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| **Project/Consultancy Title** | **Facilitate international exposure visit & training for Siinqee Bank managment on digital financial services (DFS** |

**Background:**

Access to formal financial services in Ethiopia lags far behind neighboring countries such as Kenya and Uganda. In the lowlands of Ethiopia financial inclusion is below the national average, and this is a key driver of vulnerability and poverty, as it contributes to low rates of savings, limited investment in agricultural productivity or diversified livelihoods, and underdeveloped agricultural value chains that offer limited livelihood opportunities for vulnerable rural households. In the lowlands the vast geographies and dispersed populations means physical branch services struggle to reach a large portion of rural populations, and digital financial services are currently limited to mobile money services that do not adequately meet the needs of households to save and access credit.

Through RAISE-DFS project, Mercy Corps will catalyze a transformation in digital financial services in the lowlands of Ethiopia. The central methodology underpinning the RAISE-DFS project will be a Market Systems Development (MSD) approach. This means that Mercy Corps’ role will be as a facilitator, focusing on catalyzing sustainable and systemic change in the operations and business practices of Financial Institutions (FIs) that result in the delivery of improved products and services for vulnerable populations and in particular women. By using an MSD approach, Mercy Corps will ensure that these changes in business practices will be owned and driven by the FIs themselves, including a substantial financial investment using their own capital, so that the new products and services will continue to be provided by the FIs after RAISE-DFS ends.

**Outcomes of RAISE DFS project:**

1. Financial institutions (FIs) develop the systems and capacities to deliver inclusive and resilient sharia-compliant and digital financial services
2. Rural HHs and market actors in agricultural value chains use appropriate and affordable credit and savings products and services
3. Rural HHs have the means, skills, and confidence to access, use and benefit from DFS and Sharia-compliant services

**Purpose / Project Description:**

The overall objective of the assignment is to facilitate international exposure visit & training for Siinqee Bank managment on digital financial services best practices in countries which have robust DFS industry preferably in Kenya. The Siinqee Bank leadership will have an international practical experience and knowledge on DFS will motivate them to bring the experience to their institution and expand DFS products and services including and mobile money.

**Objectives of the assignment:**

The overall objective of the assignment is to facilitate training and international exposure visit on DFS to enhance practical experiences of Siinqee Bank management. **The training & exposure visit participants are twelve persons**.

**Activities of the TA assignment:**

* Identify suitable country with robust DFS experience. It is preferred the selected country possess similar economic and social context.
* Identify and establish relationship with financial institutions, mobile money service providers and fintech companies in the host country. Arrange institutions and places to visit, develop schedules and experience sharing areas.
* In collaboration with the host financial institutions/mobile money service providers select and arrange DFS experts to provide training and arranging discussions and meetings with management of respective banks.
* There should be **at least renowned** **3 financial institutions/ mobile money** **operators** for the participants to visit. **The venue of the visits should be branch, agent and preferably head quarter. If the visit is in Kenya, we prefer Equity Bank, KCB, MPessa and Musoni Microfinance.**
* Conduct training need assesment, identify relevant DFS training topics including digital transformation, agent network management, product design and customization, and digital credit.
* Arrange accommodation and land travel in the host country.
* Develop detailed exposure visit & training schedules specific activties for all training days.
* Provide training materials, presentations, and training certificate upon completion of the visit/training.

**Deliverables**: training need assesment, training outline and exposure visit plan, raining and exposure visit report; and facilitate development of action plan by participants on the desired outcomes **-** what changes do we want to see in the participants.

**Timeframe / Schedule:** The exposure visit/training is expected to be conducted in end of December 2022. The exposure visit/training should be a **minimum of 3 and maximum of 5 working days to enable participants to have adequate time for training and experience sharing sessions.**

**Overview of Siinqee Bank**

Siinqee Bank is the transformation of Oromia Credit and Saving Share Company (OCSSCO) which had served being as microfinance institution since August 4/1997. The transformation process was started on March 16/2021 based on the NBE Directive No. SBB/74/2020 to relicense the eligible MFIs of the country as a bank and the decision of the General Assembly passed to transform OCSSCO to a bank. Siinqee Bank had obtained license from National Bank of Ethiopia on October 8, 2021, to carry out both the microfinance activities and banking business. Siinqee Bank is the first relicensed Microfinance Institution in the country by fulfilling the requirement set by National Bank of Ethiopia.

Siinqee Bank has subscribed capital of Birr 15 billion and the paid-up capital of Birr 7 billion. The total assets of the bank reached ETB 21.1 billion. Siinqee bank has over 1 million borrowers with outstanding loan portfolio of ETB 16.6 billion as of June 30, 2022.

The Bank’s total deposit balance is ETB 10.27 billion, serving 5.1 million total number of depositors in 406 branches.

**Consultant Profile**

* Demonstrated experience in digital transformation strategy development for financial institutions, strategic and business planning, and financial product development required.
* Solid experience and knowledge with best practices of digitalized financial systems and core-banking systems.
* Robust is experienced in project management, development, and facilitation of planning sessions with senior leaders, directors, and management. Prior experience in arranging international exposure/training visits on DFS is preferred.
* Working knowledge of Ethiopian and East African microfinance and banking sector.

**Instructions for the Technical and Financial Proposal**

Technical and Financial Proposal Standard Forms shall be used for the preparation of the Proposal according to the instructions provided in the bidding documents of the Request for Proposal (RFP).

The potential TA Operator should prepare a budget based on the proposed methodology and resources required for the assignment. It shall indicate the full fees requested together with per diems and transport cost. The USD is the currency to be used in the financial proposal and the currency in which the contract will be paid.

**The Consultant(s) will report to:**

Tamrat Abera, RAISE-DFS Program Manager, Mercy Corps

Needs and deliverables may change throughout the course of the TA. It is expected that the consultant be able to adjust as needed in coordination with the RAISE- DFS program team.

All deliverables must be approved by

Edwin Kuria, Mercy Corps Director of Programs

to be considered final.

**Criteria for Selection**

Qualified Individual Consultants are expected to submit both Technical and Financial Proposals. Consultants will be evaluated based on Cumulative Analysis as per the following scenario.

1. **Technical Criteria Weight is 70%**
* Understanding the scope of work and comprehensiveness of the methodology/approach; and the workplan (20%)
* Digital financial service (DFS) consultancy or strategy formulation experience (30%).
* Context understanding, and prior experience of similar assignments related DFS trainings/exposure visit (20%)
1. **Financial Criteria Weight is 30%**

**Tender details:**

The consultant or firm should submit a proposal including the proposed methodology and approach, relevant experience and references and financial proposal. The consultant(s) should propose the number of days required for each of the deliverables in these Terms of Reference.

Eligible companies/firms should submit the following:

* Statement of interest, proposed methodology and work plan.
* Copies of renewed business registration certificates.
* Financial proposal with breakdown of costs (including all related costs) in USD mentioning the terms of payment.
* Technical and financial proposal separately should be sent via electronic copy to et-tender-questions@mercycorps.org
* The applicant must score 45% (out of 70%) for technical evaluation to be eligible for financial evaluation.
* Failure to comply with any of the conditions indicated above will result in automatic rejection.
* The application deadline is 9th December 2022 at 17.00 East Africa Time and proposals sent after this date may not be considered.
* Mercy Corps reserves the right to reject the bid fully or partially.