

Request for proposals

1. **Title:** Study on Regulatory and Market-Based Solutions for Media Sustainability in Zambia
2. **Contact:** recruitment@zm.bbcmmediaaction.org
3. **Contract Type:** Services
4. **Description:** Study on Regulatory and Market-Based Solutions for Media Sustainability in Zambia
5. **Main Site or Location of Works, Main Place of Delivery:** Zambia
6. **Deadline for Submission of Proposals:** 26th March 2025
7. **Period of Work Start\Date:** estimated on 7th April 2025

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1 SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

Candidates should response to this invitation by submitting:

- a) An application form Appendix 1;

Address to which they must be sent to: recruitment@zm.bbcmmediaaction.org

The contract title (**Study on Regulatory and Market-Based Solutions for Media Sustainability in Zambia**) must be clearly indicated on the email subject line.

Failure to submit a proposal containing all the required information and documentation within the deadline specified may lead to the rejection of the proposal.

2 BACKGROUND

BBC Media Action is the BBC's international development charity. It believes in the power of media and communication to help reduce poverty and support people in understanding their rights. Its aim is to inform, connect and empower people around the world. BBC Media Action is registered as an International Non-Governmental Organisation (INGO) in Zambia and has its Secretariat in London, UK. BBC Media Action works around the world to:

- Raise awareness of development issues among mass audiences and opinion-leaders.

- Influence awareness, attitudes, and behaviour amongst less privileged communities through a wide range of educational programming.
- Build capacity in the media sector in developing and transitional countries.

Together with its partners, BBC Media Action has been exploring local solutions to media sustainability in Zambia, focusing on reducing costs and increasing revenue for media outlets. BBC Media Action now seeks to commission a study that examines regulatory reforms, market-based solutions, and sustainable funding models to support both media outlets and the Media Regulation Council of Zambia (MRCZ). This study will engage policymakers, media owners, advertisers, and media regulators to assess proposed solutions and recommend practical reforms and interventions that can be implemented in the short, medium, and long term.

3 OBJECTIVES

The study aims to identify both regulatory and market-based solutions to support the medium- to long-term financial sustainability of the media sector in Zambia. Specifically, it will:

1. **Assess potential regulatory reforms**, including targeted subsidies, tax incentives, and a more flexible licensing framework. Potential solutions include tax exemptions for media production equipment, a tiered licensing fee system considering media size and location, regulatory approval for digital monetisation (allowing media houses to earn from social media and online platforms through Zambia Information and Communication Technology Authority (ZICTA)), and government-backed initiatives such as subsidies for public-interest content through existing funding mechanisms such as Constituency Development Fund (CDF). The study will compare Zambia's framework with successful models from other countries.
2. **Identify market-driven solutions**, Understand the advertising market, including the role of large advertising agencies, the allocation of adverts, commission structures, and payment disbursement to media outlets. Examine the share of online advertising, identifying what strategies have worked and what have not. Analyse the proportion of advertising income in the total revenue of media outlets. Explore solutions such as standardised advertising rate cards and self-regulation mechanisms to prevent price dumping and unfair competition. The study will also assess the potential for collective advertising deals negotiated by MOAZ or other industry bodies or agents, as well as successful revenue-generation strategies in Zambia that could be made more accessible to media outlets.
3. **Explore sustainable funding models for MRCZ**, ensuring its independence and long-term viability

3. SUGGESTED METHODOLOGY

a) Literature review

- Review existing media viability research, tax policies, and Zambian licensing frameworks, among other legal frameworks with potential for reform that could support cost reduction for media outlets.
- Assess market-based solutions and trends in online and traditional media advertising market in Zambia, and alternative revenue streams that could support better income generation.
- Analyse international best practices on sustainable funding for self-regulation bodies like MRCZ.

b) Stakeholder consultations on all the above

- Government and regulators (Ministry of Information and Media, ZICTA, IBA, ZRA, etc.).
- Advertising agencies and corporate clients.
- MRCZ and media associations (MOAZ, MISA Zambia).
- Media outlets including digital content creators.

c) Data collection and analysis

- Conduct a survey of media houses on advertising, financial challenges and revenue strategies.
- Analyse income generation models.
- Analyse advertising market.

d) Stakeholder validation workshop

- Organise a half-day workshop to review findings and refine recommendations.

4. DELIVERABLES

- 3.1 Inception report – Outlining the methodology, work plan, and stakeholder mapping.
- 3.2 Rapid assessment report – Summarising findings from desk research and stakeholder consultations.
- 3.3 Policy recommendation report – Presenting proposed regulatory and market-based solutions.
- 3.4 Stakeholder engagement report – Capturing key insights from consultations and the validation workshop.
- 3.5 Final study report – Incorporating feedback and outlining practical policy and industry recommendations.

4 TIMELINE

Activity	Timeline
Inception report & methodology finalisation	Week 1
Stakeholder consultations & data collection	Week 1-2
Data analysis & draft assessment report	Week 3
Stakeholder validation workshop and report	Week 4
Final report submission	End of Week 4

5 REQUIRED EXPERTISE

- 5.1 Strong understanding of media policy and regulatory reforms in Zambia.
- 5.2 Expertise in business models and market-based solutions for media sustainability.
- 5.3 Proven research experience, including policy analysis and research writing.
- 5.4 Ability to engage stakeholders and develop actionable policy recommendations.

6 APPLICATION PROCESS: SUBMISSION OF FORM

All interested applicants should complete the application form below and submit their application along with their CV and relevant supporting documents.

Submission deadline:

All completed application forms should be submitted by 26th March 2025 to recruitment@zm.bbcmediaaction.org

7 GENERAL INFORMATION

- BBC MA is not obliged to accept the lowest priced proposal, or any proposal.
- BBC MA may conclude, following evaluation of proposals, not to proceed or to proceed with a limited number of elements of the proposal. BBC MA also reserves the right to republish this invitation.
 - a) BBC MA may shortlist candidates for interview on the basis of the written proposal before making a final decision on contract award.


8 ETHICAL CLEARANCE AND RESEARCH COMPLIANCE

The research must adhere to ethical standards for data collection including informed consent, confidentiality and data protection. The selected researcher must obtain necessary approvals from relevant bodies, such as the Zambia Research Ethics Committee (ZREC) or any other appropriate institutional review boards.

All participants must be informed about the purpose of the study, their rights, and data usage, ensuring voluntary participation. Data should be handled in compliance with Zambia's Data Protection Act and BBC Media Action's ethical research guidelines.

Application Form

1. Name of applicant:

 *(Full name of the consultant or organisation applying for the study)*

2. Contact information:

(Phone number, email, and physical address)

3. Experience in media policy and research (word limit: 300 words):

(Briefly describe your experience in media policy, regulatory research, or market-based media solutions.)

4. Links to previous policy and research work conducted and published:

(Provide links to reports, articles, or policy papers you have authored or contributed to.)

5. Fee rate :

(Indicate your proposed fee for conducting the study, including any breakdown of costs if applicable.)