

MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS



REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

**SIERRA LEONE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION PROJECT
IDA-E1130-SL**

Terms of Reference

For

Comprehensive study to assess the supply and demand of digital skills and to evaluate the potential of the gig economy to provide employment opportunities to youth, women, and people with disabilities in Sierra Leone

Procurement Number: SL-MOFED-367854-CS-QCBS

March 2024

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Comprehensive study to assess the supply and demand of digital skills and to evaluate the potential of the gig economy to provide employment opportunities to youth, women, and people with disabilities in Sierra Leone

I. Introduction

The Government of Sierra Leone (GoSL) has committed to transforming its economy based on a more inclusive and human-centric digital growth and development approach. A high-level vision for the digital economy is articulated in the new National Digital Development Policy (NDDP), which was approved by the Cabinet in December 2021 setting the GoSL's vision to transform Sierra Leone into an inclusive digital economy and society and to leverage digital technology to support the GoSL to deliver on its national development plan effectively and efficiently. The Sierra Leone Digital Transformation Project (SLDTP) aims to expand access to broadband internet, increase digital skills and improve government capacity to deliver public services digitally. The project will support the development of a strong enabling environment for the nation's digital transformation and digital development agenda as articulated in the National Digital Development Strategy.

II. Project Description

The Sierra Leone Digital Transformation Project (SLDTP) is a five-year International Development Association (IDA)-funded project supported with a US\$50 million grant. The project's main implementing agency is the Ministry of Communication, Technology and Innovation (MoCTI). The proposed Project Development Objective (PDO) is to expand access to broadband internet, enhance digital skills and improve government capacity to deliver public services digitally.

The SLDTP proposes four integrated and mutually reinforcing components, with a fifth component dedicated to contingent response to future emergencies (*Contingent Emergency Response Component, CERC*).

- Component 1 – Expanding Digital Access and Increasing Resilience of the Digital Environment;
- Component 2 – Digital Skills Development and Innovation
- Component 3 - Laying Key Foundations for Digital Government Services and Systems
- Component 4 – Project Management and Implementation Support; and
- Component 5 - Contingency Emergency Response Component (CERC).

The proposed activities integrated into Components 1, 2, and 3 are designed to support the Government's aspirations for bringing universal access to the internet for its citizens, developing

digital skills to bridge the digital divide, and to modernizing public service delivery through the adoption of digital solutions by enhancing the service delivery infrastructure and platforms of the government as well as to ensure continuity of public services in times of crisis.

The Project is being implemented by a Project Coordination Unit (PCU) in the Ministry of Communication, Technology and Innovation (MoCTI) which is the line ministry in charge of driving the government's digital transformation strategic vision and promoting its digital government agenda. The Government recognises that the growth of the digital economy in Sierra Leone would require a digitally competent workforce that can help strengthen the foundational pillars of a digital transformation. Moreover, such a digitally competent workforce, comprising a large majority with basic digital skills and a critical mass of skilled personnel and advanced specialists, can help extend the application of digital tools and processes in a wide variety of sectors, such as informal service, agriculture, energy, transportation, health, and education, to name a few.

In the past, low digital literacy rates, combined with limited opportunities to develop digital skills, mean that many Sierra Leoneans cannot reap the benefits of the digital economy. For youth in Sierra Leone to take advantage of opportunities offered by the digital economy, they must develop foundational to advanced digital skills. Yet, few primary and secondary schools across Sierra Leone teach computer skills or have computer labs, and most lack reliable internet and the electricity infrastructure for ICT-based instruction to be feasible. Recent interventions from both the public and private sector have seen the establishment of digital learning hubs in strategic locations of the country, which aim at serving communities and students alike. While these hubs provide access to internet services and e-learning resources, it falls short of meeting the relatively high demands of users.

As such digital illiteracy among youth and persons with disability (PWDs) remains low. Ongoing World Bank initiatives, including the World Bank-financed Sierra Leone Skills Development Project (P163723), seek to develop a digital skills training curriculum in primary, secondary, and tertiary schools. However, inadequate infrastructure, high levels of dropout at the secondary level, as well as high rates of early marriage and early pregnancy, mean that many youths, particularly girls, young women and PWD's, are excluded from this training opportunity. Access to digital skills training is limited outside formal education as well, particularly for women, and PWDs. Social norms in Sierra Leone prioritize women's household work, creating significant time constraints that often prevent women's continued education and training. As a result, men are more likely than women to participate in vocational training (7 percent versus 4 percent), as well as urban residents (10 percent) compared to rural residents (3 percent).¹

New digital skills programs are seeking to close the digital skills literacy gap, with many targeting the most underserved and marginalized communities. However, these initiatives are largely supply-driven, with employers having little or no input into the design of digital skills training curricula, leading to a disconnect between digital skills training and employment opportunities.² Trainings are often held in locations that women find either unsafe or inappropriate

¹ World Bank. 2018. *Sierra Leone Skills Development Project (P163723): Project Appraisal Document*. Washington, DC: World Bank Group.

² World Bank. 2020. [Digital Economy Diagnostic: Sierra Leone](#). Washington, DC: World Bank Group.

to visit, and women with less disposable income or who are in remote areas often cannot afford commuting costs. Further, many training centers lack the physical infrastructure and Assistive Technology (AT) equipment needed to be accessible for people with disabilities. Improving access to high quality digital skills programs can be catalytic in increasing productivity, earnings, and financial independence for youth, women, and people with disabilities.

Employment opportunities offered through gig platforms can play a key role in bringing youth, women, and PWDs into the digital economy. For example, digital platforms are enabling students to pursue online learning, entrepreneurs to engage in e-commerce, and workers to earn income through online freelancing and microwork. Jobs involving remote, online, and/or flexible work through digital gig platforms have helped youth in marginalized communities to overcome mobility constraints, challenge restrictive norms, and generate income. In order to capitalize on this potential, young workers must have knowledge, skills, and capacity to use digital technologies.

The Project aims to tackle Sierra Leone’s digital literacy gap by offering digital skills training for youth, women, and persons with disabilities (PWDs) to enable them to improve their livelihoods and address challenges in their communities. Training activities will include a Digital Literacy Training Scheme targeting youth outside of the formal education system, with a focus on women and PWDs, as well as an Innovation Series consisting of events for youth. The curricula for these activities will be informed by comprehensive market and feasibility studies, as described below.

III. Objectives

The general objective of this activity is to undertake a Comprehensive study to assess the supply and demand of digital skills and to evaluate the potential of the gig economy to provide employment opportunities to youth, women, and people with disabilities in Sierra Leone.

Specifically, the assignment focuses on two key areas:

1. Comprehensive study to assess the supply and demand of digital skills.
 - Conduct a market study to assess available skills in the target areas to determine in-demand skills;
 - Conduct a detailed assessment of the local digital ecosystem to determine the capacity of key stakeholders to deliver basic, intermediate, and advanced digital skills training to youth beneficiaries.
 - Identify bottlenecks in the digital jobs value chain to inform the design of an appropriate demand driven training curriculum targeting youth who are outside of the formal education system.
2. Feasibility assessment for the potential of the “gig” economy to provide youth with access to new and/or supplemental income opportunities.
 - Evaluate Sierra Leone’s potential comparative advantage in the global gig economy and identify relevant industries, skills, and types of online work for investment.
 - Provide policy and programmatic recommendations to enable youth, women, and persons with disabilities to access opportunities in the digital gig economy.

- Develop a strategic roadmap for employment promotion and job creation in Sierra Leone by leveraging global and regional gig work platforms.

IV. Scope of Assignment

The Project seeks an experienced consultant firm (“Consultant”) to conduct the following activities:

Activity 1: Digital Skills Market Study

The Consultant will lead a comprehensive assessment of the digital skills ecosystem in Sierra Leone. As part of the market study, the Consultant will be expected to: assess available skills in the specified target areas; determine in-demand skills in the specified target areas; identify bottlenecks in the digital jobs value chain;³ and inform the design of an appropriate demand-driven training curriculum targeting youth who are outside of the formal education system. The consultancy will also include a detailed assessment of the local digital ecosystem to determine the capacity of key stakeholders to deliver basic, intermediate, and advanced digital skills training to youth beneficiaries. Findings and recommendations will be used to inform the design and implementation of a digital literacy training scheme under Component 2 of the Project.

The Consultant will be required to:

1. Develop a detailed framework to conduct the digital skills market study in the Sierra Leone context.
 - a. A thorough assessment framework will build on existing assessment and reports as well as consider differences in skill levels across socioeconomic factors including but not limited to age, gender, income level, social class, disability status, and geography.
 - b. The market study should be rooted in internationally recognized frameworks on digital literacy skills (e.g., European Union’s Digital Competence Framework 2.1, UNESCO Digital Literacy Global Framework) to understand digital skills requirements across occupations in many sectors⁴ with added focus on services and agribusiness.
 - c. A complementary mixed-method research strategy should combine qualitative and quantitative research methods. The Consultant will be expected to conduct surveys, focus groups, and semi-structured interviews, as needed.
2. Assess the current and forecasted demand for digital skills in Sierra Leone for the short and medium term, by:

³ “Digital jobs” include work in the ICT industry, work in any industry that is increasingly digitized (accounting, cashiers), work that is performed online through digital platforms (microwork, freelancing), and traditional jobs where workers can connect with potential customers through digital platforms (e-commerce, on-demand services).

⁴ World Bank. 2021. [Digital Skills: The Why, The What, and The How](#). Washington, DC: World Bank Group.

- a. Providing a market structure which maps business size, sector, location, and type of digital skills in demand with discrete foci on national, regional and international opportunities.
 - b. Considering a range of businesses, including but not limited to: digital entrepreneurs and startups; large private sector firms driving national and regional digital transformation; and regional and international online gig job platforms.
 - c. Reporting existing high-growth sectors and emerging sectors in Sierra Leone with good opportunities for job creation through digital skills development.
 - d. Identifying specific qualifications or credentials cited by employers as an accepted industry norm for identified occupations and sectors.
 - e. Conducting a forecast analysis of future digital skills demand trends, clearly identifying market drivers for each scenario.
3. Determine the current level of supply for digital Skills in Sierra Leone and assess the gap between digital skills supply and demand, by:
 - a. Building on existing reports and assessments and mapping relevant stakeholders delivering digital skills training in Sierra Leone, including but not limited to: government agencies and institutions; civil society organizations (CSOs); non-governmental organizations (NGOs); faith-based organizations; digital innovation centers and technology hubs; technical and vocational education and training (TVET) institutions; universities and academic institutions; and private sector companies.
 - b. Assessing stakeholder capacity to meet current and forecasted demand for digital skills through program features including but not limited to: training modality; curriculum development, delivery, and assessment; qualification and/or credential provision; sector and/or business representation; workplace training support; training of trainers; job placement and employment support services; mentorship; lifelong learning and continuing professional development; and quality control and regulation.
 - c. Determining digital skills training stakeholders successfully bridging barriers for access to digital skills training by vulnerable groups, including out-of-school youth, women, and people with disabilities.

Activity 2: Gig Economy Feasibility Study

The Consultant will conduct a feasibility study to assess the potential of the gig economy to provide employment opportunities to youth in Sierra Leone.⁵ As part of the feasibility study, the Consultant will be expected to: evaluate Sierra Leone’s potential comparative advantage in the global gig economy; consider relevant industries, skills, and types of online work to be leveraged based on the target demographic; identify existing policy and regulatory frameworks which may constrain online gig work; provide recommendations for policies and/or regulations to facilitate participation in the global gig economy; identify public and private initiatives that can be leveraged within a gig work program; explore opportunities for partnerships with regional and global gig

⁵ In the digital gig economy, organizations contract with remote independent workers for short-term engagements through online platforms.

work platforms⁶ to link youth with employment opportunities; and assess supply and demand challenges, and recommend strategies for stimulating future demand for gig work. The final report will serve as a strategic roadmap for employment promotion and job creation in Sierra Leone by leveraging global gig work platforms. Findings and recommendations will be used to inform the design and implementation of a digital literacy training scheme under Component 2 of the Project.

The Consultant will be required to:

1. Develop a detailed framework to conduct the gig economy feasibility study in the Sierra Leone context.
 - a. A thorough assessment framework will define the characteristics of global and regional gig work, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa. This includes providing examples of web-based platforms and/or initiatives operating in contexts similar to Sierra Leone.
 - b. Identify the most crucial/relevant policy and regulatory bottlenecks for the gig economy, specifically identifying barriers to facilitating the emergence of the local gig economy.
 - c. A complementary mixed-method research strategy should combine qualitative and quantitative research methods. The Consultant will be expected to conduct surveys, focus groups, and semi-structured interviews, as needed.

2. Recommend a comprehensive strategy for connecting youth, women, and persons with disabilities in Sierra Leone to employment opportunities in the global gig economy. To do so, the Consultant should seek to answer several high-level research questions:
 - a. *Trends in Developing Countries:* How has the digital gig economy evolved in developing countries? What are the most in-demand skills and industries globally? What conditions are necessary for Sierra Leone to capitalize on opportunities in the digital gig economy?
 - b. *Comparative Advantage:* What is Sierra Leone’s potential comparative advantage in the global gig economy? What skills, industries, and/or types of online work should be targeted to maximize Sierra Leone’s comparative advantage?
 - c. *Inclusion of Vulnerable Groups:* How can vulnerable communities traditionally excluded from online work initiatives build sustainable livelihoods through the digital gig economy? How can governments leverage the digital gig economy for vulnerable youth populations, including young mothers and youth with disabilities?
 - d. *Ecosystem Development:* What public, private, and not-for-profit infrastructure and training centers can be leveraged to create a pipeline of skilled gig workers? How can private sector partnerships promote job creation and employment opportunities in the gig economy and stimulate local demand for gig workers?

⁶ There are two main types of gig work platforms: online web-based platforms, where gig work is performed online and remotely by workers; and location-based platforms, where gig work is performed at a specified physical location by individuals. Online web-based platforms may facilitate microwork, freelancing, or competitive programming (among other functions), while location-based platforms include those offering taxi, delivery, or domestic services. (World Bank. 2023. [Working Without Borders: The Promise and Peril of Online Gig Work](#). Washington, DC: World Bank.

- e. *Market Absorption:* What careers do IT graduates pursue and what industries do they enter? Do IT graduates possess the types and quality of in-demand skills required by local and regional employers?

V. Reporting, Time Schedules, and Payment Schedule

Deliverables

The Consultant will work under the general direction of the SLDTP Project Coordination Unit (PCU) and the Directorate of Science, Technology and Innovation (DSTI).⁷ The Consultant must submit the following deliverables:

- 1. Inception Report and Work Plan**, due two (2) weeks from contract signing. This will include, but is not limited to:
 - a. The proposed analytical framework, measurement instruments, research questions, and data collection tools.
 - b. Development of a baseline assessment tool for capturing data that assesses digital skills market needs and gaps in Sierra Leone.
 - c. Development of tools to evaluate Sierra Leone's infrastructure, legal, and social readiness to capitalize on employment opportunities in the global gig economy.
 - d. Timeline for completion, including key milestones for deliverables.
 - e. List of potential stakeholders and constituents that could be engaged for the studies.
 - f. List of potential primary and secondary data sources.

- 2. Baseline Assessment Report**, due four (4) weeks from contract signing. This will include, but is not limited to:
 - a. Desk review of country strategy documents, policies, actions, partnerships, measurement frameworks, reports, and other relevant materials.
 - b. Preliminary gap analysis of existing data to prioritize primary data collection needs.
 - c. Mapping of stakeholders that are to be consulted, including digital literacy training providers and employers in the public and private sector.
 - d. Identify accredited or internationally recognized digital skills programs and training providers which are suitable for the target group based on the results of the needs assessment.
 - e. Identify global and regional digital platforms that facilitate online work which are suitable for the target group based on the results of the needs assessment.
 - f. Summary of findings, including demand- and supply-side analysis of gaps, opportunities, and threats in Sierra Leone's digital gig economy and digital skills market.
 - g. Recommendations on how existing capacities could be strengthened through government program implementation, private sector partnerships, and engagement with digital training providers.

⁷ The Directorate of Science, Technology and Innovation (DSTI) is the Technical Leading Agency for Component 2 of the Project.

- 3. Digital Skills Market Study Report**, due eight (8) weeks from contract signing. This will include, but is not limited to:
- a. Executive Summary
 - b. Acronyms
 - c. Introduction
 - i. Background on the market study.
 - ii. Definitions and introduction to frameworks.
 - iii. Research approach, methodology, and limitations.
 - d. Current and forecasted demand for digital skills in Sierra Leone
 - i. Current and emerging skills required by the private and public sector to unlock job creation opportunities in the digital economy, including in the global digital gig economy.
 - ii. Skills (by type of digital skills, and related skills) and labor shortages (by type of occupation) in targeted sectors where demand has spiked due to digitalization and/or which are prioritized under national development plans.
 - iii. Critical digital skills applicable to the analyzed sectors grouped according to the digital skill proficiency, highlighting high-growth potential sectors.
 - iv. Gaps, trends, and opportunities across the national market, including skills, credentials/qualifications, and occupations.
 - v. Other employability skills that can be relevant to the targeted sectors (e.g., foundation skills, core skills, soft skills, business management and entrepreneurship skills, and/or transferable technical skills).
 - e. Current and forecasted supply of digital skills in Sierra Leone
 - i. Understanding needs, potential and vulnerabilities of target beneficiaries, including youth, women, and PWDs.
 - ii. Sets of skills currently available and resulting from ongoing (TVET, formal, and informal) training courses and programs.
 - iii. Strengths, weaknesses, and development needs of stakeholders to meet the current and forecasted demand for digital skills.
 - f. Demand and Supply Gap Analysis
 - i. Compare current and future digital skills demand with digital skills supply.
 - ii. Assess alignment of main training service providers with labor market and digital skill requirements.
 - iii. Synthesize gaps according to employment and learning status, location, channels, pipeline, and barriers (mapped to agreed frameworks).
 - iv. Highlight strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.
 - g. Recommended approaches to design and implement a digital skills training program in Sierra Leone
 - i. Provide recommendations for unlocking employment opportunities for target communities by leveraging digital skills, with a focus on youth, women, and PWDs.
 - ii. Identify job growth opportunities for public and private sector stakeholders, noting priority sectors for investment.
 - iii. Highlight opportunities for collaboration with the private sector and digital training service providers within the Project context.
 - h. References

- i. Annexes
- 4. Gig Economy Feasibility Report**, due eight (8) weeks from contract signing. This will include, but is not limited to:
- a. Executive Summary
 - b. Acronyms
 - c. Introduction
 - i. Background on the feasibility study.
 - ii. Definitions and introduction to frameworks.
 - iii. Research approach, methodology, and limitations.
 - d. Overview of digital gig economy trends in developing countries, with a focus on Sub-Saharan Africa
 - i. Classify common models, work arrangements, and strategies for online workers to be successful on platforms.
 - ii. Identify the largest and fast-growing use cases for online work in the digital economy (e.g., translation services, image tagging), highlighting the types of institutions/organizations driving demand for these services.
 - iii. Categorize types of digital gig economy work suitable for target beneficiaries in Sierra Leone, particularly youth, women, and PWDs, and identify niche segments in global demand that Sierra Leone can capitalize on.
 - e. Gig Work Readiness
 - i. Analyze the potential comparative advantage of Sierra Leone workers to access employment opportunities in the gig economy (e.g., language proficiency, literacy and educational attainment, time zone).
 - ii. Evaluate Sierra Leone's infrastructure, legal and social readiness for promoting global online work opportunities for youth, women, and PWDs (e.g., broadband and device access, availability of digital payment systems, prohibitive / facilitative regulations).
 - iii. Identify existing digital skills initiatives and infrastructure needed for effective gig work program delivery, identifying any investments needed to address resource and/or capacity gaps.
 - f. Program Recommendations
 - i. Propose strategies for practitioners to design and implement inclusive digital training and/or employment programs that prepare youth, women, and PWDs to capitalize on employment opportunities in the digital gig economy.
 - ii. Define essential program design components and accommodations to equip youth, women, and PWDs with technical, socioemotional, and business skills necessary to succeed in the gig economy (e.g., assistive technologies, mentoring, travel assistance).
 - iii. Highlight accommodations necessary to ensure inclusive participation of vulnerable beneficiaries in a gig work program, including women and PWDs (e.g., assistive technologies, travel assistance, physical infrastructure).
 - g. Policy Roadmap
 - i. Provide recommendations for how policymakers and practitioners effectively reduce vulnerabilities associated with online work.

- ii. Propose strategies for the government to collaborate with digital gig platforms, impact sourcing firms, and other private sector partners to increase access to online work opportunities for youth.
- h. References
- i. Annexes

5. Data Package, due ten (10) weeks from contract signing. This will include:

- a. Primary data from the market study.
- b. Exploration of secondary data used to support key elements of the report.

6. Final Reports, due ten (10) weeks from contract signing. This will include the final submission of the Gig Economy Feasibility Study Report and the Digital Skills Market Study Report after review and consultation with key stakeholders as identified by the PCU.

Payment Schedule

The Consultant should complete all activities, including submission of all deliverables, within three (3) months of the contract signing. Details of the deliverables and payment schedule are described below:

	Description	Payment Schedule⁸	Expected Delivery
1.	Contract signing	10%	0 weeks from contract signing
2.	Inception Report and Work Plan	10%	4 weeks from contract signing
3.	Baseline Assessment Report	10%	7 weeks from contract signing
4.	Gig Economy Feasibility Study Report	20%	9 weeks from contract signing
5.	Digital Skills Market Study Report	20%	9 weeks from contract signing
6.	Data Package	10%	11 weeks from contract signing
7.	Final Report Submission	20%	12 weeks from contract signing

Reporting Requirements

The Consultant will report implementation progress to the PCU and DSTI through interim reports every two weeks. The interim reports may include implementation status (description of the activities for the period and comparison of progress of work with the projected work plan), updated work schedule, major issues, and proposed corrective actions.

⁸ As a percentage of total contract amount.

A. FIRM QUALIFICATIONS

The Consulting firm must demonstrate the following:

- Experience in undertaking relevant digital skills market assessments and/or digital economy feasibility assessments in the past eight (8) years.
- Familiarity with advanced data collection, analysis, and visualization tools for multicultural audiences.
- Robust understanding of the operational and policy environment in developing countries, with preference for relevant experience in working with local actors in the digital skills ecosystem in Sierra Leone and/or in sub-Saharan Africa.
- Research and/or project experience working with marginalized populations, including women, youth, and persons with disabilities.
- Prior experience working with donors and/or national governments in Sub-Saharan Africa; experience working in Sierra Leone preferred.
- Experience in preparing reports to a standard acceptable to national and international financing institutions and fluency in written and spoken English.
- Experience in projects financed by the World Bank and or other Multilateral International Development Organizations will be an advantage.
- Commitment to facilitation of knowledge and skills transfer to strengthen the local digital ecosystem. Proposals that include partnerships and/or contracting with local firm(s) to conduct assessments highly preferred.

B. TEAM COMPOSITION

The Consultant must have a qualified project team that includes the following key personnel:⁹

1. Senior Digital Economy Specialist

- Master's degree or relevant qualifications and work experience in Economics, Information and Communications Technology (ICT), Business Administration, International Development, Social Sciences, or a related field.
- Minimum of ten (10) years demonstrated expertise in leading ICT sector studies, labour market assessments, feasibility studies, value chain analysis, and/or financial case analysis for inclusive economic growth in the digital economy.
- Strong understanding of policy and regulatory issues relevant to the ICT sector and digital transformation of economies and societies, with a particular emphasis on aspects such as facilitating development of digital platforms and services and promoting development of digital skills and innovation.
- Firm understanding of digital transformation of society trends relevant to socio-economic development in Sub-Saharan Africa. Familiarity with Sierra Leone preferred.

⁹ The Consultant's team may include additional personnel as necessary.

- Proven experience working with and supporting government agencies and/or international organizations with digital transformation and skills assessment projects in Sub-Saharan Africa. Experience in Sierra Leone will be an advantage.
- Demonstrated understanding of barriers and opportunities for women, youth, and persons with disabilities in the digital economy.
- Experience delivering clear, structured, and comprehensive evidence-based studies and/or reports in English.

2. Digital Economy Specialist

- Master's degree or relevant qualifications and work experience in Economics, Information and Communications Technology (ICT), International Development, Social Sciences, or a related field.
- Minimum of five (5) years of experience supporting the design and implementation of digital development projects in Sub-Saharan Africa. Project experience in Sierra Leone is highly preferred.
- Strong conceptual and analytical skills, including using metrics and indicators to determine targets for digital transformation, and use data to advance policy reforms and investments.
- Demonstrated understanding of the digital economy in the context of Sub-Saharan Africa, including trends in online work for youth. Familiarity with Sierra Leone preferred.
- Demonstrated understanding of barriers and opportunities for women, youth, and persons with disabilities in the digital economy.
- Experience delivering clear, structured, and comprehensive evidence-based studies and/or reports in English.

3. Digital Skills Specialist

- Master's degree or relevant qualifications and work experience in Economics, Information and Communications Technology (ICT), International Development, Social Sciences, or a related field.
- Minimum of five (5) years of experience in conducting labour market studies, feasibility assessments, and/or studies related to drivers of demand and supply of digital skills in Sub-Saharan Africa. Familiarity with Sierra Leone preferred.
- Experience supporting the design and implementation of digital skills development projects in Sub-Saharan Africa. Project experience in Sierra Leone highly preferred.
- Demonstrated understanding of barriers and opportunities for women, youth, and persons with disabilities in the digital economy.
- Proven experience working with and supporting government agencies and/or international organizations with digital transformation and skills assessment projects in Sub-Saharan Africa. Experience in Sierra Leone will be an advantage.
- Experience delivering clear, structured, and comprehensive evidence-based studies and/or reports in English.

4. Gig Economy Specialist

- Master's degree or relevant qualifications and work experience in Economics, Information and Communications Technology (ICT), International Development, Social Sciences, or a related field.
- Minimum of five (5) years of experience supporting the design and implementation of digital development projects in Sub-Saharan Africa. Project experience in Sierra Leone is highly preferred.
- Experience conducting assessments related to freelancing, microwork, and/or gig economy employment in developing countries. Familiarity with global and regional gig work platforms preferred.
- Proven experience working with and supporting government agencies and/or international organizations with digital transformation projects in Sub-Saharan Africa. Experience in Sierra Leone will be an advantage.
- Experience delivering clear, structured, and comprehensive evidence-based studies and/or reports in English.

5. Research Analyst

- Master's degree or relevant qualifications and work experience in Economics, Information and Communications Technology (ICT), International Development, Social Sciences, Gender Studies, or a related field.
- Proven expertise in designing and conducting qualitative and quantitative research for international development projects.
- Demonstrated background and experience conducting gender-mainstreaming research activities, including gender-disaggregated data collection and analysis.
- Demonstrated experience conducting research on marginalized communities, including women, youth, and persons with disabilities.
- Familiarity with digital economy, digital skills frameworks, demand-driven entrepreneurship, women's economic empowerment, inclusive economic growth, and related disciplines.

V. Facilities Data and Information to Be Provided by Client

The Directorate of Science, Technology and Innovation (DSTI), the technical lead agency for this activity, shall provide office space for the successful consulting firm to facilitate the smooth implementation of the assignment. The following shall be provided to the Consultant by the Employer:

- i. facilitate the provision of access to relevant documents and data available which may be supportive to the Consultant, and
- ii. prepare a letter introducing the consulting firm to operators in the telecommunications sector and other relevant institutions, wherever required in performing the assignment.

The firm shall provide all the administrative, technical professional and support staff needed to carry out the assignment efficiently. The Consultants shall also be responsible for providing all other necessary facilities and logistical support for its staff/teams, including accommodation, vehicles/transportation, office equipment, field survey and investigation equipment, laboratory testing, communications, utilities, office supplies and other miscellaneous requirements wherever

applicable to render their services. The firm shall nominate and make available a contact person for regular meetings with the Project Coordination Unit and DSTI teams.

VI. Working Language

The working language for the consultancy service shall be English.

VII. Conflict of Interest

The successful consulting firm shall declare any conflict of interest, especially if any or all of the consultants is/are currently carrying out consultancy work for other stakeholders including licensed operators or service providers in the telecommunications sector in Sierra Leone.

VIII. Confidentiality of Information

The firm shall protect the confidentiality of the data or information received to conduct this assignment and shall sign a confidentiality agreement with MoCTI. No data, information, or deliverables from this assignment will be released to third parties without the written approval of MOCTI. The Consultant shall surrender all data and other materials to the Regulatory Authority and shall not retain any information or materials after the closure of the assignment.