

company profile

Palette Consulting

KENYA

Bruce House | 11th Floor | North Wing | Standard Street
P. O. Box 10922 | 00100 GPO | Nairobi | Kenya
T.: +254 (0)20 2226580 | M.: +254 (0)707899845

UNITED KINGDOM

Flat 1 | 9 Bragbrooke Terrace | Hastings TN34 1TD | U. K.

SWEDEN

Rotemannavägen 10 | 145 57 | Norsborg
Stockholm | Sweden

info@paletteconsulting.co.ke
www.paletteconsulting.co.ke

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1 About us

Palette Consulting is a Kenyan-based consultancy firm, formed in 2013, specializing in project management advisory services for community based projects. Borne out of an idea among a group of individuals who were inspired to volunteer their professional skills in promoting positive change in their communities, it has grown steadily in strength and size over the years.

Today, our collective technical skills translate into our five corporate brands namely, strategy, projects, soft skills, finance and research, which, together, form the core of our services. Our primary areas of expertise include policy development; strategy development; project monitoring, reporting and evaluation; human resource development; change management; financial management; grant management; impact evaluation; and beneficiary research.

Our target clients are development agencies, international and national non-governmental organisations, community based organisations, governmental bodies and private enterprises. We believe that this group of organisations demands specialised and professional services tailored to their unique requirements. We aim to position ourselves as a 'partner of choice' by leveraging the latest information and communication technology for the benefit of our clients, thus making us uniquely placed to offer flexible approaches to undertaking assignments.

We draw our corporate identity from our slogan and logo. Our slogan "*Partnering for Positive Change*" captures our guiding spirit in every project that we manage while our logo, through its interlocking human forms, reflects our partnering approach with like-minded individuals with a view to broadening our contribution around the world.

2. Our vision, mission and objectives

At Palette Consulting, we recognise that there is a growing demand for independent, professional and quality technical advisory services by development agencies, international and national non-governmental organisations, community-based organisations, governmental bodies and private enterprises. We strongly believe that by partnering with like-minded organisations, we will broaden our contribution to positive development outcomes in Kenya, the region, and globally. We also recognize the important role played by women and youth in the overall development agenda, and we shall endeavour to ensure their participation in our work.

Vision

To contribute to making a positive change in communities through becoming a leading consulting firm for community-based projects in Kenya and in the region.

Mission

To support client organisations in achieving positive development outcomes for their community-based projects.

Objective

To provide professional and quality technical advisory services in project planning and management for community-based projects.

3 *Our team*

Palette Consulting's core team of project management specialists is comprised of technical experts, many of whom have experience spanning over 10 years in their respective fields of expertise, bringing together experience drawn from non-profit, public and private sectors to make us a formidable team.

The technical experts come from backgrounds where they have managed large projects, reviews and consultations in a variety of fields – such as disaster management, governance, health, water and sanitation – and have proven records of obtaining results for clients. Additionally, our rich and diverse portfolio of consultants equipped with skills relevant to the industry in which we serve affords us the opportunity to remain competitive as well as cutting edge.

4. *Our corporate social responsibility statement*

Palette Consulting's contribution to democratic principles is embedded in our long term strategy. As part of the strategy, we are committed to encouraging citizen participation by promoting the inclusion of all categories of the population in our projects. Further, we shall ensure that our service delivery model demonstrates gender equity and youth participation at all times. Our actions shall include gender and youth mainstreaming in programme and project planning, and designing of gender and youth conscious qualitative and quantitative monitoring and evaluation systems.

5. *Our core values*

Palette Consulting believes:

- Excellence is the hallmark in all of our business associations with suppliers, independent consultants and most importantly, our clients.
- Integrity and honesty guide all phases of the client-consultant relationship from the exploratory meeting to final delivery.
- Special expertise ensures our clients attain cost-effective, results-oriented solutions.
- The consultancy team is accountable for managing the clients' resources efficiently and delivering on their responsibilities.
- Collaboration and mutual respect is paramount in building and maintaining effective relationships with the clients' teams, as well as with external partners and supporters.

6. *Our brands*

Palette Consulting endeavours to benchmark its service delivery to best practices in the humanitarian, development, public and private sectors. Our services are structured around five brand areas namely, strategy, projects, soft skills, finance and research. We believe that this continuum represents the key domains of interest for the majority of our clients. Together, they form our core business lines.

The services can be organized as one integrated work package, or managed as independent work packages, each with its own set of deliverables, depending on the clients' specific requirements. All expressions of interest for the provision of project management technical advisory services by Palette Consulting are accompanied by the following minimum documentation and information:

- (i) Technical proposal including our understanding of the terms of reference, an implementation matrix, and a comprehensive and structured methodology for the work to be done;
- (ii) Detailed financial proposal (consultant fees, transport, accommodation, insurance, etc);
- (iii) Curriculum vitae of the consultant(s) with references of previous assignments.

6.1 Strategy

strategy

We recognise that strategy is at the core of the development of quality programmes and projects. Palette Consulting shall strive to bring our knowledge and expertise to bear in charting winning strategies with our clients. Whilst ensuring that we have a solid understanding of our clients' strategic vision and direction, we shall use tried and tested strategic planning techniques including Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats analysis; Porter's five force industry analysis; Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental and Legal analysis; and the balanced scorecard approach. Prior to embarking on a strategic planning process, we shall agree a plan, budget and timetable for the process with our client(s). We shall also prepare a concept note outlining the following:

- The key questions to be considered as part of the strategic thinking – What are the main risks and vulnerabilities that the organisation will face, what are the other trends that will impact on its work e.g. demographic changes, health and disaster trends, economy, politics.
- The methodologies to be used – Analysis of the background information, conducting a rapid assessment to define gap areas and areas where the organisation is strong, facilitation of a visioning exercise with the organisation.
- The stakeholders to be involved – In determining the key groups to be consulted, Palette Consulting's team shall consider all stakeholders who have an impact on the organisation directly or indirectly. The team shall encourage a diversity of participants by gender, class, ethnic group, age, disability, etc to enrich the analyses and strategic solutions sought for more effective programming.

6.2 Projects

projects

Palette Consulting employs project cycle management and the results-based framework methodologies in its approach to programme and project management, in line with global industry standards. Further, Palette Consulting strives to (i) ensure that principles of quality and accountability are integrated into the overall planning, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), and management of programmes and projects; (ii) support the building of local capacity on critical planning, M&E, quality and accountability skills to ensure the development and sustainability of robust, practical project management systems; and (iii) ensure learning is embedded throughout the project management cycle. Additionally, we shall do the following:

- Provide technical advice on conducting situation analyses, programme and project design, operations planning, implementation, monitoring & evaluation, and project capitalization.

- Coordinate the development of guidance and tools for programme and project management including project inception reports, annual work plans, detailed resource and result frameworks, and monitoring and evaluation plans for the project period.
- Leverage information technology (IT) expertise (or engage with the clients' information technology specialist) to maximize the benefits of deploying IT in programme and project management.
- Facilitate the development and implementation of methods that ensure transparency and accountability to beneficiaries, notably through the participation of beneficiaries (in designing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating programmes and projects) and instituting feedback and complaint mechanisms.

6.3 Soft skills



We have positioned the soft skills component of Palette Consulting's services as that of providing advice on the utilization and management of human resources based on a thorough understanding and in-depth analysis of clients' programmes and projects. In other words, we

interrogate the *status quo* and seek to determine whether the existing human resource is optimally placed to support the achievement of the overall goal(s) of the programme or project.

Some key questions to investigate are (a) what skill sets are required, (b) who can provide the skills required, (c) how the skills are to be provided, and (d) how the skills resonate with the achievement of the overall goal(s) of the programme or project.

Once this has been established, the process is followed by designing of performance management plans that are easy-to-use, relevant and tailored for humanitarian programming. Such plans will include:

- annual and monthly work plans;
- performance reviews;
- monthly programme reports from all staff;
- training participation and output, target tracking systems including participant database;
- feedback mechanisms from participants.

6.4 Finance



Financial management is an integral part of project management. At Palette Consulting, we have broken down financial management into the five most common financial tasks as practiced within the humanitarian programming context, namely, planning and budgeting; implementing;

monitoring; reviewing and revising; and reporting.

- Planning and budgeting – setting the objectives and deciding what this will mean in terms of income and expenditure, within the overall strategies of the organisation. Plans and budgets need to be realistic in terms of what will actually be received (income) and in terms of what can actually be implemented (expenditure). Developing realistic plans and budgets improves organisational credibility and therefore donor confidence. This in turn, facilitates marketing, thereby, increasing the likelihood of receiving contributions to fund projects.

- Implementing – ensuring that sufficient financial resources exist for expenditure to progress as per agreed plan;
- Monitoring – measuring actual income and expenditures against the planned amounts. Monthly statements identify the differences between budgeted and actual figures. Any corrective action is taken on the basis of these statements. Good monitoring will improve project implementation in terms of realization of project objectives and should prevent deficits;
- Reviewing and revising – evaluating, through a general review, how closely objectives have been achieved and identifying new parameters for the following period. When differences between budgeted and actual figures are significant, the budgets might need to be revised, but only if the needs or amounts have changed;
- Reporting – expenditure will be reported to donors against the budget, which is drawn from the plan and budget established during the planning process. Donor confidence will be increased with sound reporting against budget, hence the need for realistic plans and budgets.

6.5 Research



At Palette Consulting, we specialise in two types of research, namely impact evaluation and beneficiary research aimed at assessing interventions from three key dimensions: (i) the relevance of interventions within the operating context, (ii) the effectiveness and the cost-efficiency of the implementing organisation's and partners' actions, and (iii) the sustainability of the interventions in relation to the resources and means employed.

Through a consultative process involving all stakeholders of the intervention, our consultants will ensure that the dimensions mentioned above are studied during the assessment, and a final report delivered highlighting the following elements:

- Output indicators: for each objective, we shall assess if the targets were reached by the implementing organisation and its partners, referring to the agreed logical framework output indicators.
- Relevance and appropriateness: for each objective, we shall assess if the action matched the beneficiary needs, if it was coherent with the operating context and policy, and with the implementing organisation's and partners' specificities in terms of organisation and expertise.
- Effectiveness: for each objective, we shall assess if the activities contributed to improving the lives of beneficiaries.
- Project management: the evaluation will also assess the overall management of the intervention and the model within which it was delivered, including relations between the partners, differences in approach between partners, and the degree of consistency in implementation and monitoring.
- Efficiency: for each objective, we shall assess the results of the action according to the means of the implementing organisation and partners involved in terms of human resources, budget and support costs.
- Sustainability: for each objective, we shall assess if the actions of the intervention contributed to finding mid-term solutions for the people reached.
- Orienting future development of the intervention: we shall make recommendations for increasing the intervention's efficacy and relevance.

- Risks and assumptions: we shall undertake all our research taking into consideration the risks and assumptions mentioned in the logical framework while assessing the outputs, the relevance, the effectiveness, the efficiency and sustainability for each objective of the intervention(s).

