

MINUTES



Event: Kick off meeting

Date: February 07, 2024

Location: online

Project: UNEP CTCN - Using simple mobile technologies to scale up digital collection & processing of climate observations for adaptation actions in Malawi

Participants

Name	Title	Organisation
Nadège Trocellier	CTCN Climate Technology Specialist	UNEP CTCN
James Chitete	Director	Department of Water Resources (DWR)
Leman Ngwena	Sr Hydrological Officer	
Amos Mtonya	Deputy Director, Engineering & Communications	Department of Climate Change & Meteorological Services (DCCMS)
Charles Vanya	Deputy Director, Weather and Climate Observation & Forecasting Services	
Fatsanawo Dzingomvera	Sr Assistant Meteorologist - ICT & Stations Management	
Louise Croneborg-Jones	Team Lead	Water in Sight Ltd
Dr Vincent Msadala	National Coordinator	T-Notch Consulting Ltd
Thokozani Mtewa	Project Officer	T-Notch Consulting Ltd

1. The kick-off meeting for the technical assistance (TA) project, UNEP CTCN, "Using simple mobile technologies to scale up digital collection and processing of climate observations for adaptation actions in Malawi", was held on February 07, 2024, in an online conference.
2. Mr Amos Mtonya, from the DCCMS, was selected to Chair the meeting and formally kicked-off the project. All participants were welcomed and introduced.
3. The TA consultants, Water in Sight Ltd and T-Notch Consulting Ltd (Consultant hereinafter) shared that the Climate Technology Center and Network (the technical mechanism of the UNFCCC), hosted by UNEP, has awarded funding from the Adaptation Fund for Climate Innovation Acceleration (AFCIA) for the said Project.
4. Ms Trocellier from UNEP CTCN shared that:
 - The CTCN has a supervisory role in the project, reviewing and approving deliverables and payments, as well as providing implementation support, such as legal and technical advice.
 - The current AFCIA funding phase closes October 2025. This means any request for no-cost extensions beyond the project's closure date of April 2025 needs to be submitted in time and that any new closure date needs to be well within this deadline.
5. The Consultant presented the full project details to give participants insight on the project objective, design, and timeline. The presentation is provided in Annex A and covers the project implementation arrangements, Working Group structure, scope of work (including methodology for the prefeasibility study), workplan with milestones and deliverables, workshops, trainings, as well as the consultants' team and roles.
6. The representatives from DCCMS and DWR welcomed the project and provided constructive recommendations and questions. Issues raised and clarified were:

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Hydromet data applications and value.

- By integrating the improved collection and digitisation of hydromet observation data using simple mobile technologies, to climate information applications and modelling, there is potential to create the value that Malawi and the departments are seeking.
- Emphasis in the technologies tested should be on delivering automation, direct integration into existing platforms and analytical tools, and application relevance.

Sustainability.

- Aspects of sustainability should be raised with key stakeholders early in the project. This includes the Ministry of Finance and other development partners and NGOs, so as the departments' pursuit of innovative ways to harness hydromet data leverages potential opportunities for long-term support.
- It will be important to showcase how the technologies explored deliver the socioeconomic benefits that the Government of Malawi is seeking.

Selection of sites for piloting.

- The Consultant clarified that the sites for piloting will be selected through a dedicated activity and together with the Working Group. In accordance with the CTCN Response Plan, the ranking and selection of sites must meet mandatory criteria (i.e., area benefit from an in-situ weather and water management equipment, area should have Gauge Readers and Observers, and data needs to be collected on critical and prioritised water, weather and climate change challenges facing Malawi)¹. The Consultant further explained that the sites for piloting will be limited to a specific area/basin, and it will not be possible to pilot across all of Malawi.

Gauge Reader & Observer engagement & training.

- The Consultants explained that the Gauge Readers and Observers that will be engaged will be selected based on the final selection of sites. This means that Gauge Readers and Observers engaged earlier may be involved, as well as additional ones.
- Learning from earlier prototype testing with Water in Sight, the departments raised the importance of being clear on how honorariums to Gauge Readers and Observers collecting hydromet data, are financed and when they will be provided in the piloting in the Project. Early during implementation, the Working Group can discuss a strategy for optimal ways to secure and administer honorarium financing.
- Training Gauge Readers and Observers should also be done at a central location, and not as in-field training at the station. The former is preferable as it consolidates and improves the training, and thus the likelihood of them taking high-quality observations and using mobile technologies appropriately.

Climate parameters monitored.

- The request was raised that additional parameters, such as temperature, are included as they bring the additional benefit of giving annual climate insights rather than rainfall that is predominantly monitored only in the rainy season.

¹ Clarification on criteria added to minutes after the meeting.

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Station rehabilitation and equipment.

- Both DCCMS and DWR emphasised that the project should restore faulty equipment and maintenance, such as broken rain gauges, missing gauge plates, or new equipment needed for monitoring additional parameters. The Consultant explained that provisions have been made for equipment in the project and specific investments will be agreed with the Working Group and informed by the needs assessment, available budget, and the strategic selection of monitoring sites.
 - The meeting went through the next steps and DCCMS and DWR recommended that the presentation was shared for additional commenting by their staff in advance of the Inception Meeting.
7. The Consultant will send a formal Invitation Letter for the Inception Meeting to the respective departments and counterparts. The tentative date and time for the Inception Meeting has been set to Friday March 01, 2024, at 11 am Malawi time.
 8. The Chair thanks participants for a fruitful discussion and closed the meeting.

Annex A. UNEP CTCN Kick off Presentation.