



GOVERNMENT OF LIBERIA

Ministry of Commerce and Industry Ministerial Complex Congo Town, Monrovia



**Liberia Investment, Finance and Trade (LIFT) Project
Project No.: P171997**

Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MOCI)

**Terms of Reference
Financial Sector Development Specialist**

Post Title: Financial Sector Development Specialist

Location of Post: Project Implementation Unit-Ministry of Commerce and Industry,
Ministerial Complex, Tubman Boulevard, Congo Town

Contract Duration: 2 years with possible extension based on satisfactory performance.

Reporting Line: Project Coordinator-LIFT-P

Recruitment: National Position

Type of Contract: Lump Sum Contract

Background

1. The Government of Liberia (GoL), through the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MOCI), has received a Project Preparation Advance (PPA) amount from the World Bank in preparation for the implementation of the ***Liberia Investment, Finance and Trade (LIFT) Project: P171997*** if approved. MOCI intends to recruit the **Financial Sector Development Specialist** to work with the PIU's team to be established at the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, the Central Bank of Liberia (CBL) and the Financial Sector at large in implementing the subcomponents of the LIFT project relative to Access to Finance for Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and Digital Financial Services Infrastructure (National Payments Switch and Credit Reference Systems).

2. The overall objective of the LIFT-P is to improve the investment climate, expand sustainable access to finance, and increase the efficiency of trade in Liberia.
3. The LIFT-P is an explicit contributor to the FY19-FY24 Country Partnership Framework (CPF) Pillar I: Strengthening Institutions and Creating an Enabling Environment for Inclusive and Sustainable Growth. Specifically, the project implements Objective 3 of the CPF, that seeks to promote a more enabling environment for the development of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). The Project furthers the CPF's objective by fostering the emergence of an inclusive private sector through a more hospitable investment climate, expanded access to finance, and stronger market governance. The LIFT-P envisions the removal of key regulatory constraints and will facilitate trade and expand access to finance. Specifically, it will focus on (i) the regulatory areas where the need for enhancement exists (ii) implementation of the Financial Sector Development Implementation Plan and National Financial Inclusion Strategy, (iii) implementation of the Insolvency and Restructuring Law adopted in 2017, and (iv) support for Liberia's implementation of commitments to the World Trade Organization (WTO), Trade Facilitation Agreement, since adoption of the long-awaited Customs Code.
4. The project supports a Jobs and Economic Transformation (JET) framework for Liberia and its two pillars on which the outcomes sit: better market functioning and improved firm capabilities. In doing so, the project targets six of the ten-building blocks in this framework as a complement to other parallel activities under the Liberia CPF supporting macroeconomic management, infrastructure services, employment policy and human capital. The project takes account of the Government Recovery Program (GRP) project that seeks to support otherwise viable growth oriented private enterprises that were adversely impacted by the effects of the pandemic. As the mechanism for firm level support is structured, guardrails will be established to prevent adversely impacting financial discipline and commercial credit underwriting needed for a sustained recovery. At the same time, with various indicators highlighting access to finance as an issue, attention to expanding digital financial services (DFS) is needed.
5. In addition to its contribution to the Jobs agenda, the Project design supports a range of IDA priorities in operational ways including Gender, Climate, Governance, human capital and Maximizing Finance for Development (MFD). The project will ensure that women-oriented training and eligibility will be included in firm support and financial access component by deliberately incorporating, in the design of project activities, features that seek to address the identified gaps between men and women with respect to their participation in economic activity in the country, especially around differential constraints and performance between women-owned and men-owned firms. These include the reforms to the business environment (e.g., registration, permits and access to finance), as well as activities to support SMEs

and entrepreneurs. The project will monitor the extent to which activities are contributing toward closing gender gaps by measuring, among other things: (i) the number of women led MSMEs with a loan through the project; and (ii) the percentage of women that are covered by the credit registry.

6. Finally, as a foundational project to strengthen the public sector's ability to facilitate growth of the private sector on a sustainable basis, significant efforts will be devoted to institution building activities in key agencies. In this light, the project's concept identifies the strengthening of institutional functioning, streamlining of business processes and use of automation to lower costs, improve services and remove face-to face interactions.

7. The Project will be implemented in all 15 counties of Liberia for the next 5 years.

Scope of Services

LIFT-PIU therefore seeks a **Financial Sector Development Specialist** who will coordinate all activities at the PIU relating to the financial sector. The specialist would work primarily on Subcomponent 2.2 – SME Access to Finance; and Component 3 – Digital Financial Services Infrastructure (National Payments Switch and Credit Reference Systems).

Main Responsibilities

The specific responsibilities of the Financial Sector Development Specialist shall include but not be limited to the following: liaise with the Central Bank of Liberia (CBL) and other financial sector stakeholders on implementing the financial sector components of the LIFT Project in accordance with the project design and World Bank and national project operational requirements:

- i) Support activities relating to the implementation of the Line of Credit (LoC) to be disbursed to Participating Financial Institutions (PFIs) for on-lending to Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), in accordance with the approved line of credit operational manual;
- ii) Support activities relating to the modernization and operationalization of the Credit Reference System (CRS) housed at the CBL;
- iii) Support the procurement, development and implementation of a National Electronic Payments Switch (NEPS) at the CBL;
- iv) Participate in and support stakeholders' engagements surrounding the procurement and operationalization of the NEPS;

- v) Participate and support stakeholders' engagements surrounding the modernization and operationalization of the CRS;
- vi) Participate in the due diligence and selection of PFIs in line with the prescribed requirements under the LIFT-P, using the indicators and processes found in the approved line of credit manual;
- vii) Conduct verification and follow-up exercises (such as sampling MSME borrower files) regarding PFIs on-lending to MSMEs with the view of ascertaining compliance to the terms and conditions of the PFIs agreements including adherence to operations manuals;
- viii) Prepare periodic reports regarding the on-lending by PFIs in accordance with the reporting obligations under the LoC manual;
- ix) Keep close contact with the CBL on FI's standing with the CBL, specifically, their compliance to the overall regulatory and supervisory requirements of the CBL;
- x) Coordinate needs assessment and support the delivery of technical assistance and capacity building by a consulting firm to all eligible FIs, CBL and other stakeholders in the financial sector;
- xi) Ensure that periodic reports regarding the implementation of the financial sector components of the LIFT-P are prepared and submitted in time to the World Bank and other stakeholders;
- xii) Participate in preparations for and visits/virtual implementation support missions and periodic meetings with World Bank team; and
- xiii) Perform other tasks as may be assigned from time to time by the Project Steering Committee (PSC), the Project Technical Committee (PTC) and the Project Implementation Unit (PIU).

1. Qualification and Experience

- At minimum a bachelor's degree in Accounting, Finance, Economics, Management, or Business Administration or related fields is a must.
- A master's degree in Economics, Finance, Accounting, Public Policy, or related fields is an added advantage.
- A minimum of 5 years of experience within the banking and finance/microfinance sector of Liberia is required.
- Familiarity with World Bank procedures is an added advantage.
- Experience with implementing other donors' initiatives an added advantage.

- Familiarity with compliance regimes of banks and other financial institutions;
- Familiarity with the CBL regulations for banks and other financial institutions would also be advantageous.
- Sufficient familiarity with excel to analyse loan portfolios and revenue projections.

2. Key Competencies which are a desirable

<u>Abilities</u>	<u>Skills</u>	<u>Knowledge</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrated ability to plan and co-ordinate, and monitor his or her own work plan • Demonstrated ability to meet deadlines • Self-motivated professional, with ability to work with/ under minimum supervision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer literacy, especially with the software of Microsoft Office is essential • Excellent team building and interpersonal skills • Proficiency in English language with excellent communication skills • Private Sector Stakeholder management 	<p>Working knowledge of World Bank and/or GOL rules and procedures will be advantageous.</p> <p>Knowledge of prudential regulations of the CBL and supervisory practices;</p> <p>Knowledge of credit granting processes is desirable, including the role of credit registries and collateral registries</p> <p>Knowledge of Payment Systems, in particular the role of a switch is desirable.</p> <p>Appreciation and understanding of financial inclusion concepts and activities would be a plus.</p>

3. PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

- (i) Provide support for the timely submission of reports to the World Bank for review and approval;
- (ii) On a monthly basis prepare status report of each financial sector component of the LIFT-P (15 days after the end of month)
- (iii) With guidance from PSC/TC and in collaboration with the CBL, draft the TOR for consultants;

- (iv) Support activities and processes for the timely disbursement of funds to PFIs and/or consultants upon completion of project activities in conformity with approved contracts.

Selection Method: Individual Consultancy Selection (INDV) method.