Terms of Reference (ToRs)

Consultancy to Conduct a Study on the Political Economy Analysis of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) in HealthCare Facilities in Malawi

1. Background and Context

White Ribbon Alliance for Safe Motherhood (WRASM) is a locally registered (2002) civil society umbrella organization, advancing reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health (RMNCAH) in Malawi. WRA is driven by a deep commitment to reducing maternal and newborn deaths, protecting the reproductive rights of girls and women, realizing human rights for the marginalized and those discriminated against, amplifying citizen voices and creating demand for quality, safe and accessible healthcare for all.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) services are essential for delivering quality healthcare, RMNCAH and preventing healthcare-associated infections. In Malawi, gaps in WASH services in public health facilities continue to undermine patient safety, health worker protection, infection prevention and control (IPC), and overall health system performance. RMNCAH is an area that is disproportionately impacted.

Despite national commitments and sectoral strategies to improve WASH in Health Care Facilities (HCFs), investment in WASH remains fragmented and underprioritized within health sector planning and financing. Limited evidence exists on why WASH in HCFs, despite being widely acknowledged as a key strategy for promoting public health, continues to be neglected. Malawi signed up to the World Health Assembly Resolution on WASH in HCFs in 2019 committing to conduct comprehensive assessments of WASH in HCFs; develop roadmaps to achieve 'universal coverage' of WASH in HCFs; establish & implement minimum standards aimed at accelerating investments in WASH across HCFs. While some initiatives have been undertaken since then such as engagement with Government at a policy level on how to operationalize the commitment along with a few NGOs independently investing in selected pockets of the country, the picture remains far from being good. Absence of visible government commitment to translating the commitment into action is part of the motivation to make this enquiry. Each Joint Monitoring Programme assessment highlights the same concerning state of WASH services in HCFs.

This consultancy aims to provide a clear understanding of the policy and implementation landscape for WASH in HCFs. It will identify key actors and decision-making processes, examine the gaps contributing to the prevailing state of WASH in HCFs, and outline what must be done to address these gaps so that WASH in HCFs receives the long-overdue attention it deserves.

It is expected that the findings of this study will intelligently inform a consortium of White Ribbon Alliance for Safe Motherhood (WRASM), Malawi Health Equity Network (MHEN), Water and

Environmental Sanitation Network (WESNET), WASH Media Forum, WaterAid Malawi and other organisations focusing on MNCH to identify entry points for influencing practical ways of not just prioritizing WASH in HCFs but also implementation, and ensure that HCFs have functional WASH systems all the time. The consortium is implementing Civil Society Leadership in Mobilising for Better WASH (CLIMB) Project and Time to Deliver Campaign at the national level and in the districts of Ntchisi, Kasungu and Mangochi.

2. Purpose of the Consultancy

The purpose of this consultancy is to conduct a **Political and Economy Analysis** of WASH in HCFs and bring out actionable recommendations to inform national policies, strategies, and investment decisions.

3. Objectives

3.1 General Objective

To analyse the current policy and practices that underpin WASH in public health facilities programming in Malawi.

3.2 Specific Objectives

1. To assess existing national policies, strategies, programmes and institutional frameworks related to WASH and public health facilities and establish the degree to which WASH in HCFs is prioritised
2. To assess and establish actors and how decision-making relating to prioritization of WASH in HCFs is done at national and operational level and how this affects levels of WASH service provision in public health facilities.
3. To identify prevailing financing mechanisms, level of financing against the ideal and budgetary pathways for sustainable WASH integration within the health sector.
4. To assess barriers and opportunities for policy uptake and implementation.
5. To develop evidence-based recommendations for policymakers and stakeholders.

4. Scope of Work

The consultant will undertake, but not be limited to, the following tasks:

4.1 Desk Review

- Review national, district and sectoral policies, strategies, guidelines, and plans related to:
    - WASH in Health
    - Maternal, Newborn and Child Health
    - WASH and Infection prevention and control (IPC)

    - WASH financing and Health expenditure
    - WASH Standards in Health
- Review relevant regional and global evidence on WASH in health care facilities and economic evaluations.

4.2 Stakeholder and Institutional Analysis

- Map key stakeholders involved in WASH and health care facility programming.

4.4 Policy Analysis

- Assess policy coherence and alignment between WASH and health sectors.
- Identify policy gaps, implementation bottlenecks, and opportunities for integration.
- Examine financing flows and budget allocations for WASH in health facilities.

4.5 Validation and Dissemination

- Facilitate a stakeholder validation workshop to present preliminary findings.
- Incorporate feedback into the final report.
- Develop practical, policy-relevant recommendations and investment options.
- Develop a concise policy brief for decision-makers.

5. Methodology

The consultant is expected to propose a detailed methodology, which may include:

- Desk review of literature and policy documents
- Qualitative data collection (KIIs, focus group discussions where appropriate)
- Quantitative economic analysis using secondary data
- Comparative analysis using international benchmarks
- Participatory validation with stakeholders

All methods should adhere to ethical research standards and should be participatory, gender-responsive, and sensitive to equity and inclusion considerations.

6. Deliverables

The consultant will be responsible for delivering the following:

1. **Inception Report**
    - Detailed methodology
    - Work plan and timeline
    - Data collection tools

2. **Draft Study Report**
    - Policy analysis
    - Economic analysis
    - Key findings and preliminary recommendations
3. **Final Study Report**
    - Incorporating stakeholder feedback
    - Clear conclusions and policy recommendations
4. **Policy Brief** (5–8 pages)
    - Key messages for policymakers
5. **Presentation Slides**
    - For validation and dissemination workshops

7. Duration and Level of Effort

The consultancy is expected to be conducted over a period of 4 **weeks/1 month**, starting from **16 March 2026.** The level of effort is estimated at **30 working days**.

8. Reporting and Coordination

The consultant will report to **WHITE RIBBON ALLIANCE FOR SAFE MOTHERHOOD in collaboration with WaterAid Malawi** and work closely with designated technical personnel from WRASM, MHEN, WESNET, WASH Media Forum and WaterAid.

9. Required Qualifications and Experience

- Advanced degree in health economics, public health, development economics, or a related field.
- At least **7–10 years** of experience in health systems, WASH, or economic policy analysis.
- Demonstrated experience conducting economic evaluations in low- and middle-income countries.
- Strong understanding of Malawi's health and WASH sectors (highly desirable).
- Excellent analytical, writing, and communication skills.

10. Payment Schedule

Payments will be made upon satisfactory completion of deliverables as follows:

- **[30%]** upon approval of the inception report
- **[30%]** upon submission of the draft report
- **[40%}** upon approval of the final report and policy brief

11. Ethical Considerations

The consultant shall ensure confidentiality, informed consent, and ethical handling of all data collected during the study.

12. Application Process

Interested consultants should submit application to: The Executive Director; White Ribbon Alliance for Safe Motherhood; Area 47, Sector 1, Plot # 235; P.O Box 30440, Lilongwe.

Or through email to mlomaphiri@wramalawi.org;

The application should include:

- Technical proposal outlining approach and methodology
- Financial proposal
- CV(s) of consultant(s)
- Examples of relevant previous work

Deadline for submitting applications is **Wednesday, 10th March 2026.**