habits and practices that make civil society organisations vulnerable and cause a threat to their operations. These practices include the installation of pirated or unlicensed versions of software, use of weak passwords, unsecure internet browsing habits, unwarranted volunteering of information to suspicious persons, among others.

This research aims at developing a solid and reliable documentation of the most current digital security threats cases civil society organisations in West Africa are being exposed to, which will also serve as a source of reference to develop capacity programmes to enhance CSOs capacities to be cyber resilient and advocate for policies that take into consideration digital challenges they are facing.

Methodology

The study envisions employing mixed research methods that include quantitative and qualitative approaches. This will entail: a review of the literature, a desk review of secondary data, a survey, key informant interviews, and focus group discussions. The research will be conducted in English and French throughout West Africa. The study sample used should be representative of the various types of civil society organisations in the region.

Scope of work

The consultant will be required to lead on the following tasks in consultation with WACSI to:
- Provide an overview of most common online security threats facing civil society in West Africa.
- Take stock of existing cyber security regulations and policies seeking to protect individuals and organisations.
- Analyse the strengths and gaps of the existing policies.
- Document case studies on the experiences and challenges of civil society organisations in digital security and safety.

Deliverables
- Inception report
- Data collection instruments
- Draft research report
- Final report
- Delivery of cleaned data sets (in SPSS or Excel; and the Syntaxes in Word) from the administration of quantitative questionnaires
- Delivery of summarised qualitative data from administered qualitative interview protocols.

Application process

- The consultant should submit a technical proposal and budget demonstrating understanding of the scope of work, methodology and detail timeline (maximum of five pages using Georgia font size 11 and single line spacing). The timeline should detail the workflow from the project start date to the end date.

- The proposal budget should have sufficient details to allow for the evaluation of elements of costs proposed. Budgets should be submitted in United States dollars and include the cost breakdown per deliverable. Applicant's budget will be subject to 7.5% withholding tax for applicants in Ghana and 20% applicants outside Ghana. The withholding tax is charge on the total project service fee which exclude cost associated to logistics and communication component of the project.
- Submit samples of previous research work conducted.
- Submit CVs of principal researchers.

Full proposal document (technical proposal and budget) should be submitted to research@wacsi.org and cc' techsoup@wacsi.org by 31 August 2022.

Composition and responsibilities of the consultant

- The consultant will lead the study and will be supported by the programmes team at WACSI.
- The consultant should have a research team with composition of anglophone and francophone researchers with experience in conducting social science research in West Africa.
- The consultant should have a research team that includes the principal researcher and research assistants. The principal researcher will be the main contact person WACSI will engage with.

Qualification of the consultant

- The consultant must demonstrate ability and experience in conducting surveys in West Africa.
- The consultant must have the required human and logistical (computers etc.) ability to undertake the exercise.
- Experience in qualitative and quantitative research methods.
- Excellent analytical and report writing skills.
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills, including the ability to facilitate FGDs, conduct expert interviews and work in a multidisciplinary team.
- Knowledgeable about the digital security landscape in West Africa particularly from civil society perspectives.

Selection criteria

- Previous experience in conducting similar studies.
- Experience in qualitative and quantitative research methods.
- Knowledgeable in the civil society sector and digital security
- Excellent analytical and report writing skills.
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills, including the ability to facilitate focus group discussions (FGDs), conduct expert interviews and work in a multidisciplinary team.
- Experience working in the anglophone and francophone West African context.
- Working knowledge in French is an advantage.