

Contract Type: Website redesign and development assignment

Client: FSD Ethiopia

1. Background and Rationale

Established in 2022, FSD Ethiopia is an agency that aims to support the development of accessible, inclusive, and sustainable financial markets for economic growth and human development. Our role is to identify the underlying causes of financial system failures, facilitate market actors to address these constraints, and help build a functional and effective financial sector that generates economic gains for a wide cross-section of Ethiopian individuals and businesses. Our website serves as a critical platform for knowledge dissemination, stakeholder engagement, and institutional visibility. We are now seeking a full redesign and redevelopment of the website to create a modern, secure, user-focused platform that supports our brand and advances the implementation of FSD Ethiopia's communications strategy. The current website contains different pages, including publications, 2 project pages, blog posts, and assorted media (images and videos). Content migration will involve transferring this content to the new platform, with minor updates to text and formatting.

2. Overall Objective

To design, develop, and deploy a new, modern, secure, and responsive website for FSD Ethiopia using the existing domain for both desktop and mobile versions. The new website must deliver a superior user experience, enable the dissemination of research and learning, support interactive data presentation, facilitate job and procurement applications with an AI-powered automated initial screening tool, align with FSD Ethiopia's brand guidelines, comply with WCAG 2.1 Level AA accessibility standards, adhere to Ethiopia's Proclamation to Provide for Personal Data Protection (No. 1321/2024), and be resilient to cybersecurity threats. The website should target primary audiences (policymakers, donors, financial institutions, development partners) and secondary audiences (underserved communities, researchers, job and procurement applicants).

3. Specific Objectives

The selected firm will be responsible for the following:

3.1 Website Design and User Experience

- Design a clean, professional, gender responsive and accessible interface optimized for both desktop and mobile versions, aligned with FSD Ethiopia's brand guidelines (logos, fonts, colours, tone, and imagery).
- Ensure flexible page templates for various content types including blogs, publications, data dashboards, videos, project pages, and application forms for jobs and procurement, optimized for desktop and mobile displays.
- Deliver a site structure and visual hierarchy that supports FSD Ethiopia's communications strategy, including storytelling, stakeholder engagement, and visibility of key programmes and insights.
- Ensure compliance with WCAG 2.1 Level AA accessibility standards to support users with disabilities.

3.2 Development Platform & CMS

- Build the website on a secure, scalable open-source CMS (e.g., WordPress, Drupal, or equivalent).
- Ensure flexible page templates for various content types including blogs, publications, data dashboards, videos, and project pages.
- Provide a user-friendly backend interface for FSD Ethiopia staff with role-based access control.
- Support bilingual content management (English and Amharic), with FSD Ethiopia providing translated content and the contractor implementing a seamless toggle function.

3.3 Technical Specifications

- Languages: HTML5, CSS3, JavaScript, PHP (or other supported back-end languages).
- CMS: Modular CMS with plugin support and custom module development.
- Database: MySQL/PostgreSQL or equivalent.
- APIs: Integration with third-party APIs (e.g., data visualization, Mailchimp for newsletters, social media widgets for Twitter/X, LinkedIn).

- Analytics: Integration of Google Analytics 4 or Matomo for site traffic tracking and user behavior, with KPIs for user engagement (e.g., average session duration, page views) and application submission rates across desktop and mobile versions, ensuring analytics data handling complies with Ethiopia's Proclamation to Provide for Personal Data Protection (No. 1321/2024).
- SEO: Built-in search engine optimization tools and schema markup.
- Performance: Fast-loading pages (under 3 seconds on both desktop and mobile), lazy loading, and image compression tailored for mobile devices.
- Multilingual Support: Fully bilingual (English & Amharic) with toggle function and CMS support for managing updates in both languages.
- Testing: Conduct cross-browser testing (Chrome, Edge, Firefox, Opera and Safari) and mobile responsiveness testing across devices, in addition to user acceptance testing (UAT) with FSD Ethiopia staff.

3.4 Data Visualization and Integration

- Include a dynamic, filterable resource library for publications and media.
- Integrate tools for visualizing research and market data (interactive charts, infographics, maps) using D3.js, Chart.js, or equivalent.
- Support embedding or integration of live dashboards from platforms like Power BI or Tableau.

3.5 Security and Cyberattack Protection

- Implement robust security measures to safeguard the site against cyberattacks, including:
 - HTTPS with SSL certificate.
 - Web application firewall (WAF).
 - Regular security patches and plugin updates.
 - Two-factor authentication (2FA) for backend users.
 - CAPTCHA for form submissions.
 - Brute-force attack prevention and IP blacklisting.
 - Secure hosting configuration and regular vulnerability scanning.
- Conduct a penetration test and security audit before launch, including specific tests for compliance with Ethiopia's Data Protection Proclamation, with a detailed report provided.

3.6 Hosting, Maintenance, and Training

- Support secure migration of contents from the current site to the new platform, including a content audit to assess and optimize existing material.
- Provide hosting recommendations and initial setup on a secure, scalable hosting environment owned by FSD Ethiopia.
- Offer a maintenance plan for at least 6 months after launch, including:
 - 20 hours of monthly support.
 - 24-hour response time for critical issues.
 - Quarterly security updates and performance optimization.
- Train up to five FSD Ethiopia staff on content management, analytics, and minor technical updates, with training materials provided in English and Amharic. Ensure training includes gender-sensitive content management practices (e.g., equitable representation, inclusive language etc...)

3.7 Job and Procurement Application System

- Develop dedicated portals for job applications and procurement applications, accessible via clear navigation from the homepage.
- Implement an AI-powered automated initial screening tool to evaluate applications based on predefined criteria (e.g., qualifications, experience, compliance with procurement requirements), provided by FSD Ethiopia.
 - The AI tool should support keyword matching, resume parsing, and scoring based on customizable criteria.
 - Ensure the tool is integrated with the CMS for easy management by FSD Ethiopia staff.
 - Provide secure storage and processing of applicant data in compliance with data protection regulations (e.g., GDPR or equivalent local standards).
- Ensure compliance with Ethiopia's Proclamation to Personal Data Protection (No. 1321/2024), including:
 - Obtaining explicit consent from applicants for data collection and processing.
 - Implementing data minimization principles to collect only necessary data.
 - Providing applicants with access to their data and the right to rectification or deletion, as mandated by the proclamation.
 - Ensuring secure storage and processing of applicant data with encryption and access controls.

- Include user-friendly application forms with fields for uploading documents (e.g., CVs, cover letters, procurement bids) and bilingual support (English and Amharic).
- Enable automated email notifications to applicants upon submission and after initial screening (e.g., confirmation, next steps).
- Provide analytics on application submissions (e.g., number of applications, screening outcomes) integrated with Google Analytics 4 or Matomo, allowing FSD Ethiopia to track gender balance in job applications and procurement participation.

4. Brand Alignment and Strategic Communications

The website must:

- Comply with FSD Ethiopia's official brand guidelines, to be provided to the selected firm at project inception.
- Serve as a key tool in the implementation of the organisation's communications strategy, with features that support:
 - Thematic storytelling through dedicated project and impact story pages.
 - Programme visibility via highlighted sections for key initiatives.
 - Media engagement with embedded social media feeds (Twitter/X, LinkedIn).
 - Knowledge dissemination through a searchable resource library.
 - Stakeholder interaction via newsletter signup (integrated with Mailchimp), contact forms, and optional comment sections for blog posts.
- The contractor will work closely with FSD Ethiopia's communications team to ensure the final product reflects institutional priorities and effectively reaches target audiences.

5. Deliverables The selected firm will deliver:

1. Inception Report: Including project timeline, technical specifications, and risk mitigation plan addressing content migration challenges, cybersecurity vulnerabilities, and potential delays.
2. Wireframes and Prototypes: At least two high-fidelity design prototypes and a sample homepage mockup for review.
3. Fully Functional Website: Deployed on the existing domain, meeting all technical and accessibility requirements.
4. Technical Documentation and User Manual: In English covering CMS usage and maintenance.
5. Training Sessions and Materials: For up to 5 staff, including hands-on sessions and reference guides.
6. Maintenance Support: 6-month plan with security log/report and performance optimization updates.

6. Timeline

The expected duration of the assignment is 12 weeks from the date of contract signature to website go-live, with the following milestones:

- Weeks 1-2: Inception report, content audit, and wireframes.
- Weeks 3-4: Design prototypes and review.
- Weeks 5-8: Website development and content migration.
- Weeks 9-10: Testing (penetration, UAT, cross-browser, mobile responsiveness).
- Weeks 11-12: Staff training, final revisions, and launch.

7. Required Qualifications

The selected firm must demonstrate:

- At least five years of experience in website design and development, preferably for development sector organisations.
- Strong portfolio of interactive and data-rich websites aligned with client brand strategies.
- At least five years of experience in CMS development, cybersecurity best practices, and performance optimization.
- Ability to deliver multilingual websites and provide ongoing technical support.
- Experience working with clients in Africa or international development contexts is an advantage.

8. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on:

- Understanding of scope and technical proposal compliance with Ethiopia's Proclamation to Provide for Personal Data Protection (No. 1321/2024) (15%).
- Creativity and user experience in design portfolio, including sample homepage mockup (25%).
- Technical capacity in data visualization, security, and CMS implementation (20%).
- Track record in brand-aligned communication tools (15%).
- Project team qualifications (10%).
- Cost-effectiveness of the financial proposal (15%).

9. Submission Requirements

Interested firms are requested to submit the following documents as a single PDF file:

- Technical Proposal: Detailing understanding, methodology, timeline, and alignment with FSD Ethiopia's communications goals, including a content audit plan.
- Company Profile and Portfolio: With relevant examples of previous work and a sample homepage mockup for FSD Ethiopia.
- CVs of Key Personnel: Including team members with expertise in AI, application system development, data protection compliance, and responsive web design. This should not exceed five pages, if applicable. Bidders are required to provide CVs of proposed key personnel to demonstrate their qualifications and experience relevant to this assignment.
- Financial Proposal: In ETB or USD, inclusive of taxes
- Delivery Timeline: Aligned with the 12-week schedule and milestones.

10. Deadline and Contact

All proposals must be submitted electronically to bids@fsdethiopia.org by **October 16, 2026**, with the subject line: **"Proposal – Website Redesign for FSD Ethiopia."** Questions regarding the bid may be submitted in advance to the same email address by October 09, 2026, and will be responded to by October 10, 2026, at 10:00 AM EAT.