

AfDB Responsible Digital Payments Project Guide

August 2022



*“For tomorrow belongs to the people
who prepare for it today.”*
African Proverb

This guide has been created for the benefit of the African Development Bank and its partners to support them in their transformation towards a responsible and inclusive digital future.

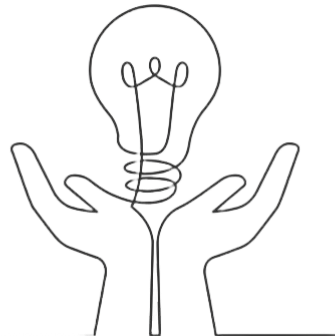


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INTRODUCTION



The Digital Eco-System

The Alliance for Financial Inclusion defines digital payment as any payment made through an electronic funds transfer (EFT) . Digital payments occur when a transfer of value from one person to another is done using a digital device like a mobile phone, POS (Point of Sales), or computer, as well as other digital channel communications such as mobile wireless data or SWIFT.

Digital payments seek to promote cashless economies with reduced costs. An efficient Digital Payment ecosystem should promote a complete end-to-end payments platform where users are able to make payments for any kind of good or service safely and securely across a wide range of suppliers and fellow users.

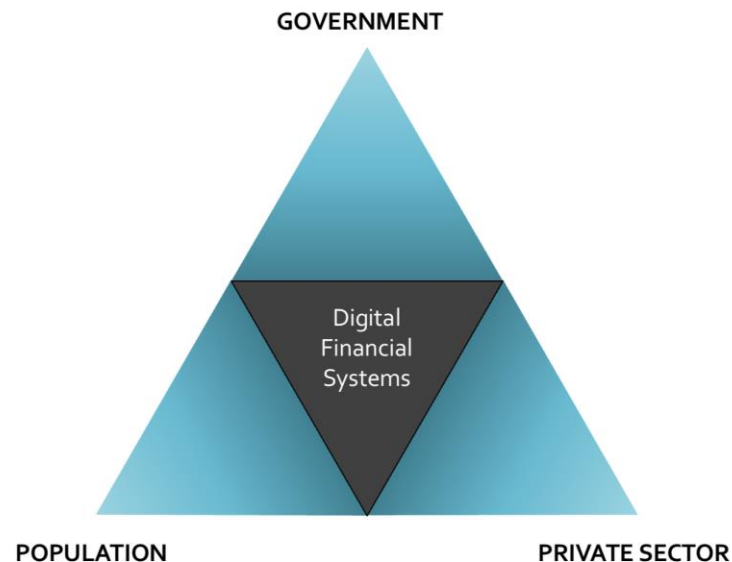
Digital payment systems encompass many stakeholders who primarily all fall within one of three categories below:



The government and related institutions have the role and responsibility to create an enabling environment through policies and regulations that are conducive and inclusive for digital payment to be taken up and thrive.

The **Private Sector** which takes on and explores opportunities to adopt and innovate around digital payment systems creating a lively ecosystem of commercial actors creating the digital economy.

The **Consumers** by virtue of the use cases developed for the market ensure mass adoption of the responsible and inclusive digital payment systems making them the prime beneficiaries of the leap in technology.

INTRODUCTION



Government enables  Private Sector creates  Population benefits



Digital Payments & Economic Well Being

INTRODUCTION

Financial inclusion is a key enabler to about 9 of the 17 SDGs and general economic development yet access to financial services and quality internet remains an issue of concern across Africa. The World Bank defines financial inclusion as having access to useful and affordable financial products and services that meet the needs of both individuals and businesses. Having a transaction account is the first and most critical step toward financial inclusion.

Digital financial services combined with effective oversight and supervision provide a gateway to greater economic security, empowerment, and opportunity for consumers and businesses. Digital technologies offer affordable and convenient ways for individuals, households and businesses to make payments, access credit and saving opportunities, insurance, social services among others.

Digitisation offers an unprecedented opportunity to accelerate economic growth by addressing eligibility and affordability barriers to formal financial inclusion faced by individuals and businesses. The AfDB has a two-pronged strategic approach; **inclusive growth** achieved by broadening access to economic opportunities for more people, countries, and regions while protecting the vulnerable and, **sustainable growth** by pursuing green growth strategies and digitisation plays a fundamental role in the achievement of both strategies.

Micro, small, and medium-sized businesses remain the backbone of most African economies and with access to suitable financial services, these businesses can create job opportunities for Africa's rising population. They however need access to quality, reliable and affordable capital, markets, and management expertise.

Digitisation of financial services coupled with mobile technology and use of big data will enable the maximisation of economies of scale, increase payment efficiency and base of service providers offering an improved experience to individuals and entrepreneurs, lowering operational costs allowing for increased financial inclusion of the most vulnerable communities and businesses while ensuring accountability, speed, security, and transparency of transactions.



AfDB's Approach to Financial Inclusion and Digital Payments

AfDB works through the Africa Digital Financial Inclusion Facility (ADFI) to accelerate digital financial inclusion across Africa. The digital financial inclusion interventions are organised along four broad strategic pillars aimed at scaling innovative digital financial services and increasing integration throughout the continent with gender inclusion as a cross-cutting issue.

INTRODUCTION

ADFI works to address the systemic barriers to DFS growth and uptake by making strategic and catalytic investments in the DFS ecosystem throughout Africa.

The Facility is aiming to deploy up to \$400 million in the form of grants and loans to scale up digital financial services to various entities, including banks and non-bank financial institutions, mobile network operators, remittance and payment service providers, fintech companies, government ministries, regulatory bodies and regional economic organisations by 2030.

Women entrepreneurs account for 37% of global GDP yet they continue to experience policy and cultural challenges limiting their ability to fully tap in to the opportunities presented by the digital economy such as access to new business opportunities and markets, access to health services, financing, learning platforms among others.

ADFI is committed to a target of 60% of its projects being gender-intentional, reducing the gender gap in access to resources, and 15% being gender-transformative, designed to transform gender power relations and actively seek to change gender norms.

Overall, governments and policymakers have a big role to play in closing the gender parity by improving access to affordable finance as well as putting in place gender-sensitive and intentional policies in support of women and their businesses for the benefit of the entire society.



CONTEXT



The Concept of Responsible Digital Payments

Technology has presents numerous opportunities to boost financial inclusion through increased convenience and efficiency of digital payments however this is not without risks. The digital divide alongside ethical considerations around digitization opens up new challenges. Digitization needs to be implemented responsibly, in a manner that makes the end user feel safe and respected. This toolkit builds on the nine foundations of The UN Principles for Responsible Digital Payments outlined below.

CONTEXT

An ecosystem-wide approach that ensures the harmonisation and alignment of data, competition, trade, and taxation policies and laws both at the national and regional levels helps to create a system that puts digital ethics and the users at the core of digitalisation and economic development. In designing projects for countries and sectors, the AfDB should consider adopting the following nine Principles:

1. Ensure equal and fair treatment of users.
2. Security of funds - Digital platforms have become the new fraud frontier. It is imperative for digital financial service providers to secure the trust of users and take actual steps in safeguarding the funds entrusted to them
3. The Digital Gender Divide – Digital payments should aim to close the digital gender divide. It is estimated that closing the digital gender gap has the potential to add nearly US\$15 billion to Africa’s e-commerce industry which is currently valued at \$180 billion between 2025-2030. Vulnerable populations should be prioritized.
4. Data Protection: Data protection enhances trust thereby increasing confidence in digital payments systems.
5. Design for Individuals: Digital payments should take on an inclusive and user-centric approach.

6. Transparency – Transparency at all levels is critical in building user trust in digital payments and especially around transaction costs and data protection and use.
7. Choice and interoperability - Users should be able to transact freely and affordably across different providers for digital payment to be as convenient as or better than cash transactions.
8. Recourse Mechanisms – Effective consumer dispute resolution and redress mechanisms are critical in digital payments. They should be simple, clear, quick, and responsive.
9. Value chain accountability – The digital finance ecosystem is vast and it relies on a myriad of stakeholders in order to function efficiently and effectively. All these stakeholders must be held to account within their remit.

Embedding ethical principles, such as transparency and accountability, into the creation of products, tools and services is essential for building public trust and confidence in technology and by extension, DFS.



Introducing the Analytical Framework for Responsible Digital Payments

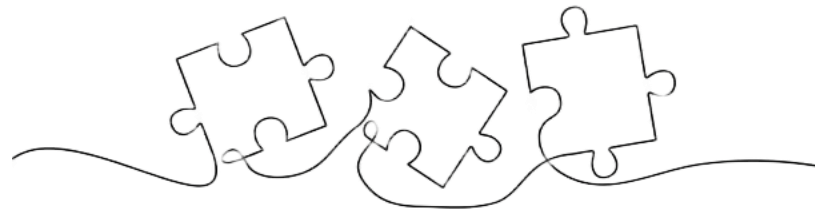
To enable the key actors in Government and related institutions, the Private Sector and the Population to be guided and inspired, the AfDB has developed for its country organisations this guide in the form of a toolkit in support.

CONTEXT

The toolkit consists of eight building blocks that together form the analytical framework behind the Responsible Digital Payments Guide.

These building blocks comprise all the requirements that need to be in place to be able to claim the successful roll out and implementation of a responsible and inclusive digital payment eco-system; including both digital and non-digital components.

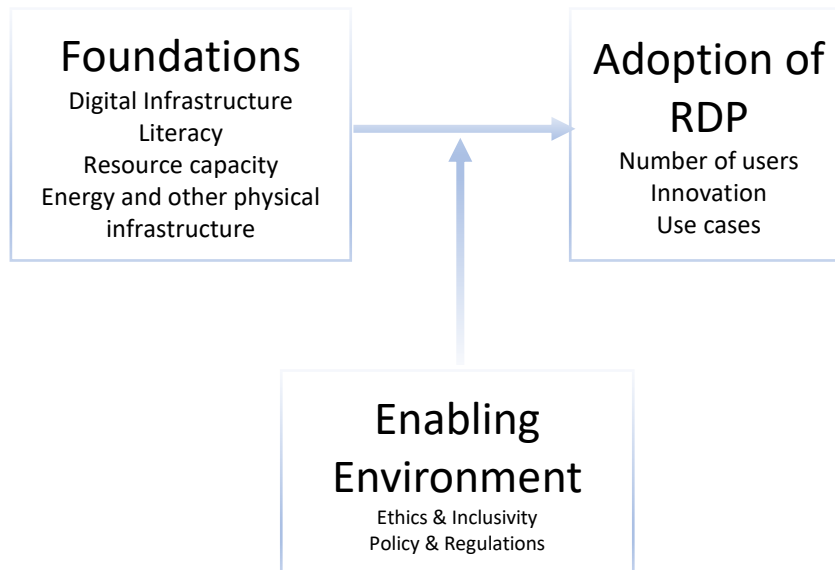
The main guiding principle on which the analytical framework for the responsible digital payments is build is to be as practical as possible grounded not in theory but in the everyday practice as experienced by the country teams.



The Analytical Framework for Responsible Digital Payments

The eight building blocks which are described in detail in the following chapter are categorized in three sections each building onto the other:

CONTEXT



Foundations: without the foundations in place digital payments will not be effective and efficient in their implementation and adoption.

Adoption: no matter how advanced the solution, if it fails to create use cases and to be adopted by its intended users, it is not a solution, but merely another system incurring costs to develop and maintain without delivering results.

Enabling Environment: to achieve breakthrough innovation as is required when aiming to develop responsible digital payments, the stakeholders involved must be enabled to play their part.



Introducing the Analytical Framework for Responsible Digital Payments - Foundations

Without the foundations in place the digital payments are set up to fail in its implementation and adoption.

CONTEXT

The foundational building blocks comprise of both digital and non-digital elements, since without the following four building blocks in place, responsible digital payments will not be able to take off:

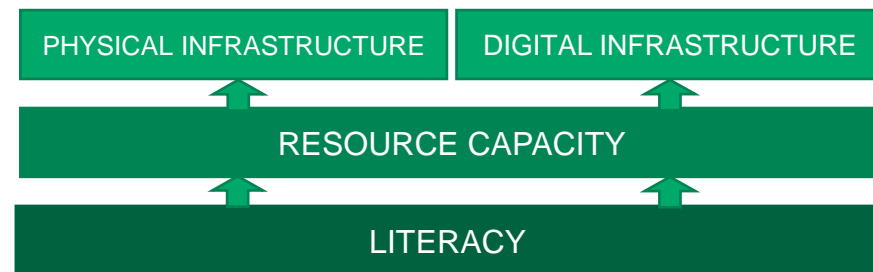
Literacy: at the most elementary level it starts with a population, both rural and urban, who have the knowledge and capability to interact within a digital payment eco-system in a responsible and inclusive manner.

Resource Capacity: does the country have the knowledge, capabilities and resources including budget to create, develop and maintain the infrastructure on which the digital payment solution(s) are build?

Physical Infrastructure: any digital solutions that are being developed or are in place will fail to survive since the digital infrastructure is fully dependent on the well-functioning of the physical infrastructure eg. energy supply feeding tools and systems.

Digital Infrastructure: the same way in which the real world is functioning within a legal and moral framework, the same is to be replicated in a digital setting for its eco-system to function properly and to its positive potential.

Combined these four building blocks make up the Foundations of the Analytical Framework.



Introducing the Analytical Framework for Responsible Digital Payments - Adoption

Regardless of how advanced the solution is, if it fails to create use cases and to be adopted by its intended users, it is not a solution, but merely another system incurring costs to develop and maintain without delivering results.

CONTEXT

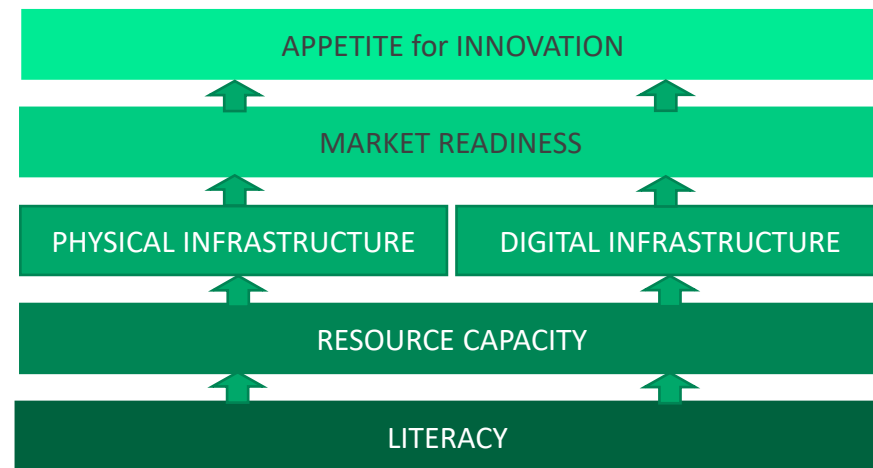
With the Foundations in place, the only elements standing in the way of implementing the responsible digital payments is the uptake of the technology or better: the solutions as build with the technology.

For digital payments to work, there needs to be a market ready to adopt, be it through demand-pull or a market-push. The key is there is a relevance for the market bringing value to the users of the technology in this case responsible digital payments.

A ready market attracts commercial and other parties to invest time and other resources to develop a wider range of solutions feeding into the digital payments ecosystem, increasing its relevance and with it its adoption which in turn again leads to a higher interest for investments and so on.

Market Readiness leads to an Appetite for Innovation setting off a perpendicular cycle until the market reaches a level of saturation which is the end goal as this represents a stable level of sustainability.

Together the Market Readiness and the Appetite for Innovation ensure the Adoption of the Analytical Framework.



Introducing the Analytical Framework for Responsible Digital Payments – Enablers

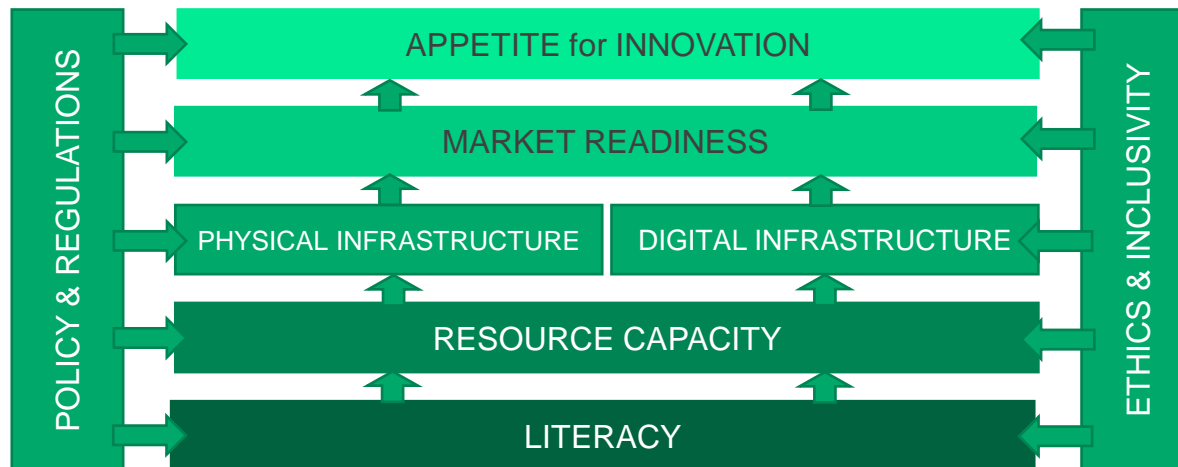
To achieve breakthrough innovation as is required when aiming to develop responsible digital payments, the stakeholders involved must be enabled to play their part.

CONTEXT

To facilitate the development and implementation of the foundational elements and the adoption across the eco-system, government and related institutions play a key role in setting the right policies and frameworks in which to operate.

Equally, to ensure that digital payments are responsible and inclusive, it is important to not only appreciate diversity when it comes to the users but also facilitate the creation of solutions that innovate across the full spectrum of diversity.

An active and forward-looking enabling environment build from policies and regulations is key in establishing the foundations and stimulating continuous growth through innovation and transformation.





GUIDELINES | HOW IT WORKS

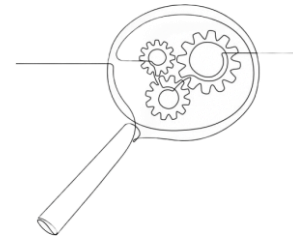


Introduction to the Toolkit & How It Works

The AfDB Responsible Digital Payment Guide, aims to help AfDB at all levels in developing countries assess their readiness towards responsible digital transformation. Through both qualitative and quantitative analyses, it identifies strengths and weaknesses of the current digital government status and proposes future-looking action plans to improve and/or develop a comprehensive national ICT strategy.

GO TO
ASSESSMENT

The Toolkit consists of an Assessment followed by a Scoring Mechanism to be done by the countries to gauge their level of preparedness in creating, implementing and adopting the Responsible Digital Payments.



The Assessment itself is comprised of a comprehensive set of questions and delves into the eight core building blocks as discussed in the previous chapter, i.e. Literacy, Resource Capacity, Physical Infrastructure, Digital Infrastructure, Market Readiness, Appetite for Innovation, Policy & Regulations, Ethics & Inclusivity.

When all building blocks have been rated, the scores are now entered into the Scoring Mechanism which follows after both the Foundations, Adoption and Enabling Environment questions of the Assessment are fully finished.

Each Building Block is first introduced, followed by a questionnaire where the participants rates the answer to the best of their abilities. There are no right or wrong answers, nor is there any judgement. The Assessment is purely meant as a tool to guide the countries to know if and when they are ready to take the next leap in the transformation process towards a Responsible Digital Payments' Society.

The Assessment is set up to guide countries at the most practical level, but can be equally used to gauge the position for individual cross-country projects and other.

We also encourage participants to engage with the questions and adapt them to their specific situation where they see fit.

Each section has its own scoring sheet.

The Assessments are merely guidelines.





ASSESSMENT



ASSESSMENT of FOUNDATIONS

ASSESSMENT





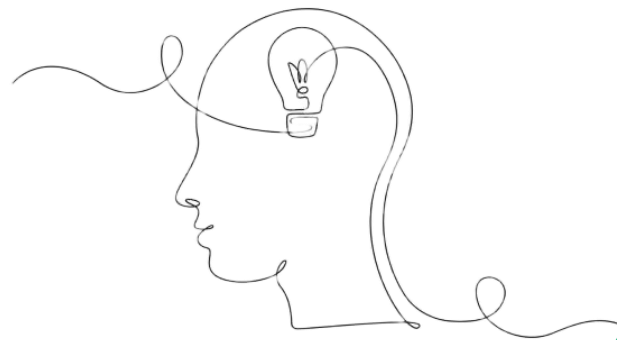
Foundations:

Without the foundations in place the digital payments are set up to fail in its implementation and adoption.

ASSESSMENT of FOUNDATIONS

“Knowledge is a garden. If it isn’t cultivated, you can’t harvest it.”

African Proverb

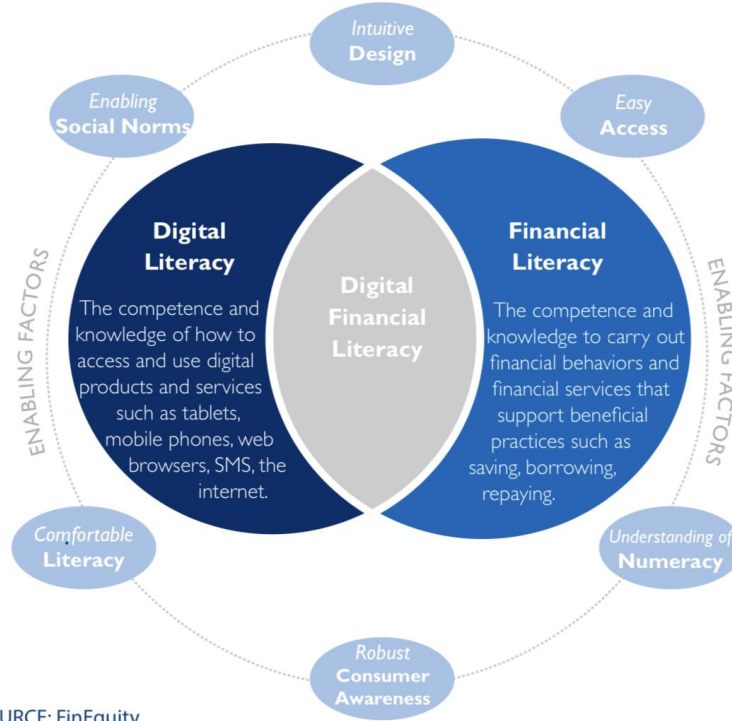


Literacy – Overview

Executive Summary

Thanks to the 4th Industrial Revolution, technology is becoming more important in people’s daily lives. One area that is seeing both the greatest opportunity and greatest growth in particular in Africa is the use of technology when it comes to digital payments. Overall the fintech (financial technology) sector is buzzing with startups and investors innovating around mobile payments and loan products.

ASSESSMENT of FOUNDATIONS



SOURCE: FinEquity

In addition to the need for people to become more technologically and digitally savvy in order to be able to keep up with the times, people as consumers will also need to have a higher level of financial sophistication to understand and make effective use of fintech (financial technology) products and services and avoid fraud and costly mistakes.

Financial and digital literacy hence are becoming an increasingly important aspect of education for the Digital Age with individuals becoming more responsible for their own financial planning.

Without financial literacy no digital literacy and without general literacy no financial literacy:

General Literacy \rightarrow Financial Literacy \rightarrow Digital Literacy.



Resource Capacity – Overview

Does the country have the knowledge, capabilities and resources including budget to create, develop and maintain the infrastructure on which the digital payment solution(s) are build?

ASSESSMENT of FOUNDATIONS

“If your vision is for a year plant wheat, if you vision is for a decade plant trees, and if your vision is for a lifetime plant people.” ~ African Proverb

9 out of 10 of projects fail because of lack of strategy and follow through. With resources (both skilled people, equipment and available budget) being scarce, cutting corners might cost one dearly when implementing a technology intensive project like a Digital Payments Solution.

Digital and other solutions go through three stages of maturity: it start with ideation and creation, then development or implementation followed by maintenance. In an ideal scenario a solution would be continuously updated to keep in trend with the latest technological capabilities.

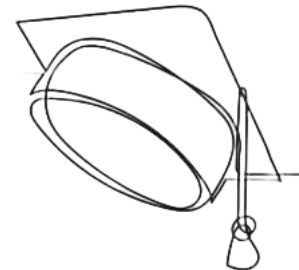
When pitching a project though, provisions are often made only for the first stage of ideation and development, with maintenance and continuous innovation an afterthought.

Within Resource Capacity, we base the Assessment on the following three categories:

Technical Knowledge & Skills: developing and implementing solutions around digital payments requires the right resources including budget to be available.

Tools & Equipment: developing and implementing solutions around digital payments requires the right hardware and software to be available or if not available, doable to build.

Digital Skills & Education: adopting new technologies requires an up-skill of resources through education.



Physical Infrastructure – Overview

Any digital solutions that are being developed or are in place will fail to survive since the digital infrastructure is fully dependent on the well-functioning of the physical infrastructure. Roads, Energy and Telecom are all three imperative to feed the digital economy and with it the development of an eco-system for Responsible Digital Payments

ASSESSMENT of FOUNDATIONS

Roads

With digital payments being real-time and hence transactions as well, expectations of users on how long the processing time of exchanging the bought goods or services should take is rapidly decreasing.

Additionally: with digital payments being able to be made from anywhere to anywhere, the radius of where people trade their goods and services to and from is at the same time increasing.

To enable the real-time transactions, a well developed network of roads connecting not only major business hubs but also the more rural areas is no longer a nice to have but a must have.



Energy

Without energy no power and without power no working devices hence no transactions.



Telecom

As much as telecommunications has become a service, the infrastructure represented by the hardware and telecom masts delivering the signals for the connections is foundational.

Another aspect is the accessibility to fast internet through under sea cables and on land fiber for example.

The faster the connection the more trade and transactions can take place and the greater the development.

Also, with the Internet of Things (IoT) connecting more and more devices through the internet high levels of speed are a must to stay connected.



Digital Infrastructure – Overview

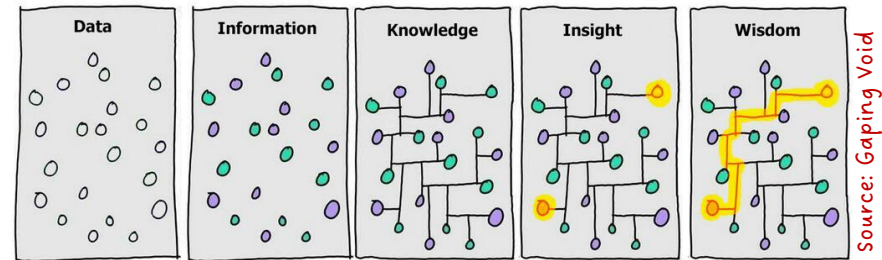
Many countries in Africa still function in a paper-based economy and feel they have a long road to travel before they can become digital economies. A digital economy though is based on the same principles as the physical economy: the same way in which the real world is functioning within a legal and moral framework, the same is to be replicated in a digital setting for its eco-system to function properly and to its positive potential.

ASSESSMENT of FOUNDATIONS

In order for Responsible Digital Payments to function, people need to acquire a **Digital Identity** which allows them to be uniquely identified and enables them to navigate in an online environment.

While in the paper-based world data and information exist in a physical form and hence its security depends on the safeguarding of the single source, in an online environment the **Security of Information** depends on how well the different sources where the information has been replicated to are protected.

One of the advantages of having a digital infrastructure for Responsible Digital Payments is that it allows for **Data Collection** where information is captured and utilised to develop more and better-targeted solutions.



A first step in the data collection is to ensure the right equipment to do the data capture is available, as well as the right storage is in place where the data can be archived.

Also, it is important that the methodology used to capture the data is easy to verify and the source of the data easy to trace.



ASSESSMENT

ASSESSMENT of
FOUNDATIONS

ASSESSMENT of
ADOPTION





Adoption:

No matter how advanced the solution, if it fails to create use cases and to be adopted by its intended users, it is not a solution, but merely another system incurring costs to develop and maintain without delivering results.

ASSESSMENT of FOUNDATIONS

“If you think you're too small to make a difference, try spending the night with a mosquito.”

African Proverb



Introduction to Adoption

The success of Responsible Digital Payment Solutions all depends on how well it is being adopted in the market, with the adoption in the market depending on the number of solutions making use of online or mobile payments.

To create these use cases, an inclusive and innovative eco-system of startups, corporates and investors is required where these products and services using Responsible Digital Payment Solutions can be developed.

Responsible Digital Payments are not the solution in itself, they exist by the grace of products and services that are build on top of it and make use of its technology.

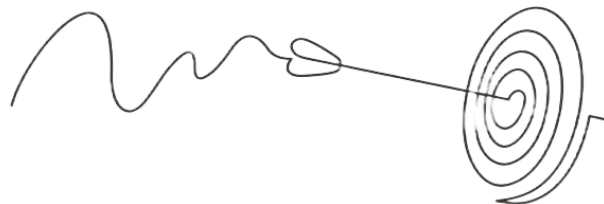
This means that the Responsible Digital Payment Solutions need to address a need within the market to allow for its adoption; in other words: the market needs to be ready to embrace the ease of making online or mobile payments as opposed to in-cash payments.

The more opportunities that exist in the market, the more incentives there are for startups and corporates to develop solutions and for investors to bring in the required funding to grow these solutions to scale.

Innovations are not created in a vacuum, but within an enabling environment where different key stakeholders come together and create solutions building on top of each-other.

The stronger and inclusive the eco-system, the more solutions can be build to address the needs of a diverse population. Together, these different key stakeholders in the eco-system consisting both of startups, corporates and investors through their **Appetite for Innovation** create solutions for the market.

ASSESSMENT of ADOPTION



Market Readiness – Overview

Tools & Systems are nothing when they are not adopted and the same goes for Responsible Digital Payments. In order to get adopted, the Responsible Digital Payments need to address a need with users bringing value to using the technology over the traditional ways of working.

ASSESSMENT of ADOPTION

Pre-requisites for the adoption of Responsible Digital Payments are therefore first and foremost **Practical Use Cases** that could either be market or user driven; or solution based solving real-world problems, as opposed to theoretical problems.

Online payments carry many advantages from around the clock availability to allowing transactions to be sent from anywhere to anywhere and a lower risk of stealing.

Also, the traceability of the transaction allows not only for increased transparency, but equally gives merchants the opportunity to perform analytics on their sales data supporting them in making smarter business decisions.

A pre-dominant driver for Practical Use Cases can be government as they already serve a ready market in holding the monopoly for the servicing of official documentation.

In addition, to ensure adoption, the products and solutions based on the Responsible Digital Payments

need at the same time be affordable for the population to buy into so that cost doesn't become a barrier, as well as have a consistent level of being available (reliability) and the User Experience needs to be one of convenience.

Finally, to ensure not only affordability but also to encourage continuous innovation around the creation of solutions for Responsible Digital Payments, **Interoperability** plays an important role in the ease of doing business:

- ✓ between operators
- ✓ across borders both pan-Africa and worldwide



Appetite for Innovation – Overview

A ready market attracts commercial and other parties to invest time and other resources to develop a wider range of solutions feeding into the digital payments ecosystem, increasing its relevance and with it its adoption which in turn again leads to a higher interest for investments and so on.

ASSESSMENT of ADOPTION

The innovation eco-system consists of corporates, startups and investors, with government enabling the blossoming of this eco-system through its policies and regulations ensuring ethics and inclusivity.

When it comes to digital and technological innovation, startups can be categorised in two types:

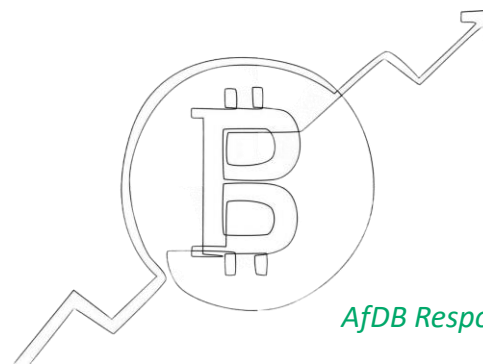
- ✓ Startups that *create* technological innovations
- ✓ Startups that *use* the technology to grow and scale

Both are equally important.

As for corporates: in addition to creating employment and with it a fertile ground for startup spin-offs, growth is enabled by technology hence corporates by themselves are also a ready market for technological innovations.

Different type of investors have different interests in the type of companies they want to invest in and different levels of expectation of what they want in return.

To support a blossoming eco-system, it is important to establish a local (angel) investors network who have an interest to invest in local solutions by local entrepreneurs as opposed to attracting funds from outside of Africa that often have a limited interest for products and solutions that do not have an impact component, but which do have potential to disrupt the local market and grow to scale commercially if they had the financial support.



ASSESSMENT

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ASSESSMENT of
ADOPTION

ASSESSMENT of
ENABLING
ENVIRONMENT





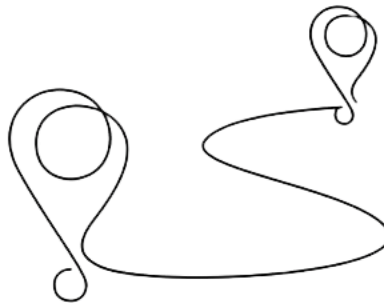
Enabling Environment:

To achieve breakthrough innovation as is required when aiming to develop responsible digital payments, the stakeholders involved must be enabled to play their part.

ASSESSMENT of FOUNDATIONS

“If you want to know the end, look at the beginning.”

African Proverb



Introduction to Enabling Environment

Having the right political buy-in and an enabling policy environment and regulatory frameworks that encourage growth and investment into the digital financial services space as well as investment around the infrastructure that facilitates digital financial services is critical.

ASSESSMENT of ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

Financial inclusion and digitization are driven by four key pillars i.e. access, usability, affordability and quality. Measure that advocate and encourage these pillars are vital for the growth and adoption of digital payments and digital financial services.

An enabling environment should be built around the key six building blocks of a digital financial services ecosystem namely:

- i. The Use Cases: the situations in which consumers and businesses consume or require digital financial services for instance Social Funds Initiatives, IMTs and One-to-many payments (payroll) among others.
- ii. The Users: Consumers, businesses, government agencies and non-profits.
- iii. The Operating Environment: The policy, law and regulatory
- iv. Service Providers: Banks, other licensed financial institutions, and non-banks that supply DFS.

v. The DFS Infrastructure: this includes Market infrastructure, Internet connectivity and payment systems.

vi. DFS Providers Support Services

Fostering Partnerships and Coordination Mechanisms and the perceived value add drawn from DFS are critical to the success of any DFS strategy. For DFS to achieve success, it must deliver value to multiple stakeholders within an ecosystem. This calls for coordination, collaboration, and co-opetition among various actors.

Having the rights partners can help to accelerate the uptake of DFS through leveraging expertise, and data as well as the development of new products and services that speak to user needs.

Countries should build an enabling environment around the principles of simplicity, financial literacy and awareness, versatility, safety and efficiency and affordable internet accessibility to ensure a healthy DFS ecosystem.



Policy & Regulations – Overview

Regulation is the foundation of a healthy and inclusive DFS however the multiplicity of licensing regimes in Africa continues to pose a challenge to DFS as a pathway to financial inclusion and eventually, sustained development. It is important to ensure that the entire ecosystem is governed by clear and transparent regulatory and governance frameworks that not only support innovation but also protect DFS users.

**ASSESSMENT of
ENABLING
ENVIRONMENT**

Easing barriers to entry such as undue compliance costs for non-traditional financial service providers, increasing consumer protection standards, and improving financial literacy is of great importance for the growth, stability and safety of the DFS sector.

DFS can then also be used as a powerful tool to counter anticompetition behaviors. This can be achieved by ensuring there are similar rules within the ecosystem for similar constituents e.g. ensuring the same treatment and same rules apply to similar payment activities/DFS categories and services, irrespective of whether the participant is a regulated bank or non-traditional financial service provider such as the Nonbank E-Money Issuers (NBEIs).

Although the urban areas benefit from increased private sector investment, they also suffer from volatile policy environments, increasing the risk profile and investment costs resulting in to ICT services that are not affordable for most Africans.

A healthy and inclusive digital financial services ecosystem calls for robust, forward-looking and inclusive legal and regulatory frameworks that allow and facilitate free and fair market entry, innovation, customer centricity and competition.

Additionally, laws and regulations that aim to regulate and stimulate the growth of the startup ecosystem are essential. Startup laws can offer incentives for angel investors and partners who comply with certain statutory requirements, thus boosting investments in the startup sector.



Ethics & Inclusivity – Overview

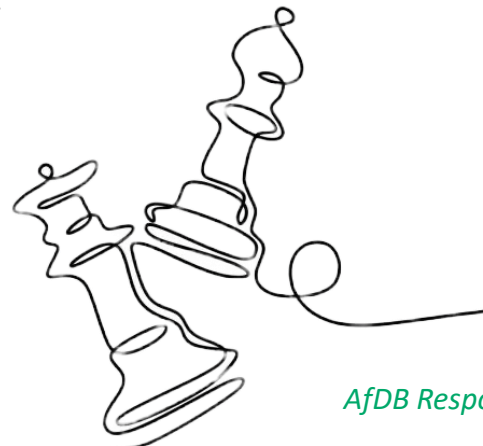
ASSESSMENT of ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

Trust underlies everything in the digital economy and there is need to have certain standards of what good and fair looks like. The Oxford dictionary defines ethics as “the moral principles that govern a person’s behavior or conduct of an activity”.

There are a number of factors that shape and affect the confidence of stakeholders in the digital ecosystem thereby shaping how and when and whom they select to engage with. These include, and are not limited to: Consumer protection and redress systems, data protection, logistical challenges and delivery turnaround times, general connectivity challenges, and the general security of systems among other concerns.

To ensure inclusivity, the need to cater to the rural population and the marginalized groups including women and the youth remains. AfDB has noted a great disparity in digital infrastructure investment across Africa’s urban and rural areas with only about 6% of rural areas having some form of digital connectivity.

For the benefits of the digital economy to be fully achieved, it is important to embed ethical foundations and principles, such as security, integrity, transparency, fairness, non-discrimination, accountability and explainability into the creation of products, tools and services for the digital marketplace so as to build public trust and confidence in the digital marketplace.





THANK YOU

