



ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL MANAGEMENT PLAN (ESMP) FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF LECTURE THEATRES AND FOR REHABILITATION WORKS AT MALAWI UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (MUST) IN THYOLO DISTRICT

Disclosure Notice

The Government of Malawi, through the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training, with funding from the World Bank, is implementing “Skills for a Vibrant Economy Project” (SAVE). The project’s aim is to improve access to market-relevant skills programmes in priority areas of the economy, ensuring equity in skills training and empowerment of women, girls and vulnerable youth through targeted skills in priority areas of the economy. Additionally, the project seeks to create a conducive policy environment, strengthening systems and institutional capacity for skills development, which will centre on: Technical, Entrepreneurial, and Vocational Education and Training (TEVET) and higher education reforms, student loans, industrial links, digital technology and safeguards, capacity building, and technical assistance, among other systemic issues. Under this project, different sub-projects have been planned in the country’s five public universities and various TEVET institutions.

Malawi University of Science and Technology (MUST) is one of the public universities targeted and a beneficiary of SAVE project. MUST proposes construction and operation of Lecture Theatres and its amenities within MUST campus located at Ndata Farm area, Sub Traditional Authority Mangazi, in Thyolo District. The project will be implemented from October 2024 to June 2027. Prior to implementation of the proposed works, MUST prepared Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESMPs) in conformity with both the national and World Bank’s Environmental and Social Safeguards standards. The project was planned and designed in a manner that enhances potential positive environmental and social impacts and mitigates potential negative environmental and social impacts. The environmental and social assessment identified and evaluated potential environmental and social impacts that the project can generate, proposed measures to enhance the positive impacts and measures to minimise the negative impacts, and developed a monitoring plan

to check implementation of the enhancement measures for the positive impacts and mitigation measures for the negative impacts.

Construction activities will involve building of a structure with three (3) double volume, single storey lecture theatres, one (1) being 250-seater capacity and two (2) being 128-seater capacities); nine (9) offices, two (2) boardrooms; three (3) meeting rooms, two (2) storerooms, a tuck shop, nine (5) toilets for females, five (5) toilets for males and six (6) urinals for males and a parking lot of 22 car slots.

In addition, the -proposed rehabilitation activities will take place at two of its ODeL (Open Distance and e-Learning) sites of Chankhanga and Nansomba as well as MUST Dam area and surroundings. The works shall involve the transformation of an existing block into an ODeL Center and rehabilitation of the Dam area. The rehabilitation is expected to commence in October 2024 and will take three months to be completed.

The ESMPs present several key impacts of the project. Construction of the facility aims at improving academic excellence, and access to market-relevant skills development programmes. The project will also increase student enrolment, improve the quality of teaching and research, training high-level human resource, provide research and consultancy services, and disseminate knowledge for societal advancement. The plan highlights the creation of temporary jobs for local communities, increased skills transfer to local people, and new business opportunities. The project is expected to boost student enrolment and skills transfer, increase tax revenues, reduce constraints in classroom space and equipment, and improve the institution's overall outlook.

On the other hand, the ESMPs identify several negative impacts, such as the loss of existing vegetation, increased risk of soil erosion, and potential blockage of footpaths and study areas, the disruption of classes and library activities, population influx, and heightened risks related to occupational health and safety. The project could lead to increased public safety risks, exposure to hazardous materials, and the spread of HIV/AIDS, STIs, and COVID-19, discrimination against women and vulnerable groups, gender-based violence, sexual exploitation of students, and increased pressure on utilities, risk of child labour, the generation of solid waste and waste-water, increased dust emissions, and a rise in theft incidents in the area.

The Environmental and Social Management Plans for the project sites have been presented to the Malawi Environmental Protection Authority (MEPA) and the World Bank and are now ready to be presented to all interested stakeholders for any observations.

Stakeholders and the public are invited to review the ESMPs, available at:

- The Malawi Environmental Protection Agency, Lingadzi House, Robert Mugabe Street in Lilongwe;
- Malawi University of Science and Technology, Thyolo, Ndata Campus;
- Malawi University of Science and Technology website, www.must.ac.mw

For further details or to participate in the public disclosure process, stakeholders can refer to the report at the specified locations and submit any observations no later than 19th July, 2024 to:

University Registrar
Malawi University of Science and Technology,
P. O. Box 5196, Limbe

Email: registrar@must.ac.mw

Copy: save-project@must.ac.mw

Phone Number: +265 1 678 000

We look forward to the public participating in the consultation and disclosure process.