Open Call for Proposals on "Mapping and Making Available Evidence-Based Research for Internet Policies in Africa"

March 5, 2018

Executive Summary

Article 19 Eastern Africa, BudgIT, the Centre for Intellectual Property and Information Technology Law at Strathmore University (CIPIT), Co-Creation Hub, the Collaboration on International ICT Policy for East and Southern Africa (CIPESA), iHub, the Kenya ICT Action Network (KICTANet), and Paradigm Initiative, with support from the Ford Foundation's Internet Freedom Program, are pleased to issue this open call for proposals (CFP) for a consultancy for Mapping and Making Available Evidence-Based Research for Internet Policies in Africa.

This consultancy will: (a) identify a preliminary scope of the initiative; (b) map available research; (c) create an online repository/directory of research; (d) lead the collaborative design of a strategy for the inclusion of private research by the partner organizations; (e) develop learning from existing research for the partner organizations; (f) lead the collaborative design of a strategy for encouraging the production of discrete pieces of needed research by the partner organizations; and, (g) in partnership with a communications expert chosen by the partner organizations, support the development of a communication strategy for effective use of discrete pieces of research in public policy settings.

This consultancy is intended to help the partner organizations to overcome the limited availability and accessibility of evidence-based research regarding internet policies in Africa, which, ultimately, will nurture public debate and due consideration by policy makers within the region.

Background

During 2017, Article 19 Eastern Africa, BudgIT, the Centre for Intellectual Property and Information Technology Law at Strathmore University (CIPIT), Co-Creation Hub, the Collaboration on International ICT Policy for East and Southern Africa (CIPESA), iHub, the Kenya ICT Action Network (KICTANet), and Paradigm Initiative initiated a process of collaboration and mutual strengthening.

One of the initiatives identified as a priority by the said organizations is the need to prioritize the availability and accessibility of evidence-based research regarding internet policies in and about Africa. Research contextualizing internet policies in Africa is limited and, for a variety of reasons (legal, technical, etc.), that research is not always publicly available or accessible. As a result, most public interest organizations lack the evidence that would nurture public debate and due consideration by policy makers within Africa.

Objectives

This open call for proposals is looking for a consultancy that will support the work of the said organizations in mapping and making available evidence-based research for internet policies in and about Africa. This would help the partner organizations to overcome the limited availability and accessibility of evidence-based research regarding internet policies in Africa, which, ultimately, will nurture public debate and due consideration by policy makers within the region.

This consultancy will:

(a) **Identify a preliminary scope of the initiative**. In order to achieve this purpose, the consultant will identify the needs and requirements of partner organizations in order to agree with them the most reasonable scope of mapping and collecting evidence-based research relevant for decision-making on internet policies in Sub-Saharan African countries. This would include both raw data and interpretation of such data, and qualitative and quantitative studies in any field that may be relevant to designing internet policies. Partners are willing to consider narrowing the field of focus so the priorities they choose leverage their combined areas of expertise and interest. Some examples include studies on telephone and internet access, relevant legal regimes, and the functioning of the internet market. Initially, the initiative would cover relevant research produced during the last five years.

(b) **Map available research.** The consultant will collect and catalog existing, available, and credible relevant research. This process would include categorizing research by subjects, timing, and geographic scope based on predefined criteria. Partner organizations are willing to collaborate with the consultant, allocate time and some resources for supporting the initiative, including quarterly reports by the consultant during the periodical meetings of partner organizations, as well as updates about their own research.

(c) **Create an online repository/directory of research.** As the consultancy makes progress identifying and mapping relevant research, content will be cataloged and made available online through an index, repository, directory or similar mechanism that is easily accessible to all involved organizations, if not to a broader audience. Through time, each organization would be able to contribute to the initiative, in a model similar to Wikipedia or Encyclopedia, with authorized users and public access.

(d) **Lead the collaborative design of a strategy for the inclusion of private research by partner organizations.** The partner organizations are conscious that some public interest research is not available for several reasons including

business confidentiality, intellectual property consideration, competitive edge, and others. Partner organizations agree on the need to create a strategy to encourage making accessible and available the collection of data and research that is **not** currently available. The consultant will lead the partner organizations in designing a joint strategy for said purpose.

(e) Develop learning from existing research for partner organizations. Partner organizations agreed that this initiative needs follow-ups that ensure learning about existing research in the region which would help them to incorporate evidence into their work, and raise awareness among the public and policymakers. These follow-ups may be achieved through individual actions, such as by posting on their own websites and social media, as well as adding value to the research and evidence by using infographics and other communications. A collective effort would be needed to analyze data, identify and learn about knowledge gaps, methods, and areas of attention. Some potential actions that the consultant should include are: developing a research track in upcoming regional events; planning a workshop to learn from research; developing a layered approach for other key stakeholders, such as journalists and other media practitioners, human rights activists, and academics; and, identifying research gaps that are relevant for advocacy on internet policies in Africa.

(f) Lead the collaborative design of a joint strategy for encouraging the production of discrete pieces of needed research by partner organizations. After identifying thematic gaps or areas that need to be addressed or filled related to future research, partner organizations will design a joint strategy for ensuring research is conducted in relevant areas in order to make progress on internet rights issues in Africa. Partner organizations will co-create a strategy to strengthen evidence-based research in Africa, and the consultant will lead that process.

(g) Support the development of a communications strategy for effective use of discrete pieces of research in public policy settings. In partnership with a communications expert, partner organizations will discuss the creation and utilization of a communication approach to leverage research in order to strengthen their capacities to use the research to develop narratives about each organization's efforts. The consultant will work closely with a communications expert in order to provide guidelines and learning to partner organizations in this process.

Application Requirements

Applications are welcome from individual researchers or research organizations. Applications from coalitions between NGOs and research institutes are also welcome, except from those organizations making this call. Preference will be given to applicants based in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The application should be written in English, be a maximum of six pages long, and should include the following information:

- **Description of proposed consultancy***:* Describe the consultancy, main envisioned processes, activities, and responsibilities, and clarify what would be the expected outcomes for each of them. Please do indicate where you will be based during this consultancy and how you envision to communicate and collaborate with the partner organizations.

- **Researchers' qualifications and track record***:* Describe academic background and other practical research qualifications and experience of individual researchers, their role on the project and how their skills and knowledge enable them to carry out the consultancy. The required fields of experience and qualifications include but are not limited to: ICT4D; Computer Science; Journalism/Mass communication; Informatics; Gender Mainstreaming; Development Studies; ICT legal frameworks and best practices; Internet Policy; and Technology, Human rights and Governance.

- **Proposed timeline:** Provide a timeline for the project, which should not exceed 12 months.

- **Budget:** Provide a budget (in U.S. dollars) describing the expenses of this consultancy. The budget must include applicable salaries and/or honorariums.

- **Copyright and Intellectual Property:** Copyright and any other intellectual property right on any outcome produced during the consultancy will belong to the principal, who will license it under a Creative Commons license, wherever that is possible.

Applications should be submitted via email to Alberto Cerda at Ford Foundation a.cerda@fordfoundation.org

Shortlisted applications will be communicated along with more detailed information regarding the requirements for a full proposal.

Application Timing

Process	Deadline
Publication of call for proposals:	March 5, 2018
Request for clarification by potential consultants:	March 20, 2018
Application submission deadline:	March 25, 2018
Notification of shortlisted applications:	March 28, 2018
Full proposal submission deadline:	April 14, 2018
Official announcement of results:	April 26, 2018
Conclusion of consultancy:	No later than May 31, 2019

Review

All applications received by the submission deadline and in compliance with the application requirements will be reviewed by a committee that includes professional staff from Article 19 Eastern Africa, BudgIT, the Centre for Intellectual Property and Information Technology Law at Strathmore University (CIPIT), Co-Creation Hub, the Collaboration on International ICT Policy for East and Southern Africa (CIPESA), iHub, the Kenya ICT Action Network (KICTANet), Paradigm Initiative, and the Ford Foundation.

This committee will shortlist and make the final decision based on the following criteria:
● Relevant and demonstrated experience including qualifications and previous work undertaken;
● Responsiveness to the objectives (knowledge and understanding of the requirements of the consultancy and deliverables
● Demonstration of innovation, including suggestions and/or improvements to the objectives
● Budget feasibility

No individual feedback will be provided on proposals that don't reach the shortlisted stage.

Contact

Request for clarification, please, send to Alberto Cerda, at a.cerda@fordfoundation.org, by March 20, 2018.