



Research Brief

Title: Music consumption habits and distribution channels in Malawi

BACKGROUND

Music Crossroads Malawi (MCM), the Malawi National Commission for UNESCO (MNCU) and Rei Foundation Limited (RFL) are looking to commission a consultant researcher, research collective or research firm to carry out a comprehensive review on current music consumption habits, music distribution channels and music industry trends in Malawi.

The study is designed to provide both commercial and nonprofit actors in Malawi's music ecosystem with valuable insights to adjust their operational and impact models, increase benefits for their artists and better serve audiences. The research shall inform audience development, marketing and distribution strategies, and first and foremost identify trends that are beneficial and fair for all creatives involved.

Additionally, the research shall provide relevant background information for policymakers and regulators to improve effective policymaking and realize the opportunities of the 2005 UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions.

CURRENT SITUATION

There are many musicians writing and producing music in Malawi. While some are registered with the Copyright Society of Malawi, many more are not registered which makes it difficult to determine the commercial impact of their products. Additionally, a lot of music is

produced and consumed at village level but because they have not been commercially packaged, they are not counted in the economic value chain.

Apart from a study that was undertaken by the Copyright Society of Malawi through the National Statistical Office regarding the contribution of the creative industries to the economy on Malawi, there has been no known professional comprehensive study on the consumption habits and distribution channels of music in Malawi.

Fast changes and developments in technology have greatly impacted the way music is accessed and consumed. Without corresponding action from practitioners and consumers, economic exploitation of musical products has been a challenge and the musicians have lost out in a big way. It is thus important that research of this nature helps to generate relevant information and data that can inform both the producers and consumers when making decisions. New knowledge will also be handy for policymakers to guide investment in the field of music and arts.

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

The aim of this research is to provide Music Crossroads and the music ecosystem including both commercial and nonprofit actors with relevant data they need to develop strategic and successful business plans.

Research Objectives and Information Needs

1. Explore current and potential consumers of music and their musical tastes in Malawi
 - Identify musical styles that are popular with the audience
 - Analyze music audience segments (e.g. age, gender, socio-economic status, rural/urban)
 - Analyse the challenges faced by consumers to access music
2. Identify current music consumer patterns in Malawi
 - Analyse consumption/distribution platforms and mediums that are visited or accessed most by the audience
 - Identify platforms and mediums that are most economically beneficial to musicians and their businesses
 - Determine what amounts are people willing to pay for music
3. Analyze the music distribution channels in Malawi
 - Identify the current music distributors and gatekeepers
 - Identify the channels the distributors use to distribute music
 - Identify the channels independent artists use to distribute music
 - Analyse the relevance of the current distribution channels in relation to technology and usability

- Analyse whether different distribution channels are used more often or are better suited to certain genres and audiences
 - Research new mediums for music distribution with economic viability for Malawi
 - Identify relevant trends that impact music consumption and distribution (e.g. 5G access, cell phone penetration, economic growth, touring/festivals)
 - Identify and recommend business opportunities within the music distribution and consumption chain
4. Explore barriers to economic exploitation of musical products in Malawi and ways to overcome them
 - Identify the physical, social, intellectual and financial barriers that prevent people from economically benefiting from music
 - Explore how these barriers can be overcome
 5. Outline trends in music consumption habits and developments of distribution channels in Malawi and globally, and draw recommendations based on the outcome of the research to be presented to stakeholders

SEGMENTS OF INTEREST

The expert or consultant(s) will be expected to undertake research with:

Musicians, cultural institutions, cultural experts, educational institutions, business enterprises, marketers, policy makers, music consumers and the general public (sample), entertainment venue owners and managers, arts associations and local and traditional leaders.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Deliverables of this research project include

- a comprehensive written report, including detailed graphs and visualisations
- a user-friendly executive summary, including simplified graphs and visualisations

The report and executive summary will be shared with all staff and board of Music Crossroads Malawi, Malawi National Commission for UNESCO, Rei Foundation Limited, Malawi Government (Department of Arts) and relevant stakeholders in the music ecosystem both within and outside Malawi. Additionally, the report and executive summary will be made available online for public access.

Both the main report and any appendices as well as the executive summary should be produced both in printable form as well as digital PDF format.

The report will be released under Creative Commons License.

TIMESCALE

From the point of contracting, research deliverables shall be produced within six months.

BUDGET

A sum of up to \$8,000 USD (incl. VAT) will be awarded to cover the project fee which includes research, planning, meetings, travel, mailings, stationery and other materials and resources as required.

Proposals should itemize daily or hourly rates and demonstrate how many days or hours each consultant / researcher / administrator will spend on the project and what each person's key responsibilities will be. Additionally, other expenses such as travel costs, stationary etc. will need to be itemized, too.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

1. Feasibility of the project (in terms of scope, methodology, timetable, budget, skills, qualifications and experience of the applicants) **(20 points)**
2. Quality of the written proposal i.e. in clarity, organization, and design (method, data, analysis) **(10 Points)**
3. Relevance and Strength in the following aims:
 - Exploration of the current and potential consumers of music and their musical tastes in Malawi **(20 points)**
 - Analysis of music distribution channels in Malawi **(20 points)**
 - Exploration of barriers to economic exploitation of musical products in Malawi and ways to overcome them **(10 points)**
 - Outline of trends in music consumption habits and developments of distribution channels in Malawi and globally, and drawing of recommendations based on the outcome of the research to be presented to stakeholders **(10 points)**
4. Adherence to ethical standards of research according to the Framework of Requirements and Guidelines for Research in the Social Sciences and Humanities in Malawi, by the National Commission for Science and Technology **(10 points)**.

PROPOSALS

The closing date for submission of proposals is 14 March 2021. The proposals must outline the following:

- Proposed methodology, budget and timetable
- Relevant skills and experience
- Personal information: full name, qualifications, position, address, email and contact phone numbers + CVs including relevant professional experience and qualifications of the team members

- Selection of two previous works of the applicant that are similar or otherwise relevant to this research

Respondents will be informed of the decision four weeks after the closing date for proposals. Shortlisted respondents will be invited to an interview before an evaluation panel at a place to be communicated or online (Zoom, Skype, Microsoft teams or Google meet whichever is possible). Ethical review will form part of the evaluation.

To apply, go to:

<https://tinyurl.com/malawimusic2>

CONTACT NAME AND NUMBER

For additional information and clarifications contact:

The Director
Music Crossroads Malawi
Tel: +265 999916799
Email: mcmalawi@music-crossroads.net

CC:

The Executive Secretary
Malawi National Commission for UNESCO
P. O. Box 30278, Lilongwe 3
Email: admin@unesconatcom.mw

Rei Foundation Limited
Email: sholden@reifoundation.com