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CITIZENS JURY

BEACONS DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

FINAL EVALUATION OF TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL REPORTS

To

AFRINIC Ltd.

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By

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

I. CONTEXT AND DESCRIPTION

FIRE is a Grant and Awards program designed by AFRINIC in order to support and encourage the development of solutions to information and communication needs in the Africa Region. It places particular emphasis on the role of the Internet in the social and economic development for the benefit of the African community.

Launched in May 2012, the program is partly funded by two donors: IDRC and SIDA International Development Agencies. In 2013, AFRINIC selected eleven grant recipients which received 10 000 USD each for their project.

The grantees are bound by several obligations, which are among other things:

- Implementation and use of the project funds solely to perform the objectives and activities of their project
- Use the funds in accordance with the budget set out in their application
- Submission of an Interim and a Final Report in accordance with AFRINIC's report guidelines outlined in the Memorandum of Grant Conditions.

II. PURPOSE AND EXPECTED USE

AFRINIC required this evaluation in order to confirm that the project is run in accordance with the following criteria:

- Quality and reliance of design
- Effectiveness
- Efficiency of implementation
- Impact and potential of sustainability
- Replicability

AFRINIC also requires this evaluation to be run on the basis of the Interim and Financial Reports sent by the project in accordance with their obligations.

III. OBJECTIVES

AFRINIC requires this evaluation to ensure of the following:

- The project meets identified objectives;
- Enhance the Design and the implementation of FIRE programme;
- Demonstrate and Improve the impact of the various projects on the local community;
- Develop recommendations to improve the implementation and the monitoring of future projects;
- Ensure that funds allocated to the various projects are used efficiently and within the initial identified scope.

IV. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The project aims to empower Nigerians to become active citizens by providing them with vital and accurate information about the budget and how it affects them at all levels is a fundamental reason for its use. For the moment, the project seems to be well-defined and the implementation is on a good track. In addition, the participation of the main stakeholders seems to be a major plus in the project. It seems that the calendar has not been respected so the results of the project have not been obtained yet. It would be important that FIRE program management gets in touch with the project team in order to ensure that the project will completely success.

V. KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Even the project is on a good track, the activities are not completed. The app development is still on-going and it seems that many steps are still to go. The timeline of the project seems to have been minored by the team and the financial resources are not sufficient. The project has respected all the project management steps but the report lacks to provide all the information. We recommend that FIRE program continues to be involved in this project until the deployment of the app in order to be aware of the achievement of the outputs.

THE EVALUATION

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.1. PURPOSE

AFRINIC required this evaluation in order to confirm that the project is run in accordance with the following criteria:

- Quality and reliance of design
- Effectiveness
- Efficiency of implementation
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- Replicability

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AFRINIC requires this evaluation to ensure of the following:

- The project meets identified objectives;
- Enhance the Design and the implementation of FIRE programme;
- Demonstrate and Improve the impact of the various projects on the local community;
- Develop recommendations to improve the implementation and the monitoring of future projects;
- Ensure that funds allocated to the various projects are used efficiently and within the initial identified scope.

This evaluation is also required by AFRINIC in order to help the project in its implementation in accordance with the Memorandum of Grant Conditions.

1.2. AUDIENCE AND USE

The stakeholders who will make use of the evaluation reports are:

- 1. FIRE programme AFRINIC
- 2. International Development Research Center (IDRC)
- 3. Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA)

- 4. The grantees
- 5. Prospective applicants to FIRE program

1.3. OBJECTIVES

AFRINIC requires this evaluation to ensure of the following:

- The project meets identified objectives;
- Enhance the Design and the implementation of FIRE programme;
- Demonstrate and Improve the impact of the various projects on the local community;
- Develop recommendations to improve the implementation and the monitoring of future projects;
- Ensure that funds allocated to the various projects are used efficiently and within the initial identified scope.

1.4. METHODOLOGY

The evaluation methodology is linked with the objectives, the evaluation questions and the type of evaluation.

Evaluation criteria	Key Results Areas	Evaluation questions	Data sources
Design	Assess the extent to which the project responds to priority issues and identified objectives.	 Are the project objectives still valid? Has the project team put in place the appropriate strategies? Are there major risks that have not been taken into account? 	 Design documentation. Project objectives. Interim and final technical reports.
Effectiveness	Assess the project major key results.	Are the obtained results aligned with planed objectives?Are the results in	Interim and final technical reports.Project management

Efficiency	Assess the extent to which: - Project plan has been followed; - Project reports are up to date.	 acceptable both in terms of the quantity and their quality? To which percentage has project plan been achieved to date? Are expenses aligned with established budget? Have data collected archived for future use? 	 Project management plan. Monitoring and control reports. Financial reports. Interim and final technical reports.
Impact	Assess to which extent the project will have a long-term positive impact on local community.	To which extent has the project's general objectives and final goals been achieved?	 Project objectives Interim and final technical reports. FIRE programme objectives
Sustainability	Assess to which extent the project has been socially and politically adopted by the local community.	 Will the project contribute to long-term benefits? Would the long-term benefits be materialized by the implementation of an organization? What are the costs implications for scaling up impact? Are there savings that could be made without compromising delivery? 	 Project benefits report. Project cost report. Project monitoring report.

1.5. TEAM

M. Kenneth SANVI, PMP, is a Canadian Consultant in International Development, specialized in all areas of project management. M. SANVI is a seasoned expert with many audits and evaluations projects in several countries in Africa. He is also a trainer in many areas among which, monitoring and evaluation.

Ms. Rebecca GIDEON, CISA will perform the evaluation of Information Technology aspects of the reports. Ms. Gideon is an experienced Information Technology professional with over seven years of diversified experience.

2. THE PROJECT

2.1. CONTEXT

The necessity of empowering Nigerians to become active citizens by providing them with vital and accurate information about the budget and how it affects them at all levels is a fundamental reason for its use. Furthermore, empowering Nigerians thus enlightened, to constructively demand a more open, accountable and transparent system of governance by tracking budget performance (crowd-sourced) through a repository of public data and information using technology (online/mobile app).

During BEACONS CITIZENS MEDIA GOVERNANCE ADVOCACY PROJECT (CGMAP) survey across various communities; it was commonplace to see that:

- Citizens do not understand how the budget work,
- Citizens do not totally understand the job description or roles of their leaders as regards their community development at the Local government level,
- Citizens do not have an idea if there were allocations from the Federal government to the Local governments,
- Citizens have never made a demand for fiscally accountable and transparent spending from their leaders nor do they know how to,
- Citizens do not know the import and essence of the Freedom of Information bill,
- Citizens do not know how powerful their voices can be when used appropriately,
- Citizens do not know how to make demands using channels of engagement,
- Citizens had less expectations from their leaders and as such treated as "gods" those ones who offered any little project to relieve them off any suffrage,
- Citizens do not know how much their leaders earn or what comes to them,
- Citizens do not know what accrue to their communities or the local governments serving them as monthly allocations from the Federal Government.

The Citizens CONNECT/JURY platform was conceptualized as an offshoot of the CITIZENS MEDIA GOVERNANCE ADVOCACY PROJECT (CGMAP), the latter being the result of a concerted effort of the Beacons Foundation to find a solution to the perennial, inefficient use of budgetary allocations as well as persistent failure of annual budgets at all levels of Government.

Mobile technology, which is becoming increasingly ubiquitous across various societal segments, was adopted as a vehicle to drive behavioural change among citizens towards budget issues and performance.

The project was first implemented on a full-scale in Ekiti State, South-West Nigeria in July/August 2013 but its initial pilots had been run in Lagos State, also in South-West of the

country as well as Abuja, Nigeria's Capital Territory earlier in the 2013. A full report of these activities can be found at www.beacons-ng.org/resources/reports.

The report provides some data confirming the necessity to track financial information given by the government and the opportunity to use mobile technology to do so.

2.2. UNDERLYNG RATIONALE

The objectives of the project are listed below:

- i. **Citizens Enlightenment/Empowerment:** To enlighten the masses on governmental policies and how they are affected and the democratic channels they can utilize to demand good governance thus inspiring and encouraging citizen participation in democratic processes
- ii. **Open governance**: (transparent and accountable budgeting practices) positively impact growth, efficiency, and track performance. Open governance assures more open, transparent and accountable leadership. It also assures responsible spending, ensures fiscal prudence, opens government to development, increases access to aids (where needed), help citizens participation and feedback, assures government focus on priority spending and meeting the ultimate goal of growth.
- iii. **Open Data:** allowing more access to data from the government.
- iv. Stifle Corruption: It is an app to stifle corrupt practice. Open government allows for perusal in the use of public funds, which ultimately help check the abuse where necessary. Severally, government makes policies through budgets (sometimes exorbitantly) for projects across Nigerian communities that are seldom implemented. This owes in part to corruption and lack of demand from citizens.
- v. **Feedback:** Capture and report on executed projects, in line with budget estimations, extent of Execution, sustainability as regards the object of such expenditures.

2.3. STAKEHOLDERS AND BENEFICIARIES

2.3.1. Stakeholders

- a. FIRE programme AFRINIC
- b. International Development Research Center (IDRC)
- c. Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA)
- d. The grantees
- e. Prospective applicants to FIRE program

- f. Citizens: Citizens are at the core of this project. Being a platform run on a crowd-source model, the data regarding extent, quality and quantity of work done on any government project depends on citizens. Deliberate effort was expended in getting input from them by using one-on-one interviews, visualizations and group meetings.
- g. Social Activists: These are influencers and opinion-leaders with significant following on various online platforms such as the social media channels. They have a key role to play in the project in terms of disseminating information as well as providing continuous education to their followers. Their buy-in was cultivated and obtained with a commitment to serve as Jasi App ambassadors and help propagate the message.
- h. Non-governmental Organizations: NGOs, which have financial propriety and anticorruption as their objectives, are also stakeholders in the project. NGOs such as BudgIT are examples. Input was sought from this stakeholder for expert opinion on best ways/practices of presenting budget information to a mass-oriented user population.
- i. Government Agencies/Officials: Government officials at various levels have to deal with budgetary issues and feedback may be a challenge to them especially when relying on second-hand information to determine the stage of completion of allocated projects with various communities. By seeing what the people at the community levels have to say about the projects earmarked for their respective communities, government officials will be able to obtain first-hand information and develop appropriate follow-up strategies.
- j. Legislative Arm of Government: Being the arm saddled with the task of scrutinizing the Executive Arm's proposed budgets, the ability of the Legislators to determine the level of implementation of the budget is critical. This project enables them to have a finger on the pulse of the people who are directly impacted with the budget.
- k. International Organizations: These include organizations having financial probity and development as their core objectives. Donor agencies pushing for increased accountability in governance are key stakeholders as this project dovetails with their objectives.

2.3.2. Users & Beneficiaries

Citizens, social activists - The citizens are affected because they are directly impacted by the use or abuse of public funds as stipulated in the budget. As such, information dissemination from the budget across communities helps stakeholders in the democratic process prepare and demand effectively as required. Social activists also form a pivotal group of users because their works are more enhanced through vital information that can be accessed through the utilization of the platform.

Civil societies, Non-governmental organizations, International organizations – CSOs, NGOs and international organizations find more effective use of the platform because they can easily track government funding of projects represented through the capital budget. This way, they can offer/proffer constructive advice since their work is made easier through crunched data. Data influx from this platform can be easily accessed and utilized through infographic materials to make their work more effective and their engagement with government more productive.

Government officials, Legislative arm of government – Government agencies can easily access the usage of budgetary funds across communities through citizen's feedback. This allows for more scrutiny in the usage of funds needed for societal development.

2.4. CONCEPTUAL MODEL

2.4.1. Resources and activities

The activities performed by the project team are listed below:

Pre-development: The pre-development stage of the project is one of the most critical stages as it directly follows the conceptualization of the App. Mock-ups of the App were created and shown to select target groups for input. The objective at this stage was to get valuable feedback from prospective users of the App as well to ensure that it is a proper fit for the problem it aims to solve.

Development: The App and online development is the next stage following incorporation of feedback from prospective users. This feedback is also built-in and other steps such as graphic design of the packages, and the technology build of the packages then taken.

Beta Test: This involves the random testing of developed apps and online platform to detect possible loopholes and flaws where applicable of the package. This would involve deployment on all mobile phones of all kinds and testing on all browsers as required. The app will be available on mobile platforms and PCs to access allocated budget for communities, and be able to use this data (budget information) to track its performance across the communities. The mobile phone platforms include iOS, Android, Symbian and Blackberry respectively.

Deployment: This is the official launch of the mobile apps and online package to stakeholders. This is expected to take place at a scheduled location involving citizens, social activists, civil

societies, non-governmental organizations, government officials, legislative arm of government, international organizations and other democratic groups. Deployment would also help us get instant feedback to access the performance of the application.

Advertisement: Advertisement is one of the most crucial parts of this project. The target of the Jasi App Project is to have at least 14 million users before the 2015 general elections in Nigeria. This would have empowered citizen's reach an engaging level never seen before. Advertisement platforms include traditional media, radio jingles, prints/newspapers, new media (social media), billboards, documentaries, TV adverts and technological platforms. An aggressive advertising plan is required to ensure the objective of the application is achieved.

Research/Feedback: Feedback on the application is expected to be instant and continuous. Feedback will help us measure the level of impact of the platform, and show how decisively the platform has empowered stakeholders to act. Feedback will ensure researches can crunch data in a way that is simple and comprehensive to an average data user. Feedback is crunched, produced as infographs, packaged and resent to increase more participation with users in a dynamic way. Part of crunching data from users feedback is the usage by stakeholders in engaging with government and elected leaders.

Usage: Crowd-sourced users data are updated on the database to provide comprehensive data capture on budget performance across local governments and communities in Nigeria. These collated data are processed, analyzed and reproduced in comprehensible formats to be used further by stakeholders. The usage of crunched and processed data from feedback ensures that informed and empowered stakeholders (active citizens) can now utilize data in an engaging way with elected leaders, government bodies in a wide-reaching way.

Even the final report did not mention the main milestones, the interim report did so. Thus, they can be identified as followed:

- i. App Platform conceptualization
- ii. App platform development
- iii. Pre-launch campaign
- iv. Official launch of the App Platform
- v. Initial 100k App downloads

vi. Initial 1m App downloads

The core project team comprises of the Project Team Lead, Oluwaseun Fakuade and other team members, Olatunji Ladi Adejumo (Community Facilitator), Samuel Akinlotan as well as Chuba Ezekwesili. In other to save costs, no additional staffs was employed; rather volunteers were solicited on basis of their capability to carry out specific tasks such as information dissemination about the Jasi App platform.

In order to ensure that each member of the team is fully equipped for the project, training programmes have been organized to facilitate the transmission of learnings from the AFRINIC Training programme held in Djibouti in June 2014. Key concepts such as PESTEL Analysis, Design of Communications Strategy, Design and Analysis of Surveys as well as Report Writing were learnt during the training programmes in order to increase capacity to effectively manage and report the project.

Due to paucity of funds, additional equipment was not procured, instead the team elected to channel available financial resources towards payments for the building of the Jasi App platform as well as adverts to disseminate information about the platform.

2.4.2. Expected results

Expected results from this project are listed below:

- a functional app ready for use
- Staff and Volunteers Capacity Building Training Programmes
- Consolidation of support-base among key influencers
- Consolidation of critical support-base among selected national leaders, business tycoons and celebrities in entertainment industry

2.5. RESULT CHAIN AND LOGICAL FRAMEWORK

The interim report mentioned that the project team tried to demonstrate the link between the different elements of the logical framework and that it could be noted that even the main information have been mentioned, the outcome of the project has been forgotten. The report also suggested that it would be important in the final report that all the components of the framework are identified and well defined. In spite of this recommendation, the final report failed to correct the lack of information.

2.6. PROJECT MONITORING SYSTEM

As stated in the report, daily updates were monitored through SCRUM meetings with developers while updates on tasks and responsibilities are uploaded through TRELLO. TRELLO provides a real-time update of how tasks are implemented as scheduled.

Although the report mentioned some tools used to monitor the project activities, we do not have any information on how these tools have been used to perform this activity. More information from the project team would be appreciated and should be better explained.

2.7. EVALUATION FINDINGS

2.7.1. **DESIGN**

➤ Valid objectives

The project objectives remain valid. As highlighted by the team, the feedback from interaction with various citizens segments were extremely useful. Based on the report, they addressed the contribution of the Jasi App to development with their observations in the field where citizens indicated surprise at financial allocations and projects earmarked for their states/communities within a given timeframe. (BEACONS DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATIONS CGMAP has been a tremendous help in assessing this need for budget access and monitoring). They also indicated desire to obtain more information and eagerly participate in the process of vetting budget performance but for lack of proper channels to do so. Project team made bold to say that Jasi App provides that desired channel and citizens showed a willingness to make use of the platform the App offers.

As the citizens show their interest in the information provided by the project and their willingness to participate to the success of this initiative, we can conclude that the objectives of the project remain really valid.

> Appropriate strategies

According to the report, the project team use a well-defined strategy to lead the project. In effect, after ensuring that the project members have been trained according to the objectives, the activities have been performed by the project team following a well-designed plan. The key milestones were identified conscientiously. The stakeholders have also been incorporated to the project development and their feedbacks were important in the implementation and the improving of the application. The main risks as mentioned in the lines to come were well-identified and mitigated according to a plan.

➤ Major risks not accounted for

POLITICAL:

• OPEN DATA: Data Stifling

While the Jasi App is not a political tool, its effect on politics cannot be ignored, as it is actually an avenue for the citizens to present an independent/objective scorecard for good governance and even the performance of elected officials on an ongoing basis using the capital budget. Given these undertones, it is not surprising that Non-Governmental Organizations have been attracting scrutiny recently. This could limit the willingness of relevant institutions to effectively work with NGOs thus hindering operations and efficacy.

The lack of access to budget data across states present the greatest obstacle to perusing state budgets. Non-cooperation can hinder the effective usage of the apps. The willingness of politicians to open up to processes through which public funds are released and utilized in Nigeria has been frustrating with little progress made so far.

MITIGATION PLAN:

- i. Steps are being taken to liaise/interface more with lawmakers in Nigeria to ensure that they understand the importance of open data.
- ii. Access of stakeholders, especially those in political office, to the crunched data from usage of the app is also in plan.
- iii. Cluster citizen's efforts also will be sort to help mount pressure in states where data is not accessible.

ECONOMIC:

- Sustainability of the project: High cost of advertisement, staff and other administrative charges pose future challenges for the sustenance of the project.
- Persistent economic challenges translate to curtailing of citizens' ability to easily afford data-enabled phones or smartphones. Even when they can afford such phones, being able to consistently afford Internet data plan is another issue for consideration. By extension, they will be limited in the ability to fully optimize the various functionalities of the App and provide rich data.

- Advertising is a critical activity in creating and sustaining awareness about jasi App. However, costs of advertising and publicity via traditional media channels such as television, radio and newspapers are considerably high and increasingly prohibitive. This will likely constitute an impediment in reaching a wider spectrum; from younger to the older citizens segments across localities as they are less savvy about social media channels thus have negligible representation within those channels.
- Unforeseen future fluctuations in currency exchanges could also affect the day-to-day activities of the organization as regards the successful implementation of the platform.

MITIGATION PLAN:

- i. Seeking funds from donor organizations to help scale the economic challenge that may arise from sustaining the research, staff and other administrative charges of Jasi. Advertisement and other post-implementation costs can also be scaled once access to necessary funds is sought.
- ii. Providing citizens with mobile phones with preloaded jasi app can help accelerate access to the app and its data. Partnership with telecommunication corporations in Nigeria will also help increase the access across communities in Nigeria.

SOCIAL/CULTURE

Religious and ethnic sentiments have been discerned as ready tools in Nigeria's socio-cultural and political landscape. Thus, often times, cultural opinions get influenced by the ethnic/religious tainted arguments of political characters who are shown by their constituencies as having shortfalls in budget implementation and project execution. Also, lies easily becomes social norms and also become easily entrenched in the culture of the people. Cultural title holders, traditional rulers benefiting from a political largesse/individual can easily sway opinions in a community, thus resulting in countering the effective usage of the platform.

MITIGATION PLAN

The roles of community heads and traditional rulers (where their influence still exist) cannot be over-emphasized. Thus, seeking the help and counsel fo these leaders is impkortannt to gaining communal access and credibility

TECHNOLOGICAL

Report-based feedbacks provide opportunities for enriching platforms like Jasi to undergo continuous modification that are specifically tailored to meet the needs they are designed. As such, continuous upgrading, modifications and research funding are critical aspects of any technology-driven platform such as the Jasi app. Consequently, failure to access funds for these

will likely constitute a major impediment to the achievement of set goals and management of operational objectives. Maintaining the apps could be a herculean task if accessing funds becomes a challenge.

As the App relies on mobile platforms, the de-emphasis and even, eventual decommissioning of some platforms could provide challenges in terms of maintenance. This is apparent in the recent moves of Nokia towards its own adaptation of the Android platform.

MITIGATION

i. Funding, as much as possible, is essential to keeping up with the various technological modifications that may be required in upgrading the app. Research funding is also important in

LEGISLATION

Recently, reported news of the a new bill before the Federal Legislature which has the objective of requiring NGOs to disclose funding to the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission may in fact be an attempt to stifle the activities of NGOs which are geared towards stimulating citizens to demand accountability. Legislation in Nigeria is particularly unfriendly to the Civil Society Organizations whose efforts within the past years have been towards ensuring a more open, transparent and accountable leadership.

MITIGATION PLAN

- i. Lobbying with lawmakers and the parliament is an important part of our mitigation plan. Cooperation, without conforming to corrupt standards, is extremely important if we will be making serious headway in open data
- ii. Collaboration with other CSOs/NGOs to achieve more pressure during demands for openness and transparent accountability.

2.7.2. EFFECTIVENESS

> Results aligned with planed objectives

As stated in the report, the results are aligned with the planed objectives and many efforts are done by the project team to achieve all the planned objectives.

> Results acceptability

Based on the report the results of the inputs are acceptable in terms of the quantity and quality of outputs obtained. The web platform and the app platforms all met the standards that the project set during the planning stage. This came as a result of the timelines.

2.7.3. EFFICIENCY OF PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

> Percentage of achieved project plan

At the time of writing this report, the Jasi App platform has reached 40% completion. Based on the report, we cannot ascertain the total percentage of completion of the project as it just mentioned the percentage of completion in the development of the app.

> Expenses aligned with budget

According to the final report the project received **1 380 100 Naira** after bank charges from FIRE program. The project spent **1 612 196 Naira**. The expenses seem to have been made conscientiously but we wonder if the remaining amount to be received by FIRE program will be enough to deal with the remaining activities until the launch of the app. The report should explain how the remaining expenses would be assumed in order to reassure FIRE program that the project will be conducted to its end.

> Archive of collected data

Based on the report and as highlighted, there have been many monitoring activities and we can ascertain that many data have been collected. Nonetheless, the report failed to provide information regarding the archiving process of data. This final report does not provide more information than the interim one. This is a lack to be mentioned.

2.7.3. IMPACT

As the app is not completely developed, the impact of the project cannot be evaluated as well. Even the report mentioned some impacts, they are not the ones expected. The project should be ended and the app implemented to determine the real impacts. They should demonstrate how the outcome change the way of life of people after being used for a certain time.

2.8. RECOMMENDATIONS

Even the project is on a good track, the activities are not completed. The app development is still on-going and it seems that many steps are still to go. The timeline of the project seems to have been minored by the team and the financial resources are not sufficient. The project has respected all the project management steps but the report lacks to provide all the information. We recommend that FIRE program continues to be involved in this project until the deployment of the app in order to be aware of the achievement of the outputs.