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JOINT PRESS RELEASE: IQONIX, Talico Technologies, and Ingonyama Holdings Announce Strategic South African Expansion via Southern Royal Fund

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa — 18 August 2026 — IQONIX, a premier global commercial fintech entity, its deep-tech engineering partner Talico Technologies (Singapore), and South Africa's Ingonyama Holdings today announced a joint operational deployment launching Ebony, a proprietary white-label marketplace financial and banking services platform, into the South African market through the creation of the **Southern Royal Fund.**

This initiative marks a milestone partnership between global technical innovators and a major South African enterprise player. Operating as the primary customer and localised deployment vehicle, Ingonyama Holdings will utilise Ebony's digital infrastructure to deliver comprehensive retail banking, B2B corporate trade accounts, and targeted agricultural marketplace solutions to regional ecosystems.

Institutional Compliance and Partner Banking Framework

To ensure absolute alignment with domestic regulatory standards, the partners confirm that all regional banking operations, deposit-taking capabilities, and transactional compliance frameworks are strictly managed under the license of their fully authorised South African partner bank.
This model allows financial institutions, institutional investors, and corporate partners to engage with the Southern Royal Fund with full confidence. The underlying tech ecosystem combines Talico Technologies' advanced machine learning pipelines for localised risk mitigation and

biometric identity management with the rigorous regulatory oversight, capital controls, and auditing standards required by the South African Reserve Bank (SARB) and the Financial Sector Conduct Authority (FSCA).

Empowering Female Entrepreneurs: The iWIN Initiative

A core pillar of this deployment is the integration of specialised women's empowerment banking delivered under **Ingonyama's iWIN initiative**. This targeted framework is specifically engineered to empower female-led small and medium enterprises (SMEs) across South Africa.

By leveraging Ebony's proprietary digital architecture, the iWIN initiative introduces:

- **Alternative Underwriting**: Utilising machine learning pipelines for non-traditional credit evaluations to bypass systemic funding barriers.
- **Bespoke Capital Access**: Designing financial products tailored specifically to the cash-flow requirements of women-owned commercial entities.
- **Enterprise Incubators**: Providing dedicated digital toolkits and marketplace access to accelerate the scale and sustainability of female-led enterprises.

Transforming Commerce: Ingonyama Holdings as the Strategic Customer

Ingonyama Holdings serves as the localised commercial anchor for this rollout. The company holds deep operational roots tied to the Ingonyama Trust, which manages approximately 3 million hectares of communal land—accounting for roughly one-third of the KwaZulu-Natal province on behalf of the Zulu Nation.
By acting as the launching customer for the Ebony engine, Ingonyama Holdings will address historical financial access gaps across its vast footprint:

- **Farming Community Banking**: The Southern Royal Fund will introduce targeted digital wallets and secure transactional banking to previously underserved farming communities on Ingonyama land.

- **Integrated Ebony Marketplace**: AgriTech tools, farm management systems, and affordable physical farming inputs will be distributed directly to smallholder farmers through the digital platform.
- **Supply Chain Liquidity**: Corporate accounts will streamline B2B trade clearing, connecting local agricultural yields directly with wider trade networks.

Executive Perspectives

Mr Lucas Mkhwanazi, CEO of Ingonyama Holdings, stated:

"Our mission at Ingonyama Holdings has always been centred on unlocking sustainable economic value and modern commercial access for our regional communities. By serving as the launch customer for the Ebony marketplace engine, we are directly overcoming long-standing financial access gaps across our agricultural landscapes. Crucially, through our iWIN initiative, we are embedding dedicated women's empowerment banking directly into the Southern Royal Fund to supercharge female-led SMEs with alternative underwriting and specialised financial tools. This joint deployment marks a historic turning point for financial agility, inclusivity, and agricultural empowerment in South Africa."

Mr Nick Fitzgerald, CEO of IQONIX and Talico Technologies, added:

"This joint market entry represents a perfect operational synergy within our global ecosystem. At Talico Technologies, we have built a high-performance marketplace infrastructure integrated with advanced machine learning pipelines to handle biometric security, localised risk mitigation, and automated compliance. Through IQONIX, we bridge this technical intelligence with the financial and commodity markets required to scale them effectively on an international stage. By collaborating with Ingonyama Holdings to power both their agricultural marketplace and their vital iWIN initiative, we are deploying a robust, compliant digital ecosystem tailored directly to the unique capital requirements of South African enterprises and rural communities. We are completely proud to support this transformative rollout."

Commercial Launch Date Announcement

The technology integration phase is now progressing under strict compliance monitoring. An official announcement detailing the exact **commercial launch date** and immediate account onboarding protocols for both retail and corporate users will be issued in an upcoming media brief.

About the Partner Entities

About Ingonyama Holdings
Ingonyama Holdings is a strategic South African corporate entity dedicated to driving economic development, agricultural sustainability, and modernised commercial access across regional communities. Tied closely to the administration of communal land resources in KwaZulu-Natal, the company fosters asset-backed growth, community empowerment, and commercial joint ventures intersecting heavy industry and digital financial technology.

About IQONIX, Talico Technologies, & Ebony
Operating as a synchronised global ecosystem, this corporate framework bridges deep-tech innovation with international commodity trade and financial engineering. **IQONIX (United Kingdom)** operates as the global commercial entity, managing the international distribution and financing frameworks of Ebony—a white-label financial services platform powered by its banking-licensed BaaS partners. **Talico Technologies (Singapore)** serves as the central intellectual property (IP) repository and engineering engine, specialising in artificial intelligence and OEM software development.

Forward-Looking Statements Disclaimer

This press release contains forward-looking statements involving risks, uncertainties, and assumptions regarding future growth, white-label technology adoption, market penetration of Southern Royal Fund in South Africa, regional regulatory compliance, and commodity trends. Words such as "believe," "expect," "anticipate," and "plan" identify these statements.

Actual corporate results may differ materially from those projected due to shifting financial regulations, South African banking laws, central bank compliance frameworks, currency and market volatility, and geopolitical supply chain adjustments. We assume no obligation to update these statements.

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