



TERMS OF REFERENCE

Strengthening Case Management Systems in the Supreme Court of Rwanda Courts IT Consultant

Background

Reform of Justice Sector in Rwanda began in 2004. The focus was on clearing the backlog of cases that had accumulated, some dating back more than 20 years. In collaboration with key international partners good progress has been made in this respect and the back log is expected to be cleared by end of 2013. The judiciary, with the Supreme Court as its lead institution, has driven the reform of the justice sector.

With demands on the justice system increasing all the time, there is a need to put in place an effective and efficient system that can manage the expected volume of cases coming through the system. The Strategic Plan of the Supreme Court (2009 - 13) seeks to address this and by doing so contribute to the wider goals of the Government of Rwanda Vision 2020 and the Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS).

The implementation of this plan has lead to an overhaul of the human resources within the judiciary. This has involved and will continue to involve the recruitment of young, newly qualified court officers. Though motivated and talented, these new recruits require training and mentoring from experienced practitioners particularly in court management and administration and the use of electronic tools to support these processes. Currently, several electronic systems are in place through the support provided by other partners (UNDP, Netherlands, USAID), these include: the Electronic Filing System (EFS); the Electronic Records management System (ERMS); the Legal Information Portal (LIP). Though useful and functional, these systems are not integrated and are not currently used to their fullest potential.

Purpose of the project

The project aims to enhance the operational effectiveness of the Supreme Court of Rwanda with regard to electronic case management in order to ensure that justice is administered fairly, effectively and efficiently and that it is fully accessible to the people of Rwanda.

The project will lay the foundations for the establishment of a responsive and accessible justice system in Rwanda which will increase confidence in the justice system among the population and also among domestic and foreign investors. This will provide the basis for Rwanda's continued social and political development and economic growth.

Scope of work

Following an initial general assessment by a court administration expert, we now require an IT specialist, with particular experience in court administration systems, to conduct a technical review of the IT applications currently in place in the Supreme Court of Rwanda and the human capacity available to support these systems.

It is expected that the Consultant will undertake the following activities:

- Review and analyse the IT applications currently in place in the Supreme Court of Rwanda and the human capacity available to support these systems.
- Prepare report regarding the feasibility of upgrading the existing IT tools (including the Electronic Filing System, the Electronic Records Management System and the Legal Information Portal) to perform as an effective and efficient electronic case management system.
- In collaboration with appropriate court staff, liaise with local software engineers as necessary to develop understanding of current and future development requirements.
- Definition of the capacity building that is required throughout the judiciary (principally registrars and IT officers) in order to ensure that staff are fully equipped to utilise the IT tools available and liaise appropriately with local software engineers.

Subsequent interventions (where necessary) will be agreed according to the report.

Outputs (Deliverables)

It is expected that this intervention will result in the production of a comprehensive assessment report that gives detailed analysis of the IT applications currently in use and provides a platform on which senior management of the judiciary can make informed decisions regarding the development of an electronic case management system.

Implementation Arrangements

The expert will work closely with Commonwealth Secretariat Advisers in delivering this technical assistance. The Consultant will be based at the Supreme Court of Rwanda in Kigali for up to three weeks and will report to the Secretary General of the Supreme Court. The consultant will work closely with staff already involved in the reform process.

Person Specification

- Degree in relevant subject
- Minimum 10 years' experience in corporate IT project management and implementation
- Experience of managing IT projects in courts and of case management systems in particular
- Experience in programming
- Experience of working with software developers
- Fluent in English
- Strong communication and report writing skills
- International experience would be an added advantage
- Knowledge of French language would be desirable