TERMS OF REFERENCE

Consultancy to Develop an Advocacy Strategy and Brand Identity for the Malawi Agrobiodiversity Network (MAgNET)

Commissioning organisation: Centre for Environmental Policy and Advocacy (CEPA), on behalf of MAgNET

Duration of Assignment: 2 Weeks

1. Background

The Malawi Agrobiodiversity Network (MAgNET) is a national network of civil society organisations, farmer groups, researchers and other stakeholders working to conserve and sustainably use agricultural biodiversity. Its work centres on farmer-managed seed systems, seed sovereignty, and the policy environment that supports smallholder farmers' rights to save, use, exchange and sell seeds, as well as the other Farmers' Rights provided for under Article 9 of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, including the protection of traditional knowledge, the right to equitably participate in sharing the benefits arising from the use of plant genetic resources, and the right to participate in national decision-making on these resources. MAgNET also engages with international frameworks at regional and global level including the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA), the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Nagoya Protocol, as well as relevant national frameworks such as the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan and the National Climate Change Management Policy.

MAgNET has been hosted by CEPA since November 2019. As the network grows and the policy environment shifts, it needs a clear, shared advocacy strategy and a distinctive identity that members, partners, policymakers and the public can recognise and trust.

2. Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this assignment is to strengthen MAgNET's voice, visibility and influence on agrobiodiversity policy and practice in Malawi.

Specific objectives

1. Develop an evidence-based, costed advocacy strategy for MAgNET covering 5 years
2. Develop a cohesive brand identity for MAgNET, including positioning, messaging and visual identity.
3. Equip the MAgNET Secretariat and members with practical tools and capacity to implement the strategy and apply the brand consistently.

3. Scope of Work

The consultant will carry out the following, in consultation with MAgNET members and partners:

- Review MAgNET's key documents and relevant policy context emerging or existing regional policy processes that may affect farmer managed seed systems COMESA and SADC seed harmonization frameworks, ARIPO Arusha Protocol and EAC Seed and Plant Varieties Bill and any other that could impact Malawi policies.
- **Consult:** Consult members, farmers' representatives and other key stakeholders to inform both outputs.
- **Advocacy strategy:** develop a costed advocacy strategy based on a clear set of key issues, setting out goals, priority policy asks, target audiences, key messages, an implementation plan and a monitoring and evaluation framework.
- **Brand development:** develop MAgNET's brand identity, including positioning and messaging, a refreshed or new logo and visual identity, and brand guidelines with basic templates.
- **Validation and handover:** present drafts to MAgNET members for validation, finalize the outputs, and orient the Secretariat on using the strategy and brand.

4. Methodology and Approach

The consultant should propose a participatory, all-inclusive and context-sensitive methodology. Approaches should prioritise the voices and priorities of smallholder farmers and should reflect the principles of seed sovereignty and farmers' rights.

5. Qualifications and Experience

Required

- Advanced degree in agricultural policy, development studies, environmental policy, communications, social sciences or a related field
- At least 7–10 years of experience in developing advocacy and communications strategies, preferably for civil society networks or coalitions.
- Demonstrated experience in brand development and design
- Strong knowledge of Malawi's policy environment and civil society landscape and knowledge to relevant regional policy environment in relation to seeds
- Excellent writing and presentation skills in English.

Desirable

- Knowledge of agrobiodiversity, seed systems, food sovereignty, climate or environmental governance.
- Familiarity with international processes such as the ITPGRFA, UNFCCC, Nagoya Protocol and the International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV).
- Proficiency in Chichewa and/or other local languages.
- Experience with evidence-informed advocacy and with MEL for advocacy.

6. Application Requirements

Interested consultants should submit, by **26 October 2026** to info@cepa.org.mw with the subject line "MAgNET Advocacy Strategy and Brand Consultancy":

1. A technical proposal maximum outlining understanding of the assignment, methodology and workplan
2. A financial proposal with a detailed budget
3. CVs of the consultant(s).
4. A portfolio or samples of at least two relevant past assignments (advocacy strategies and brand identities), and the contact details of two referees.

7. Evaluation Criteria

Criteria	Weight
Understanding of the assignment and quality of methodology	30%
Relevant experience and past work (including design portfolio	30%
Qualifications and capacity	20%
Financial proposal and value for money	20%