

INDIVIDUAL CASE STORY | **MSE SYSTEM**

FIKRESILASE EXCELS THROUGH A NEW DIGITAL FINANCIAL SERVICE BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY

Fikresilase is a 25-year-old chemical engineer graduate who lost his job as a day labourer in a factory due to the economic crisis resulting from COVID-19. Since then, he struggled to find employment even though he was registered as a jobseeker through a Woreda office. It was through this registration that Elebat Management and Technology Solution PLC (Elebat Solution) identified Fikresilase as a candidate for a new digital financial service opportunity that was co-created in partnership with LIWAY.

The model targets, empowers, and engages women and youth-owned MSEs to effectively deliver digital financial services as agents. Elebat Solution develops partnerships with banks, microfinance institutions, and other relevant actors to become a master agent. The company mobilises, trains, and mentors target MSEs to become sub-agents that provide digital financial services on a commission basis. To ensure business feasibility for the MSEs, Elebat Solution has engaged other partners and has designed and developed more products (e.g., telecoms, digital health, e-commerce) to provide the MSEs with additional income-generating opportunities. Elebat Solution also implements marketing and promotion activities to increase awareness of the digital products, build trust, and generate demand for the MSEs.



After successfully passing the selection process, Fikresilase completed the required technical training on the package of digital products and services and began to work on a commission basis to subscribe and mobilise potential customers. Fikresilase is a self-motivated youth, and he quickly became a business representative of Elebat Solution and aggressively started working on new target engagement. He also provides orientations and briefings about Elebat digital financial services, market drive, and customer engagement, and engages and onboards suppliers with five other youth. He has signed a contract with Elebat Solution under two different engagement modalities both on fixed periodical payment and on commission basis to promote and market Elebat Solution’s digital products and services.

Fikresilase commented on his experience to date and the skills he has learned.

“ *The training and business engagement have helped me a lot to improve my communication and negotiation skills. It increased my interest toward digital businesses and motivated me to engage in digital service delivery business... I am able to learn new business ideas and am gaining practical experience. I realised that the lives of many youth could be changed if they are properly informed about such a digital business.* ”

Currently, Fikresilase is earning an average monthly income of 7,000 to 9,000 ETB and he believes he can increase his earnings if he works more. He is also in discussions with Elebat Solution regarding access to a micro-loan that will enhance his ability to engage more youth and to form a partnership with Elebat Solution to scale up the business. As the digital space is growing, he aspires to have his own digital business, where he plans to apply his knowledge and skills and leverage his professional networks.