

## **Sierra Leone Financial Inclusion Project (SLFIP)**

*(IDA Project No.: P166601)*

**Consulting Services:** A consultant to conduct an assessment of the digital payment access point.

SL-MOFED-201696-CS-INDV

**(Date of Issue: 11<sup>th</sup> November, 2020)**

### **REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST**

#### **1. BACKGROUND**

The Government of Sierra Leone has received a loan of USD\$12M from IDA/World Bank to implement the Sierra Leone Financial Inclusion Project. The Project has a development objective to increase the interoperability of digital payments and access to financial services. The Project is an Investment Project Financing (IPF) and comprised of three components. Component 1 – Ensuring interoperability of digital payments; finances the hardware, software, and consulting services required to implement a switch successfully. Component 2 – Ensuring the viability of the payments system through increasing usage thereof by financing access points for the switch, including Point of Sale (POS) terminals, mobile wallets, and government payments. The component has a particular emphasis on increasing access in areas of the country with particularly low levels of financial inclusion, and in particular, rural areas. The component also supports other barriers to the usage of the payments system, including legal and regulatory barriers and financial awareness. Component 3 – Project Implementation Support; finances a project coordinator and oversight mechanisms for the project to ensure private sector stakeholder involvement.

In particular, component 2 aims to support linkages to the country's payment systems with a focus on the forthcoming national retail payment switch by supporting the development of digital payments access points in Freetown. In particular, the assessment will focus on digital payments and associated accounts which facilitate digital payments, including POS terminals, NFC and QR code-based transactions, cards, and mobile money-based transactions and accounts. The study will focus on the retail and services payment landscape, including mobile-based service providers such as public transport drivers, those in the fishing industry, and traders/vendors. The lessons learned can be leveraged for other urban areas, which could be supported by additional investments from government, other donors, and the private sector. The assessment will look at the existing landscape in Freetown due to limited project resources and it will complement a similar effort being undertaken by the project to support rural linkages to the country's payment systems.

#### **2. GOAL AND OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSIGNMENT**

The main objective of the assignment is to engage the services of a consultant to conduct a comprehensive technical, financial, and data-driven field analysis on the challenges and solutions to increasing digital payments in the retail and services sectors.

### 3. SCOPE OF WORK

Specifically, the assessment will examine the current array of digital access points and payments used, associated fees, client perception/use thereof, and electricity and network challenges thereto, in Freetown. The assessment will also examine: (i) private sector salary payments, transportation services, private sector bill payments, and remittances (both domestic and international); (ii) the current pain points and barriers to switch to digital payments; and (iii) the opportunities for new products and services possible with the installation of the national retail payment switch. Given the assessment, the consultant or firm will provide three or four concrete and costed solutions (each with a budget of \$700,000 dollars) to facilitate the increased uptake and usage of digital payments in Freetown.

### 4. METHODOLOGY AND APPROACH

In order to conduct the assessment, the consultant will be expected to:

- Carry out desk research which is driven by rigorous data and financial analysis
- Carry out field research with retailers, service providers, and end users (customers/beneficiaries)
- Hold consultations with potential project beneficiaries, including financial institutions, DFS providers, and government ministries, among others
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### 5. DURATION NATURE OF APPOINTMENT

The assessment is expected to be completed within three months of contract signing.

### 6. DELIVERABLES

Assessment report with three or four concrete and costed solutions (each with a budget of \$700,000 dollars) to facilitate the increased uptake and usage of digital payments in Freetown.

### 7. QUALIFICATION AND EXPERIENCE

The consultant will be recruited on a competitive basis and in accordance with the World Bank procurement guidelines. They should possess the following qualification and experience:

- A minimum of a master's degree or equivalent;
- Evidence of conducting at least two other such similar digital payment assessments and/or digital payments project development, successfully
- The consultant will have at least 7 years' experience working with digital payments
- Good oral and written English communication skills in substantive and technical areas
- Strong interpersonal and analytical skills

### 8. SUPPORT FROM THE CLIENT

BSL will provide office space (if needed) for the work of the consultant and will also be given access to the facilities of FSDP of the BSL. BSL will assist the consultant in her/his



consultations with relevant agencies and will ensure that the consultant has access to all information as may be legally allowed for the performance of her/his services. The consultant will report directly to the Project Coordinator, but overall management will rest with the FSDP Senior Manager.

#### Selection Criteria

The short listing criteria are:

1. Individual Consultant's experience relevant to the Assignment
2. Competency/Qualification of the Individual Consultant relevant to the Assignment

This REoI will lead to the preparation of Short list of Consultants

Consultants will be selected in accordance with the procedures set out in the World Bank's Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants by World Bank Borrowers (July 2016, Revised November 2017)

#### Mode of Application

All applications in writing should be accompanied by up-to-date Curriculum Vitae and supporting documents (Note: do not send originals) with the names and addresses of three referees, one of which should be the last or current employer and addressed to:

Team Lead  
Project Fiduciary Management Unit (PFMU)  
Ministry of Finance  
Africanus House, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
13A Howe Street  
Freetown, Sierra Leone

Or

By E-mail: application should be sent as an attachment (including all supporting documents) to: [pfm2018@gmail.com](mailto:pfm2018@gmail.com) cc: [sandelo185@gmail.com](mailto:sandelo185@gmail.com)

Please clearly indicate on the envelope (in the case of hard copy application) or in the email subject heading and attachment (in the case of electronic applications) the post for which application is made.

**QUALIFIED WOMEN ARE STRONGLY ENCOURAGED TO APPLY.**


#### Closing Date:

The Closing Date and time for receipt of applications is 25<sup>th</sup> November, 2020 at 4:00 pm GMT.

Only short-listed candidates will be contacted.

Signed -----

Dated -----

  
10/11/2020