**Script**

**Project: Enabling Affordable Rural Internet with Dynamic Spectrum Management and Software Defined Radio**

**First slide**

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is an indispensable tool for socio-economic development.

However, the main challenges towards universal access are infrastructure and affordability; hence, the University of Strathclyde, embarked on a 3-year project to research on regulatory frameworks and technologies that can facilitate affordable internet access.

This is funded by UK’s Engineering and Physical Science Research Council. In Malawi the partners are Chancellor College and C3. Just two weeks ago, the regulator, Malawi Communications Regulatory Authority (MACRA), officially joined the project.

**Second Slide**

Malawi has made progress in installing a national optical fibre backbone that connects district centres.

However, it is not economical to connect subscribers in the rural areas with optical fibre cables mainly because of low population density and low household income. Additionally, mobile network operators like TNM can only extend their mobile broadband service to an area if it makes business sense to do so.

This project focuses on a technology called “TV White Space Communication”, which simply means exploiting dynamic access to vacant channels in the TV band to provide wireless broadband internet. Although this technology has pros and cons, it could make a tangible difference by making it easier and cheaper to connect to some areas because:

1. Signals in this band are energy efficient and have good propagation characteristics over rolling hills and through thick forests,
2. It requires much lower capital and operating expenditure than 4G network.

**Third Slide**

On one hand, this project is expected to contribute towards Key Priority Area number 3 of the MGDS III which is ICT Infrastructure. On the other hand, it is also a fact that ICT service is an enabling technology for achieving efficiency and effectiveness in delivery of programmes in all the five key priority areas.