Terms of Reference (ToR)

Position: Market Research Consultant
Location: Western Kenya (Kisumu, Kakamega, Vihiga, Homabay, Migori)
Duration: 21 working days (July – August 2025)
Reporting to: Chief Operating Officer (COO)

1. Background

M-taka is a tech-enabled waste management and recycling social enterprise that uses mobile platforms, AI, and social incentives to enhance traceability, drive behavior change, and create dignified jobs in the waste sector. As part of its expansion, M-taka is piloting a county-level rollout in five counties in Western Kenya. To inform this process, a detailed market research exercise will be conducted to understand the landscape, identify entry points, and ensure the project's interventions are locally grounded and evidence-based.

2. Objective of the Assignment

The objective of this assignment is to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the waste ecosystem in Kisumu, Kakamega, Vihiga, Homabay, and Migori counties.

The consultant will:

- Assess the structure, actors, and operational dynamics within the county-level waste landscape
- Gather insights from waste actors—including informal collectors, agents, aggregators, and recyclers—on recycling behavior, pain points, and opportunities
- Identify current adoption levels, perceptions, and gaps around technology products used in the waste sector (e.g., digital platforms, mobile tools, inventory systems)
- Explore user needs and preferences regarding digital business management and waste tracking tools
- Analyze local policy frameworks and county-level support for circular economy initiatives, Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR), and solid waste management (SWM)

3. Scope of Work

The consultant will be expected to:

- Develop a detailed research plan, including methodology, tools, and stakeholder mapping
- Design survey tools and interview guides for households, SMEs, informal waste actors, and institutional stakeholders
- Conduct qualitative and quantitative data collection across the five counties
- Facilitate key informant interviews and focus group discussions with waste actors, government officials, and private sector stakeholders
- Analyze collected data and generate county-level insights and recommendations
- Facilitate validation sessions with internal teams and county partners
- Produce a final report with recommendations for product design, stakeholder engagement, and pilot strategy

4. Deliverables

Deliverable	Description	Timeline
Inception Report	Desk review, Methodology, tools, county mapping, and work plan	Within 5 working days of contract start
Field Data Collection	Surveys, interviews, and FGDs conducted in all 5 counties	By end of Week 3
Validation Sessions	Internal and external sessions to review key findings and integrate feedback	Week 4
Final Report	Consolidated market research report including county profiles, tech insights, policy briefs, and strategic recommendations	Week 4

Dissemination	Conduct a county level dissemination meeting to stakeholders on the findings and insights from the research	End of contract

5. Required Qualifications of Lead Consultant

- A degree in social sciences, public policy, environmental studies, market research, or related field (Master's preferred)
- At least 5 years of experience conducting field research and assessments in Kenya, preferably in the waste management or sustainability space
- Proven experience working with county governments and informal sector stakeholders
- Excellent data analysis and reporting skills
- Strong understanding of digital innovation and tech ecosystems in emerging markets
- Fluency in English and Kiswahili; knowledge of local dialects is an added advantage

6. Duration and Payment

The consultancy is expected to run for 21 working days between July and August 2025. Payments will be structured in three tranches based on the timely and satisfactory completion of deliverables.

7. Reporting and Supervision

The Consultant will report directly to the Chief Operating Officer (COO). The Consultant will be expected to provide weekly updates and participate in regular check-ins and progress review meetings with the M-taka team and relevant stakeholders.

8. Confidentiality and Intellectual Property

All data, reports, and materials produced under this consultancy will remain the intellectual property of M-taka. The Consultant shall treat all information received during the assignment as confidential and shall not disclose any such information to any third party without the written consent of M-taka.

9. Submission Guidelines

Interested applicants should submit:

1. A technical proposal outlining their workplan, approach, methodology, and understanding of the assignment
2. A financial proposal, inclusive of all costs and taxes
3. A CV and portfolio highlighting relevant experience
4. At least two references from recent and relevant assignments