Terms of Reference – *Market Analysis: Nigeria*

8 May 2026

Introduction

GSMA
The GSMA is a global organisation unifying the mobile ecosystem to discover, develop and deliver innovation foundational to positive business environments and societal change. Our vision is to unlock the full power of connectivity so that people, industry and society thrive. Representing mobile operators and organisations across the mobile ecosystem and adjacent industries, the GSMA delivers for its members across three broad pillars: Connectivity for Good, Industry Solutions and Events.

GSMA Mobile for Development Foundation
The GSMA Mobile for Development Foundation, Inc. ("GSMA") is a U.S. 501(c)(3) charitable organisation. The Mobile for Development team (M4D) operates at the intersection of the mobile ecosystem and the development sector. Our aim is to stimulate digital innovation and deliver both sustainable business and large-scale socio-economic impact. Our research and insights platform, in-market expertise and community of partners push forward digital innovations and implementations that empower underserved populations. To date, we have impacted the lives of over 260 million people.

Context

The GSMA is undertaking a market analysis focused on Nigeria to *understand the conditions under which digital innovations can achieve sustainable scale and impact, particularly for underserved and vulnerable populations.* A core focus of the analysis will be examining how market dynamics, including regulatory frameworks, infrastructure, competitive landscape, and ecosystem support, either enable or hinder impact-driven digital solutions from reaching vulnerable users and scaling commercially. In addition to examining external market conditions, this work will also recognise the role of innovative business models adopted by GSMA grantees to navigate market complexities and drive both commercial viability and social impact. The analysis will further explore GSMA's role in shaping the market environment, including its contribution to enabling conditions and supporting innovation outcomes. As part of this, the study will consider which business models are most likely to be effective in this market, both commercially and in delivering impact.

Nigeria represents a high-potential yet complex digital market, characterized by strong ecosystem growth, significant investment from venture capital funds or other corporates and a large addressable population, but also persistent structural challenges that affect the scalability of digital solutions.

For underserved and hard-to-reach populations, specifically low-income, rural, and marginalised groups, high access costs to mobile internet services and internet-enabled handsets, alongside low levels of digital literacy, limit meaningful adoption and use. On the supply side, infrastructure fragility and the high costs of network rollout, especially in rural areas, continue to pose challenges, compounded by regulatory fragmentation. The ecosystem is further constrained by weak enabling systems, including complex and often fragmented digital payment mechanisms that limit seamless transactions, along with limited access to reliable electricity infrastructure, and a shortage of skilled

talent required by innovators and grantees to build, deploy, and scale digital solutions. These factors collectively increase the cost of innovation, limit adoption, and slow the ability of solutions to scale. Kenya will be included as an illustrative and parallel example, offering useful insights from a different digital ecosystem which holds strong ground in mobile money, digital inclusion, and infrastructure.

Building on the growth and scale of GSMA Innovation Fund grantees in Nigeria, the study adopts a systems-based approach to assess how key market conditions including infrastructure, regulatory frameworks, human capital, and ecosystem maturity influence the development and scaling of digital innovations across sectors such as agriculture, energy, education, health, and food loss and waste. The analysis hence aims to define what constitutes an enabling environment for developing and scaling digital technologies that deliver meaningful social impact for underserved communities, while also examining the actions and strategies adopted by startups to navigate constraints and drive scale within this context.

Project overview and Objectives

This project aims to assess the conditions under which digital innovations in Nigeria can achieve sustainable scale and deliver meaningful impact for underserved and vulnerable populations. The project will also reflect on GSMA's and grantees' role within this system, identifying how GSMA helps contribute to strengthening market conditions and where there may be opportunities to enhance impact.

The primary objectives of this assignment:

1. **Ideal market conditions for digital innovations for underserved communities in Nigeria to thrive:**

    a. Assess market conditions in Nigeria:
    - Identify key structural constraints affecting the development and scaling of digital innovations
    - Analyze how factors such as infrastructure, regulation, investment and inclusive access and usage influence outcomes
    - What constitutes an ideal market environment for digital solutions to thrive and scale

    b. Assess ecosystem enablers and gaps:
    - Evaluate the role of critical enablers, including:
        - Infrastructure Readiness
        - Regulatory Effectiveness
        - Investment Viability
        - Ecosystem Integration
        - Inclusive Access & Adoption
    - These enablers will be turned into a composite index, a scoring framework, and a qualitative rubric.
    - Identify where gaps most significantly hinder scale and inclusion

    c. Define an enabling environment for inclusive digital innovation
    - Articulate the key conditions required for digital solutions to scale sustainably and equitably
    - Develop a structured view of what "good" looks like across ecosystem components

2. **GSMA Grantees' journeys in Nigeria/digital innovation solutions:**

    a. Understand pathways to scale and impact
        - Identify success factors and bottlenecks in reaching underserved populations
        - Examine how digital innovations (particularly GSMA Innovation Fund grantees) have navigated market constraints
        - Distill practical lessons across sectors (agriculture, energy, education, health, food systems)

    b. Explore GSMA's role in scale and impact of grantees' digital solutions
        - Towards enabling environment
        - Towards scale and impact

3. **Draw actionable insights from parallel markets:**

    a. Use Kenya as a parallel example to highlight approaches that have enabled stronger digital adoption and ecosystem development

    b. Identify transferable lessons relevant to the Nigerian context

Methodology

Research questions

1. How do market conditions shape inclusive digital innovation outcomes?

How do key constraints and enablers such as infrastructure, regulation, investment, and barriers to access and usage influence the ability of digital innovations to deliver meaningful impact for underserved populations, and how do they shape solution design, pricing, and delivery?

2. What market conditions and actors are critical to enabling inclusive impact at scale?

Which ecosystem enablers (e.g., payments, energy, skills, partnerships) and actors are most essential for improving outcomes for underserved users, where are the most critical gaps, and how can organisations like GSMA strengthen these enabling conditions?

3. What pathways, strategies, and business models enable sustainable scale with impact in Nigeria?

Which business models adopted by grantees are most successful in achieving both commercial viability and meaningful inclusion, and why? What trade-offs arise between scale and impact in Nigeria, and what targeted support have grantees needed to reach scale and last-mile users? How can GSMA best support these efforts?

Scope

Prospective bidders should propose a robust approach that can best answer the evaluation questions listed above. We would envision the following key components but would welcome suggestions:

- Literature review
- Interviews with selected stakeholders
- Comprehensive review and comparative analysis of both historical and current M4D data

- We will also consider conducting a brief survey with grantees

Deliverables and timelines

Phase	Key activities	Timeline
Phase 1 - Inception phase	**Key activities** - Kick-off call with GSMA M4D MEL team - Co-create evaluation questions with GSMA M4D MEL team - Draft analytical framework - Begin co-designing data collection tools with GSMA M4D MEL team **Key deliverables** - Evaluation Plan - Analytical Framework - Inception report	Contract signing + 2 weeks
Phase 2 - Desk-based research	**Key activities** - Review ToR, prior grantee reports, Innovation Fund data - Review other external data and literature - Co-design data collection tools with GSMA M4D MEL team - Interview planning and logistics **Deliverables** - Finalised data collection tools - Confirmed respondents' list and schedule	Contract signing + 4 weeks
Phase 3 - Stakeholder interviews and consultations	**Key activities** - Data Collection - Mid collection debrief with GSMA M4D MEL team - Transcription, and Quality Control **Deliverables** - First 2 interviews transcripts and overarching summary for quality control - All cleaned and coded transcripts - Survey results (if short survey is deployed)	Contract signing + 8 weeks
Phase 4 – analysis, validation, and reporting	**Key activities** - Integrated analysis: Conduct analysis of historical, current GSMA M4D data and data collected - Sense making workshop with GSMA M4D MEL team - Reporting, and revision **Deliverables** - Presentation of interim findings - Final report (Approx. 30 pages, Word) - Grantee Case Studies - PowerPoint presentation of findings	Contract signing + 12 weeks

Firm and proposal requirements

Looking for: ***Individual consultant / corporate consultancy team***

Required experience

Essential:

- Demonstrable track record of completing similar assignments
- Expertise in implementing mixed methods evaluations in LMICs, please provide examples of previous projects
- Advanced qualitative and quantitative data analysis skills
- Demonstrated experience in ecosystem mapping, particularly in the digital technology sector, as well as previous work with public and private sector stakeholders. Please provide relevant examples
- Strong ability to analyse complex ecosystems, stakeholder motivations, and regulatory environments. Please provide examples
- Familiarity with emerging technologies e.g. AI and IoT, and their application in creating inclusive and sustainable solutions
- Full working proficiency in English, writing to publication quality.

Proposals should include a separate technical and financial proposal:

Technical proposal

1. A short (1 page) statement of suitability, highlighting recent relevant experience.
2. A short (2-4 page) discussion of the proposed approach including: the analytical frameworks to be used, identified data sources, and initial proposals on case studies.
3. Any proposed changes to the ToR.
4. Details of relevant firm project experience.
5. Gantt chart outlining major project stages and timelines
6. Teams and responsibilities: a short bio, alongside proposed roles and locations of team members; CVs.

Financial proposal

1. Level of effort (person-day) by activity.
2. Fee rates (per day in GBP).
3. Total project cost (GBP), without VAT[1].
4. The Respondent's Total Price is inclusive of all costs, insurances, fees, costs, expenses, liabilities, obligations, risks, and all financial requirements for the performance of Services and provision of Deliverables.
5. Any charge not stated in this Proposal, which extends above to the Total Price, is not permitted.

Due to GSMA compliance requirements, exact project budgets cannot be provided at this stage. You are, however, able to provide a few implementation/budget options that can help us assess value for money and we can align our project scope to the relevant budget after a consultant has been selected.

Total estimated days required: *35-40*

Proposal assessment and selection Process

The proposal will be scored on the following set of criteria:

[1] GSMA Foundation Inc is a US registered 501(c)(3) charity and is exempt from VAT.

Criteria	Importance	Weighting
Cost	Proposal's value for money	20%
Quality	Quality of the research approach outlined in the proposal, including degree to which it addresses the outlined research questions and proposal elements	35%
Bidder's capacity to manage the project on time and on budget	Demonstrated experience of running multi-country evaluations, selection of experienced high-quality research partner(s) and ability to manage the project on time and on budget	30%
Relevant experience	Bidder's experience in successfully conducting similar projects	15%

- Proposals are to be submitted no later than 29 May 2026 to Daisy Macaskie (dmacaskie@gsma.com), Meghana Parik (mparik@gsma.com), and Ruth Orbach (rorbach@gsma.com)
- Please send clarification questions to Meghana Parik and Daisy Macaskie by 18 May. Responses to clarification questions will be shared by 20 May. If you would like to be included on this mailing list, please confirm your interest before this date.

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