Role Profile: DFS Policy and Regulation Specialist

Background
In Africa, there are currently over 400 million financially excluded adults. These individuals do not have access to formal financial services and instead rely on cash or informal providers to meet their financial needs. This system is costly and risky, especially for the low-income segments and rural women who are disproportionately affected. Digital financial services (DFS) can address the issue of financial exclusion. By facilitating access to the digital economy, DFS can significantly reduce the cost of financial transactions and create benefits for households, and businesses, as well as contribute to economic growth. To achieve this, national or regional-level inclusive instant payment systems (IIPS) need to be implemented. However, as evidenced by AfricaNenda’s State of Inclusive Instant Payments Systems (SIIPS) in Africa research, these systems still require support to scale. A concentrated source of continental expertise can accelerate the deployment of inclusive instant payment systems and drive transformation throughout Africa.

About AfricaNenda
AfricaNenda is an Africa-led coalition of dedicated digital payments experts that work to build expertise, coordinate, and accelerate the roll-out of IIPS for the benefit of all Africans including the poorest and financially excluded. Our mission is to work towards universal access to inclusive payment systems ensuring that the more than 400 million unbanked adults across Africa are included in the financial system. We pursue this mission by removing the structural and technical barriers to effective deployment of IIPS such as lack of interoperability, insufficient technical in-house capacity, and lack of collaborative models across actors. As a convening actor, AfricaNenda executes its mission by enhancing capacity building across African institutions, providing technical support to IIPS projects, facilitating knowledge-sharing and collaboration, and providing tools and resources.

Key initiatives include:

- **Policy development initiatives:** AfricaNenda is on a mission to build the institutional capacity of African policymakers through advocacy, technical assistance, training sessions, curated convenings and dialogue sessions, and secondments from AfricaNenda’s vast network of experts.

- **Technical project support:** AfricaNenda provides technical assistance and resource mobilization support to expand the pipeline of fundable IIPS projects through conducting readiness assessment, project definition, and implementation.

- **Knowledge-sharing and collaboration:** AfricaNenda facilitates knowledge-sharing and collaboration using its cross-sectoral network of experts to provide cutting-edge thought leadership on efficiently and effectively accelerating inclusive instant payment systems.

- **Tools and capacity development:** AfricaNenda develops IIPS tools and customized capacity-development initiatives e.g. bespoke training sessions tailored to public and private African organizations, payment experts, and relevant stakeholders in the sector.

- **AfricaNenda partners with the regional economic communities (RECs), governments and relevant agencies, central banks, Pan-African organizations, and other development partners /enablers to collaboratively reduce structural and technical barriers to the deployment and scale of IIPS.**

Position summary
AfricaNenda is committed to supporting financial services policymakers and regulators in Africa to create a conducive environment for the deployment and scaling of inclusive instant payment systems (IIPS) in the continent. AfricaNenda aims to enhance the capacity and commitment of stakeholders at regional and national levels, to review policies and regulations according to advancements and evolving realities in the DFS ecosystem. AfricaNenda also seeks to support stakeholders to promote an open and level playing field for financial service providers, encouraging competition and innovation. Additionally, we aim to encourage policymakers and regulators to actualize policy and regulatory harmonization at the continental level, to
facilitate effective and efficient digital cross-border payments. AfricaNenda is dedicated to promoting the inclusivity of IIPS, developing and enforcing consumer protection structures to enhance trust among consumers. AfricaNenda therefore seeks a DFS Policy and Regulation Specialist to join its team, reporting to the Director of Advocacy and Capacity Development.

The DFS Policy and Regulation Specialist, in close collaboration with the Director of Advocacy and Capacity Development, will lead the development and implementation of AfricaNenda’s policy engagement strategy across Africa. This includes:

1. strategically positioning AfricaNenda and forging mutual partnerships with a broad range of policymakers and regulators, e.g. regional and national central banks, government agencies including ICT and competition authorities, ministries of finance, treasury departments, among other relevant bodies, as well as partners policy development organizations.
2. amplifying key policy insights, best practices, and benchmarks in the deployment and scale of IIPS in the continent
3. support AfricaNenda’s agenda for promoting cross border payments policy and regulatory harmonization in Africa
4. enhancing the capacity of key policy and regulatory stakeholders on developing and scaling IIPS
5. developing tools and resources to support policymakers and regulators in driving IIPS

Summary of key responsibilities:

- Policy and regulatory advocacy
- Key partnership development
- Capacity development support
- Development of policy tools and resources in enabling IIPS

Key responsibilities

- Assist in building and maintaining relationships with regional and national central banks, government agencies including ICT and competition authorities, ministries of finance, treasury departments, among other relevant bodies, as well as partner policy development organizations, the private sector, development partners/enablers, and other stakeholders in the DFS ecosystem.
- Conduct research and diagnostics to build evidence for policy reforms and map the policy and regulatory landscape in Africa
- Be at the core of the policy engagement strategy development, review, update, and implementation
- Engage in key partnership development and technical assistance initiatives.
- Produce evidence-backed policy notes, technical project reports, and presentations as necessary.
- Provide strategic guidance on key policy advocacy moments that AfricaNenda could leverage and identify approaches to working with key channels of influence in policy
- Take initiative in positioning themselves as IIPS advocates, and coordinate with other internal technical teams during project implementation
Capacity development

- Identify opportunities to support existing policy capacity development initiatives by development partners or capacity building organisations, aligned to enhancing an enabling environment for digital payments and financial inclusion in Africa.
  - Conduct capacity development needs assessment in policy and regulation themes for existing and new partners/initiatives.
  - Develop capacity development initiative plans for policy and regulations stakeholders.
  - Coordinate all capacity development support provided to policy and regulation stakeholders, in collaboration with other staff and consultants where needed.
  - Contribute to capacity development evaluations to inform refined and improved policy initiatives.
  - Develop post-capacity development reports or outputs.
  - Coordinate with the Communications Department colleagues on repurposing policy and regulatory capacity development outputs, for additional internal and external initiatives.

Development of policy tools and resources in enabling IIPS

- Conduct desk research/literature review of the availability of policy tools/ resources and Identify tools and resources that would be useful to industry (e.g., best practices and benchmarks)
- Perform other tasks as assigned by the Director, Advocacy and Capacity Development and the Deputy CEO partnerships and capacity building

Skills and experience

- A master’s degree in Economic / Public Policy / Business Administration, or any other related discipline. Additional certificates / training in digital financial services or related disciplines will be an asset.
- At least 5 years of progressively responsible professional experience in a central bank / regulatory setting body/policy and regulatory coordination function
- At least 2 years of experience in providing technical assistance to regulators / policy makers, and / or advisory in DFS, payments, or financial inclusion, capacity-building initiatives within policy / regulatory / government engagements
- Proven experience in research, regulatory reviews, policy and government stakeholder management, and partnership management
- Good understanding of policy and regulation frameworks in digital financial services and financial inclusion in Africa, including an in-depth understanding of the key challenges and opportunities
- Excellent analytical capabilities (particularly economic/quantitative analysis), written and oral communication - Excellent computer skills (Microsoft Office Suite) - Good planning, organizational and reporting skills.
- Ability to plan and coordinate the implementation of participatory action planning approaches and engage policymakers and regulator stakeholders.
- Demonstrated experience in the coordination of project activities, working with multiple teams including government agencies, central banks, civil society, and the community.
- Demonstrated experience in work planning, meeting coordination, and report writing.
- Advocacy experience related to policy, leadership, and governance is strongly preferred.
- Full professional proficiency in English and French is preferred.
Personal attributes

- Sound commitment and passion for policy reforms for financial inclusion in Africa.
- Excellent diplomacy and negotiation ability, interpersonal and problem-solving skills,
- Exceptional communication skills, both oral and written, including multi-party communication.
- Versatility and adaptability to the workload of multiple projects and clients.
- High accuracy and attention to detail.
- Strong analytical skills.
- Independent and the ability to apply sound judgement to decisions.
- Sound time management skills and the ability to prioritize.
- Nimble, flexible, and the ability to deal with structured change.
- Comfortable in a multicultural environment, flexible, and able to handle pressure well.

How to apply

Qualified candidates are invited to submit a CV and cover letter to info@africanenda.org before 4th August 2024, and the subject line should read “DFS Policy and Regulation Specialist” and relevant files labelled accordingly e.g.: “CV – (Name)”. Please note that incomplete applications will not be considered. As there are several applications, only shortlisted candidates will be contacted. However, we encourage interested parties to continue to check our website for opportunities as they come up.

AfricaNenda is an equal-opportunity employer and strongly encourages applications from people of all backgrounds. We are committed to creating a diverse environment and are proud to be an inclusive organization.