# Community Strategy Proposal

April 2020

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**License**

**Context & Background**

Mojaloop is open-source software for creating interoperable payments platforms that connect all digital financial providers and customers and help unbanked people around the world access digital financial services. Named after the Swahili word for "one," it can help loop providers and customers together in one inclusive system.

Mojaloop grew out of principles set forth by the Financial Services for the Poor team at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. These principles form the cornerstone of the Level One Project, which is the foundation's initiative for designing and implementing digital financial services and systems to include and benefit the world's 2 billion unbanked. The Mojaloop code won't address the gap in digital financial services on its own, but it can help service providers open markets and accelerate progress.

Mojaloop provides a blueprint for bridging all the financial products and applications in use in any given market. Across a whole nation or region, there are dozens and dozens of banks and mobile money companies providing financial services. Making them interoperable used to require each service to build custom-made connections to one another.

Mojaloop can help create a new platform that financial providers, merchants, and government offices all share. When they loop together, the result is an internet of payments, where digital money moves without barriers throughout the economy.

The software itself was built in collaboration with a group of leading tech and fintech companies: Ripple, Dwolla, Software Group, ModusBox, and Crosslake Technologies. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation provided funding and support. Since the development kickoff, a growing community of developers have joined the effort and are actively contributing to the project.

A total of 9 community meetings have been held in various locations in Africa, with 70-100+ participants attending the events. The focus of these convenings is to report on work since the last meeting and prioritize work for the next Program Increment (PI). In addition to the focus on development, sessions are conducted at these events to review work in progress on pilot projects and to educate new prospective participants about the code base and development efforts.

To maximize the reach as well as to ensure the long-term impact of the Mojaloop Initiative, it was proposed that The Gates Foundation transitions the project and the work under it into a new, independent organization - Mojaloop Foundation. While it intends to remain committed to the project and its work over the long term, The Gates Foundation seeks to bring together a diverse group of industry participants to help drive the creation of this new organization and help ensure it meets its mission-critical objectives.

One such objective is to build a strong and diverse community of participants around Mojaloop.

In this regard, a Community Manager was hired in March 2020 to establish a community management practice and focus on mission-critical functions such as Community Governance and Mojaloop Evangelism.

**Strong and Diverse Mojaloop Community**

This proposal suggests anchoring the community management practice on the principle of community involvement and decision making rather than top down decision making at all levels.

The process below suggests a community-led practice to establish a strong and diverse community.

1. **Input**: Clear Objectives and Tactical Plan
2. **Process**: Community Leadership Committee
3. **Outcome**: Strategic Direction
4. **Implementation**:

**Input: Clear Objectives and Tactical Plan**

During the Johannesburg Community Meeting on 27th January 2020, participants had the opportunity to discuss issues pertaining to the community. These discussions were organized in the following themes:

- Engineering Workflow
- Governance and Leadership
- Communication Platforms
- Content and Social Media
- Events

Common themes that surfaced from these discussions include:

1. The need to define community audiences and standardize channels around them
2. The need to align the same resources to all workstreams
3. The need for a clear and effective workflow for all workstreams

In the past month, the community manager has reviewed these needs and has had one on one conversations with many community participants and summarized them into a set of clear objectives and tactical plans aimed at structuring the community management function. The objectives are summarized as follows:

1. **Formalize Community Management**: The goal of this objective is to put in place a structured system for responding to non-tech and community related issues that directly support the community and responds to its needs.
2. **Simplify Onboarding Processes for All Member Profiles**: The aim here is to help new contributors feel comfortable in the community, earn their commitment to the cause and help them start contributing to the project.
3. **Make Governance More Transparent and Participative**: The objective here is to help the community understand Mojaloop's governance structures: their makeup, their workflow and how they can engage and participate.
4. **Create awareness and communicate Mojaloop activities**: The goal is to put in place a system and tools to share information across different member profiles and work streams to ensure

everyone in the community is aware of what's taking place. In addition, find and utilize opportunities to advocate and evangelize mojaloop in other spheres.

5. **Set up a Knowledge Management Initiative**: The goal here is to create new, and organize existing knowledge archives and make it easy for people to find and search through

These objectives serve a dual purpose: one, to organize and prioritize tasks for the function of community management and two, to serve as one input for the community led process to establish a community strategy proposal.

**Process: Community Leadership Committee**

The Community Leadership Committee is one of a series of recommendations for optimizations to the overall Mojaloop project made by Jono Bacon. Here, it is adapted to fit the purpose of delivering a Community Strategic Direction for the Mojaloop project.

This committee is envisioned to be temporary in its tenure. Its make up is suggested to constitute all the leads of the various workstreams, a representative from the Technical Governing Board (TGB), the Design Authority (DA), the Change Control Board (CCB) and the Mojaloop Foundation Leadership. This is a suggestion and any recommendations from the community are welcome.

In delivering the Community Strategic Direction, the Community Leadership Committee will follow the process outlined as follows:

1. Research and Input
2. Ideation
3. Consultation

**Research and Input**

As aforementioned, the common themes from the Johannesburg workshop and the community managers' Objectives and Tactical plan form basic inputs for consideration by the Community Leadership Committee.

In addition to this, the committee may propose a research targeted at the wider community to surface needs, requests and tensions. This would strengthen the inputs for consideration by the committee. This proposal strongly recommends a survey to supplement existing inputs.

**Ideation**

In this stage, the committee members would organize the inputs into clear strategic targets which serve as the structure for the Community Strategic Direction. For each target, the committee would ideate and propose plans and solutions to respond to the emerging need in light of the bigger goal of creating a strong and diverse community.

**Consultation**

The Community Leadership Committee will conclude the ideation process with a draft version of the Community Strategic Direction and will initiate a consultation period where the wider community will give feedback and propose any final changes the committee should consider.

Once all feedback is resolved and a final draft is drawn up, the Community Leadership Committee will present it for final adoption by community members.

If adopted, the Community Leadership Committee will have come to the end of its tenure unless a term extension or new mandate be given to them.

**Outcome: Strategic Direction**

The Strategic Document is envisioned to present a raft of recommendations and a plan of action aimed at building a strong and diverse community of participants around Mojaloop.

Listed below are some of the outcomes envisioned for the Strategic Direction (NB: these are subject to discussion and approval by the Community Leadership Committee and the wider community):

1. **Shared ideals**: A vision, mission, values, and guiding principles that will serve as the foundation for a strong community and define how we work together based on common ground.
2. **Membership Model:** A clear definition of membership profiles within the community, how people acquire membership and the terms of engagement
3. **Working Structure:** A plan that describes workflows and recommendations to improve its effectiveness
4. **Diverse Participation:** Recommendations and plans that suggest how to get people from diverse backgrounds and different skill sets to actively participate and engage in the Mojaloop project

**Implementation**

Once adopted, the Community Manager, together with various governing committees and community leaders, will work together to implement approved resolutions.

**Timeline**

| Task | Due Date |
| --- | --- |
| Review of Community Strategy Proposal | 10th April 2020 |
| Creation of Community Leadership Committee | 24th April 2020 |

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| Research and Input Stage | TBD |
| Ideation Stage | TBD |
| Consultation Stage | TBD |
| Adoption of Community Strategic Direction | Proposal: Q1 2021 Community Meeting |
| Implementation of Community Strategic Direction | Q1 to Q4 2021 |