



CALL FOR PROPOSALS FOR THE UCC/UCUSAF GRANT FOR ICT CIRCULAR ECONOMY AND E-WASTE ECOSYSTEMS PROJECT

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Uganda Communications Commission (UCC), through the Uganda Communications Universal Service and Access Fund (UCUSAF), invites eligible organizations to submit proposals for grant support to implement the ICT Circular Economy and E-Waste Ecosystems Project, aimed at promoting the sustainable management of ICT equipment throughout its lifecycle.

UCC implemented the ICT E-Waste Collection Project, which demonstrated that effective ICT e-waste management requires more than the collection of obsolete or non-functional equipment. A sustainable system should also promote repair, refurbishment, reuse, safe dismantling, material recovery, traceability and the environmentally sound management of equipment that cannot be returned to productive use. These interventions support waste reduction, improve the affordability and continued accessibility of ICT devices, promote resource efficiency and contribute to an environmentally responsible communications sector that is responsive to Uganda's socio-economic context.

The Project will also help safeguard and extend the value of ICT equipment deployed in schools, health facilities, communities and other beneficiary institutions, under the UCUSAF program, by promoting maintenance, repairability, refurbishment, reuse and responsible end-of-life management. It will further strengthen traceability of obsolete devices and generate information to support better lifecycle planning, budgeting and sustainability of future ICT access interventions.

UCC, through UCUSAF, therefore seeks to implement a dedicated twelve-month ICT Circular Economy and E-Waste Ecosystems Project to strengthen and track repair, refurbishment, reuse, recovery and the responsible routing of ICT equipment across the wider e-waste value chain.

The Project will be implemented through a UCUSAF grant by an Implementing Partner selected through an open and competitive process. The selected Implementing Partner will work closely with UCC/UCUSAF and relevant stakeholders to deliver the agreed activities, outputs and reporting requirements.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION

A key learning from the pilot phase was that ICT equipment does not move directly from use to disposal. Before becoming e-waste, devices may be maintained, repaired, refurbished, resold, reused, dismantled for components, aggregated or routed for treatment. Much of this activity is undertaken by a diverse network of formal and informal actors who provide affordable services, preserve the residual value of ICT equipment and create employment and livelihood opportunities.

In Uganda, as in many developing economies, this ecosystem presents both an environmental necessity and a strong economic case. The relatively high cost of new ICT equipment means that repair, refurbishment and reuse remain important pathways for improving affordability, extending access to digital devices and reducing premature replacement. Strengthening these activities can therefore support digital inclusion, local enterprise development, resource efficiency and employment, while also reducing the volume of equipment entering the waste stream.

Despite their contribution, many actors operate with limited access to structured technical training, occupational health and safety guidance, appropriate handling and storage practices, reliable record-keeping, traceability tools and approved downstream channels. The public also has limited access to verified information on where equipment can be repaired, refurbished, donated, collected or safely disposed of.

The Project will address these gaps through ecosystem mapping, capacity building, practical support, digital traceability, public information, awareness and stronger feeder linkages to approved aggregation and downstream treatment facilities. It will complement the national scale-up of ICT e-waste collection by strengthening the actors and systems that operate before and around formal collection.

3.0 PROJECT GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 Project Goal

To strengthen Uganda's ICT e-waste value chain by developing structured, safe, traceable and sustainable ICT e-waste ecosystems that promote repair, refurbishment, reuse, responsible collection, youth skilling and environmentally sound end-of-life management.

3.2 Overall Objective

To implement a twelve-month UCUSAF-supported intervention that demonstrates how informal ICT repair and e-waste ecosystems can be organized, strengthened and integrated into formal collection, traceability and approved downstream treatment systems.

3.3 Specific Objectives

- 1. Map and profile ICT repair and e-waste actors** - To identify and profile repairers, refurbishers, collectors, waste entrepreneurs, second-hand device

dealers, aggregation points and material flows, so that UCC/UCUSAF has a clear picture of the existing ICT circular economy and e-waste ecosystem.

2. **Assess lifecycle management of ICT equipment deployed through UCUSAF programmes** – To identify the maintenance, repair, refurbishment, reuse and end-of-life management needs of ICT equipment provided to UCUSAF-supported schools, in order to improve the sustainability and long-term functionality of ICT computer laboratories.
3. **Establish and strengthen model ICT circular economy ecosystems** - To support selected ICT repair, refurbishment, reuse and e-waste recovery ecosystems to operate in a more organized, safe, traceable and sustainable manner.
4. **Build practical skills and livelihood opportunities for youth and informal actors** - To equip youth, repairers, refurbishers, collectors and waste entrepreneurs with practical skills in ICT device diagnostics, repair, refurbishment, sorting, record keeping, basic enterprise management and responsible handling of ICT equipment.
5. **Improve health, safety and environmental practices** - To promote safe handling, storage, sorting and referral of ICT e-waste, including batteries, screens, circuit boards, cables and data-bearing devices.
6. **Strengthen digital traceability and data reporting** - To establish or improve digital systems for registering actors, tracking device flows, recording repair and refurbishment outcomes, capturing collection volumes and monitoring final routing to approved downstream handlers.
7. **Improve public access to trusted information** - To provide the public, schools and beneficiary institutions with clear information on where to repair, refurbish, donate, collect or safely dispose of ICT equipment, including guidance on data security and responsible device ownership.
8. **Link informal ecosystems to formal collection and treatment systems** - To create practical feeder networks that connect repairers, refurbishers, collectors and aggregation points to approved collection, storage and downstream treatment facilities, while complementing the ongoing Phase II ICT E-Waste Collection Project.

4.0 PROJECT SCOPE

The Implementing Partner shall undertake the following activities and meet the minimum implementation targets indicated below. The geographic distribution and detailed implementation arrangements shall be confirmed during inception and approved by UCC, without reducing the overall minimum targets.

a. Establishment or strengthen of Model ICT Circular Economy Ecosystems

The Implementing Partner shall identify, establish or strengthen at least four model ICT circular economy and e-waste ecosystems, with one ecosystem in each of the Central, Eastern, Northern and Western regions. A model ecosystem may comprise an existing cluster or network of repairers, refurbishers, collectors, waste entrepreneurs, second-hand ICT dealers, aggregation points and related actors. The Project is intended

to strengthen existing systems and linkages rather than establish new physical infrastructure unless specifically approved by UCC.

For each model ecosystem, the Implementing Partner shall undertake the following:

- i. **Mapping and profiling:** Map and profile at least 600 ICT circular economy and e-waste actors, distributed as follows:
 - at least 300 actors in the Central Region; and,
 - at least 100 actors in each of the Eastern, Northern and Western regions.

The mapping shall cover repair technicians, refurbishers, waste entrepreneurs, informal collectors, second-hand ICT dealers, aggregation points and other relevant actors. It shall document their locations, services, skills, handling practices, occupational health and safety risks, material flows, record-keeping practices and existing collection and downstream linkages.

- ii. **Capacity building and mentorship:** Train and mentor of the identified actors in (i) above.

Training shall cover, as applicable, ICT device diagnostics, repair, refurbishment, basic electronics, sorting, component recovery, data protection, record-keeping, occupational health and safety, environmentally sound management and basic enterprise development.

- iii. **Operational and safety support:** Provide appropriate basic operational and occupational safety support to the selected participating actors within the model ecosystems. Support may include personal protective equipment, safe-handling guidance, visual safety materials, reporting tools and storage guidance. The type and level of support shall be based on an assessment of actual needs and shall be subject to prior approval by UCC.
- iv. **Feeder networks and downstream linkages:** Establish or strengthen at least one feeder or referral points in each region.

The feeder points shall link participating actors to approved ICT e-waste aggregation, collection and downstream treatment facilities. The arrangements shall include clearly documented roles, referral procedures, chain-of-custody requirements, handover records and reporting responsibilities.

- v. **Digital registration and traceability:** Develop, adapt or strengthen a functional digital system for registering actors, recording transactions and tracing ICT equipment and e-waste flows.

At least 80 per cent of Project-supported transactions and handovers shall be captured digitally. The system shall generate a minimum of 400 verifiable records during the implementation period, with at least 100 records from each region. Records may relate to repair, refurbishment, reuse, collection, referral, aggregation or downstream handover.

The system shall be simple, accessible to participating actors and capable of producing reports for monitoring and verification by UCC.

- vi. Public information platform:** Develop or enhance at least one functional public-facing digital platform, chatbot or online directory providing verified information on:
- ICT repair and refurbishment services;
 - feeder and authorised collection points;
 - data protection and handling of data-bearing devices; and
 - responsible disposal of ICT equipment.

Key public information shall be presented in clear and accessible language and, where appropriate, translated or adapted into commonly used languages within each regions. The platform should allow for periodic verification and updating of the information provided.

- vii. Verified service directory:** Establish and maintain a verified directory of participating repair centres, refurbishers, feeder points, authorised collection points and approved downstream facilities.

The directory shall include, at a minimum, the service offered, location and contact details of each listed actor or facility. It shall be reviewed and updated periodically throughout the Project.

- viii. Public awareness and stakeholder engagement:** Conduct at least two targeted awareness or stakeholder-engagement activities in each region, resulting in a minimum of eight activities nationally.

The activities shall address device maintenance, repair, refurbishment, reuse, data security, separation of ICT e-waste from general waste and responsible end-of-life management. The Implementing Partner shall document participation, communication reach, stakeholder feedback and lessons arising from each activity.

- ix. UCUSAF beneficiary engagement:** Engage at least three UCUSAF-supported schools or beneficiary institutions in each region, resulting in a minimum of 12 institutions nationally.

Where feasible, the institutions shall be linked to active UCUSAF-supported ICT hubs or other relevant access initiatives. Engagement shall assess and promote ICT equipment maintenance, repairability, refurbishment, reuse, equipment record-keeping and responsible end-of-life management.

b. Coordination with the ICT E-Waste Collection Project

The Implementing Partner shall coordinate with UCC, approved downstream handlers and the ongoing ICT E-Waste Collection Project to ensure that the interventions remain distinct but complementary.

Coordination shall facilitate appropriate referral and handover of non-repairable or end-of-life ICT equipment, avoid duplication of activities and strengthen integration across the ICT equipment lifecycle and e-waste value chain.

c. Monitoring and Reporting

The Implementing Partner shall maintain complete and verifiable records of:

- actors mapped and profiled;
- participants trained and mentored;
- model ecosystems strengthened;
- UCUSAF-supported institutions engaged;
- feeder and referral points established;
- digital transactions and handovers recorded;
- ICT equipment repaired, refurbished or reused; and
- ICT e-waste transferred to approved aggregation or downstream facilities.

Progress against the approved targets shall be reported monthly and shall be subject to verification by UCC. Any proposed adjustment to the geographic distribution of the targets shall require prior approval from UCC and shall not reduce the overall Project targets.

5.0 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AND KEY DELIVERABLES

The Implementing Partner will be expected to deliver the following:

- a. **Inception Report:** A detailed implementation methodology, work plan, stakeholder engagement approach, risk management plan, monitoring framework, implementation schedule and coordination arrangements with the ongoing ICT E-Waste Collection Project.
- b. **Ecosystem Mapping and Baseline Report:** A verified database and baseline assessment of ICT repairers, refurbishers, wastepreneurs, informal collectors, second-hand device actors, aggregation points and relevant material flows. At a minimum, the database shall capture the actor category, location, contact details, services or materials handled, estimated volumes, existing practices, skills gaps, occupational health and safety risks, traceability arrangements and downstream linkages.
- c. **Capacity-Building and Ecosystem Strengthening Outputs:** Approved training materials, practical guidance and implementation reports covering ICT diagnostics, repair, refurbishment, reuse, sorting, data protection, record-keeping, safe handling and environmentally sound management. The outputs shall include participant attendance records, training materials, practical exercises or assessments, participant feedback and evidence demonstrating the knowledge or skills gained.
- d. **Digital Traceability and Public Information Systems:** A functional actor-registration and traceability system, together with a verified public-facing platform, chatbot or directory on repair, refurbishment, collection and responsible disposal. Deliverables shall include user guides, system documentation, access credentials and handover materials.

- e. **Feeder Networks and Downstream Linkages:** Documented feeder and referral arrangements linking participating actors to approved aggregation and downstream treatment facilities, supported by chain-of-custody and handover procedures.
- f. **Public Awareness and Institutional Engagement Reports:** Reports on stakeholder engagements, public awareness activities and participation of selected UCUSAF-supported institutions, including evidence of reach, approved materials, feedback and lessons learned.
- g. **Monthly Progress Reports:** Monthly reports on progress against the approved work plan and targets, outputs delivered, challenges, risks, mitigation measures, supporting evidence and planned activities. The Implementing Partner shall participate in review meetings as required by UCC.
- h. **Final Project Report and Handover:** A consolidated report on achievements, challenges, lessons, sustainability and scale-up recommendations, incorporating UCC and validation feedback and accompanied by all final data, tools, databases, training materials and digital-system handover requirements.

All deliverables shall be complete, accurate, verifiable and supported by appropriate evidence. UCC may request clarification, correction or additional supporting documentation before formally accepting any deliverable.

6.0 ELIGIBILITY OF APPLICANTS

The grant may be awarded to a single applicant or to a consortium. In either case, the applicant or the lead applicant in a consortium must be a legally registered entity in Uganda. Where a consortium is proposed, other organizations may participate under the lead applicant, which shall retain overall responsibility and accountability for the proposal and project implementation.

6.1 General Criteria

- a. The applicant must be a legally registered entity in Uganda. Where an application is submitted by a consortium, the lead applicant must be legally registered in Uganda and clearly identified in the proposal. Other consortium members shall implement their agreed roles under the lead applicant's overall coordination and accountability. The lead applicant shall sign the Grant Agreement and remain responsible to UCC for the performance of the entire consortium.
- b. The applicant must demonstrate satisfactory financial health and adequate governance, financial management, administrative, procurement, monitoring and reporting systems to manage the Project.
- c. The applicant must demonstrate relevant and verifiable organizational experience in implementing e-waste management projects or related interventions in environmental management, circular economy, ICT repair and refurbishment, youth skilling, digital systems or community engagement.
- d. The applicant must demonstrate experience in stakeholder mobilization, capacity building, occupational health and safety, environmental safeguards,

project management, monitoring and reporting. The applicant must demonstrate experience in ICT device diagnostics, repair, refurbishment, recycling, material recovery or management of end-of-life ICT equipment, either directly or through clearly identified partners.

- e. The applicant must demonstrate experience developing or operating digital databases, dashboards, mobile applications, traceability systems, chatbots or public information platforms.
- f. The applicant must provide at least two reference letters, completion certificates or other documentary evidence for comparable assignments.
- g. Where a consortium is proposed, the respective competencies, roles, responsibilities and accountability arrangements of the partners must be clearly stated.

6.2 Preferred Capacity

Preference will be given to applicants that demonstrate:

- A strong track record in practical ICT e-waste management, repair, refurbishment, reuse and circular economy interventions;
- Capacity to engage and build the capability of informal-sector actors and youth using practical, competency-based approaches;
- Existing or demonstrable arrangements with approved ICT e-waste aggregation and downstream treatment facilities;
- Strong experience in digital traceability, data management and development of public information tools;
- Sound governance, grant management and public-sector reporting capacity;
- A credible sustainability and knowledge-transfer approach; and
- The ability to mobilize complementary resources, partnerships or in-kind support where appropriate.

7.0 ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Applications will be evaluated through administrative, technical and financial assessments.

7.1 Administrative Evaluation

- Legal registration and status of the applicant;
- Submission of all required administrative and legal documents;
- Compliance with the minimum eligibility requirements set out in this Call; and
- Completeness and validity of the application.

7.2 Technical Evaluation

- Understanding of the Project and alignment with the stated goal, objectives and scope;
- Relevance and feasibility of the proposed implementation methodology;
- Applicant's relevant experience and track record;
- Qualifications and suitability of the proposed team;

- Quality and practicality of the work plan, timelines, stakeholder engagement, risk management and monitoring approach;
- Strength of the approach to ecosystem mapping, capacity building, occupational safety, digital traceability, public information and downstream linkages;
- Clear coordination with the ongoing ICT E-Waste Collection Project and avoidance of duplication;
- Integration of cross-cutting considerations, including youth, gender, disability inclusion, data protection and environmental safeguards; and
- Sustainability, knowledge transfer and potential for replication or scale-up.

7.3 Financial Evaluation

- Clarity, completeness and realism of the proposed budget;
- Cost-effectiveness and value for money;
- Consistency between the technical proposal, work plan and budget;
- Adequacy of financial controls and accountability arrangements; and
- Any proposed co-financing, in-kind contribution or complementary resource mobilization.

8.0 LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE DOCUMENTS REQUIRED

Applicants shall submit the following documents. For a consortium, the requirements shall apply to the lead applicant and, where relevant, each co-applicant:

- a. Certificate of Incorporation or Registration.
- b. Memorandum and Articles of Association, constitution or equivalent governing documents.
- c. Current physical, postal and electronic contact details.
- d. Details of the authorized representative, including proof of authority to act on behalf of the applicant.
- e. Valid tax and other statutory compliance documentation, where applicable.
- f. Audited financial statements for the most recent two financial years.
- g. Documentary evidence of relevant experience, including reference letters, completion certificates, contracts or client testimonials.
- h. Letters of commitment or partnership documentation for proposed consortium members or key technical partners.
- i. Evidence of relevant licenses, approvals, recommendations or downstream arrangements, where applicable.
- j. A duly signed Code of Ethical Conduct for Grant Applicants.

9.0 PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

The proposal should include:

- a. Project motivation and understanding of the assignment.
- b. Alignment with UCC priorities and the national development agenda.
- c. Experience managing similar projects
- d. Project implementation methodology,

- e. Project management framework,
- f. Project implementation budget with clear allocation of resources to implementing partners
- g. Sustainability approach,
- h. Monitoring and evaluation approach,
- i. Risk management framework,
- j. Integration of cross-cutting issues of gender, youth, and digital divide, among others.
- k. Any value-added or innovative approaches that strengthen delivery of the Project without altering its approved objectives and scope.

N.B: The Commission reserves the right to conduct due diligence at any stage of the evaluation process to verify the authenticity and accuracy of the information and documentation submitted by applicants.

10.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

The Commission's assessment team will conduct a comprehensive risk evaluation, including both stated and unstated risks. This assessment will holistically review the applicant's submission to determine the overall level of risk classified as low, medium, high, or extreme that the proposed engagement may pose to UCC operations, resources, and objectives.

11.0 APPLICATION TIMELINE

The grant application is open effective 10th August 2026 to 4th September 2026. Applications must be submitted through the grant application portal at <https://eservices.ucc.co.ug/web> by 11:59 pm on 4th September 2026.

12.0 DISCLAIMER

- a. Personal information supplied in an application will be handled in accordance with the applicable laws of Uganda.
- b. UCC reserves the right to conduct due diligence at any stage of the application and evaluation process.
- c. UCC is not obliged to award a grant merely because applications have been received.
- d. The costs of preparing and submitting an application shall be borne by the applicant.
- e. UCC reserves the right to amend, suspend or cancel this Call at any stage, in accordance with applicable procedures. Any amendment to the Call shall be communicated through the appropriate official channels.

**The Executive Director,
Uganda Communications Commission,
Plot 42 - 44, Spring Road Bugolobi,
P. O. Box 7376,
KAMPALA**

ANNEX 1:

CODE OF ETHICAL CONDUCT FOR GRANT APPLICANTS

Applicants shall:

- Maintain integrity and independence in their professional judgement and conduct;
- Comply with the laws of Uganda and the terms of any Grant Agreement awarded;
- Provide accurate, complete and non-misleading information;
- Avoid and disclose actual, perceived or potential conflicts of interest;
- Respect the confidentiality of information received during the grant application and implementation processes;
- Refrain from offering gifts, hospitality, inducements or anything of value intended to influence a grant decision;
- Refrain from collusion, fraudulent practices, misrepresentation, double billing or any conduct that undermines fair competition; and
- Accept full responsibility for the quality, and integrity and proper delivery of all activities, services and outputs under the Grant Agreement.

Where an application is submitted by a consortium, the lead applicant shall sign this Code of Ethical Conduct on behalf of the consortium and ensure that all consortium members comply with its requirements. The lead applicant shall remain fully responsible and accountable to UCC for the conduct and performance of the consortium and for all activities, services and outputs delivered by its members under the Grant Agreement. Any action or omission by a consortium member shall not relieve the lead applicant of its obligations or accountability to UCC.

I, _____, being the authorized representative of the applicant or lead applicant, confirm that I have the authority to sign this declaration and undertake, on behalf of the applicant and, where applicable, the consortium, to comply with the above Code of Ethical Conduct.

Name: _____

Title: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____