



Central Bank of Kenya

Credit Officer Survey

March 31, 2026



CENTRAL BANK OF KENYA COMMERCIAL BANKS' CREDIT OFFICER SURVEY FOR QUARTER ENDED MARCH 31, 2026

1.0 COMMERCIAL BANKS' CREDIT OFFICER SURVEY

1.1 Background

Credit risk is the single largest factor affecting the soundness of financial institutions and the financial system. This is because lending is the principal business for banks. The ratio of gross loans to total assets was 51.0 percent in the quarter ended March 31, 2026, a decrease from 51.9 percent in the quarter ended December 31, 2025.

The Central Bank of Kenya (CBK) undertakes a quarterly Credit Officer Survey to identify the potential drivers of credit risk. The survey requires senior credit officers of banks to indicate their banks perception or actual position in the immediate past quarter and the subsequent quarter in terms of demand for credit, credit standards, asset quality, credit recovery efforts, deployment of liquidity and impact of implementing new standards.

1.2 Survey Methodology

Senior Credit Officers¹ complete most of the survey and collect input from senior officers responsible for the other aspects. For the quarter ended March 31, 2026, 38 commercial banks and 1 mortgage finance

company participated in the Commercial Banks Credit Officer Survey.

The survey sought to establish the lending behavior in the banking sector in respect to all the eleven economic sectors. Questions were posed on demand for credit, credit standards for approving loans, non-performing loans, credit recovery efforts, implementation of International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) 9 on Financial Instruments and IFRS 16 on Leases. The survey's questions are generally phrased in terms of changes over the past three months and expected changes over the next three months.

The survey also included questions concerning liquidity in the banks. The banks were required to state their liquidity trend and appetite for the deployment of liquidity towards extension of credit, interbank lending, and other forms of investment.

Following the declaration by the World Health Organization of coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak as a pandemic in March 2020, CBK has continued to assess the impact of the pandemic on the banking sector.

¹ These are officers involved in most of the credit and liquidity decisions hence are able to provide reasonably accurate and complete responses from their bank's perspective. They also collate input on non-credit aspects from their counterparts.

1.3 Kenyan Banking Sector Performance

The Kenyan Banking Sector performance recorded a mixed trend in the quarter ended March 31, 2026, compared to the growth in the quarter ended December 31, 2025. Some of the sector's performance indicators are as follows:

- The total assets increased by 3.8 percent to Ksh.8,732.0 billion in March 2026, from Ksh.8,413.3 billion in December 2025.
- Gross loans increased by 1.9 percent from Ksh.4,369.6 billion in December 2025, to Ksh.4,453.0 billion in March 2026. The increase in gross loans was largely witnessed in the Financial Services, Personal and Household, and Energy and Water sectors.
- Total deposits increased by 3.8 percent from Ksh.6,274.1 billion in December 2025, to Ksh.6,512.9 billion in March 2026.
- The asset quality, measured by gross non-performing loans to gross loans ratio, deteriorated from 15.4 percent in December 2025, to 15.6 percent in March 2026. This was due to a higher increase in gross NPLs of 3.4 percent and an increase in gross loans of 1.9 percent.

- The capital adequacy ratio increased from 20.0 percent in December 2025, to 20.4 percent in March 2026.
- Quarterly profit before tax decreased by Ksh.0.3 billion from Ksh.83.9 billion in the quarter ended December 2025, to Ksh.83.5 billion in the quarter ended March 2026. The decrease in profitability was mainly attributable to increased quarterly expenses of Ksh.5.2 billion and decreased quarterly income of Ksh.1.7 billion.

1.4 Summary of Credit Officer Survey Findings

- **Demand for credit:** In the first quarter of 2026, the perceived demand for credit remained unchanged in nine economic sectors. It increased in Trade, and Personal and Household sectors.
- **Credit Standards²:** In the first quarter of 2026, credit standards remained unchanged in all economic sectors.
- **Non-Performing Loans per sector:** Respondents indicated that the level of NPLs is expected to remain constant in nine economic sectors but decrease in the Personal and Household and Trade sectors during the next quarter.

² Credit standards are guidelines used by commercial banks in determining whether to extend a loan to an applicant.

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- **Credit Recovery Efforts:** For the quarter ending June 30, 2026, banks expect to intensify their credit recovery efforts in nine economic sectors. The intensified recovery efforts are aimed at improving the overall quality of the asset portfolio. Credit recovery efforts are expected to remain stable in Agriculture and Mining and Quarrying sectors.
 - **International Financial Reporting Standard (IFRS) 9 on Financial Instruments:** Most banks have adopted a tight credit risk appraisal, ensuring that facilities are well secured and that alternative sources of repayment are available.

- **Liquidity risk:** During the quarter ended March 31, 2026, 87 percent of the respondents indicated that their liquidity position had improved.

Banks intend to deploy additional liquidity towards lending to the private sector (27 percent), interbank lending (23 percent), investing in Treasury Bonds (19 percent), investing in Treasury Bills (14 percent), taking advantage of CBK liquidity through repos (11 percent), increase their cash holdings (4 percent), and invest in other instruments including offshore (1 percent).

2.0 SURVEY FINDINGS

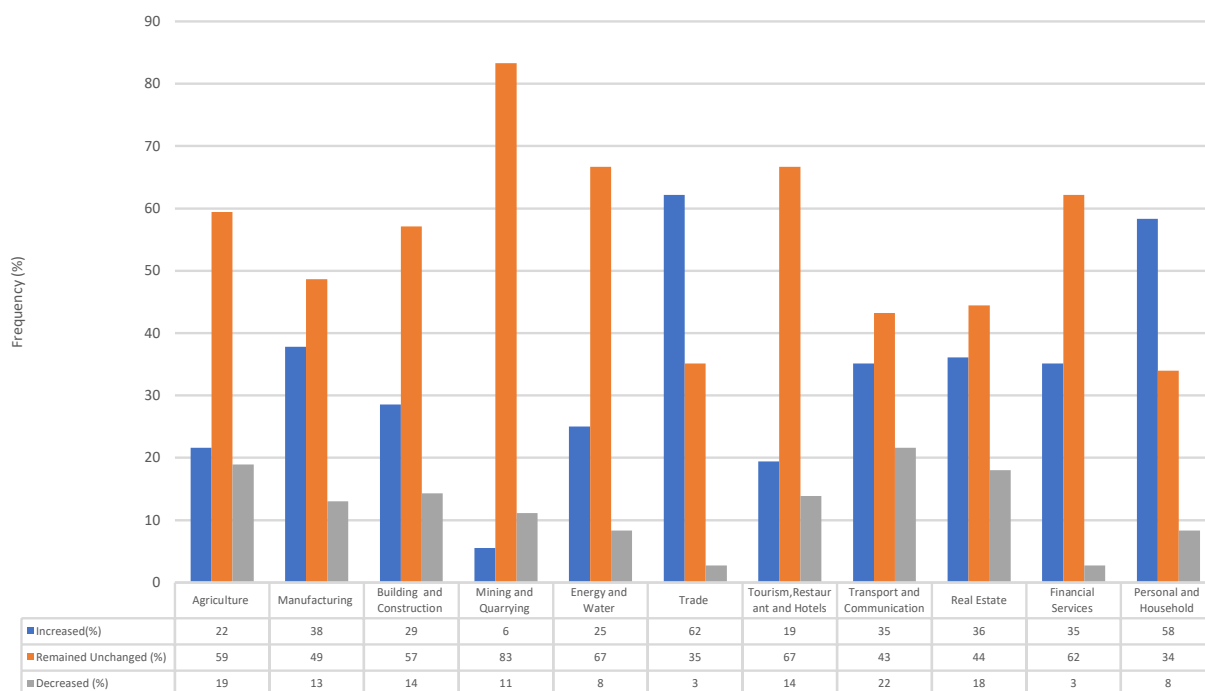
2.1 Demand for Credit

- In the first quarter of 2026, the perceived demand for credit remained unchanged in nine economic sectors. It increased in Trade, and Personal and Household sectors.
- The main sectors with unchanged demand for credit are Mining and Quarrying, Tourism, Energy and Water, and Agriculture.
- The perceived increased demand for credit in the Trade and Personal and Household sectors is mainly attributed to increased working capital requirements.
- Table 1** and **Chart 1** present below the trend in the perceived demand for credit in the last two quarters.

Table 1: Change in Demand for Credit (Percentage, %)

	December 2025			March 2026		
	Increased	Remained Unchanged	Decreased	Increased	Remained Unchanged	Decreased
Agriculture	32	57	11	22	59	19
Manufacturing	33	67	0	38	49	13
Building and Construction	25	50	25	29	57	14
Mining and Quarrying	5	81	14	6	83	11
Energy and Water	27	62	11	25	67	8
Trade	51	35	14	62	35	3
Tourism, Restaurant and Hotels	11	67	22	19	67	14
Transport and Communication	19	59	22	35	43	22
Real Estate	39	42	19	36	44	18
Financial Services	32	65	3	35	62	3
Personal and Household	52	37	11	58	34	8

Chart 1: Demand for Credit



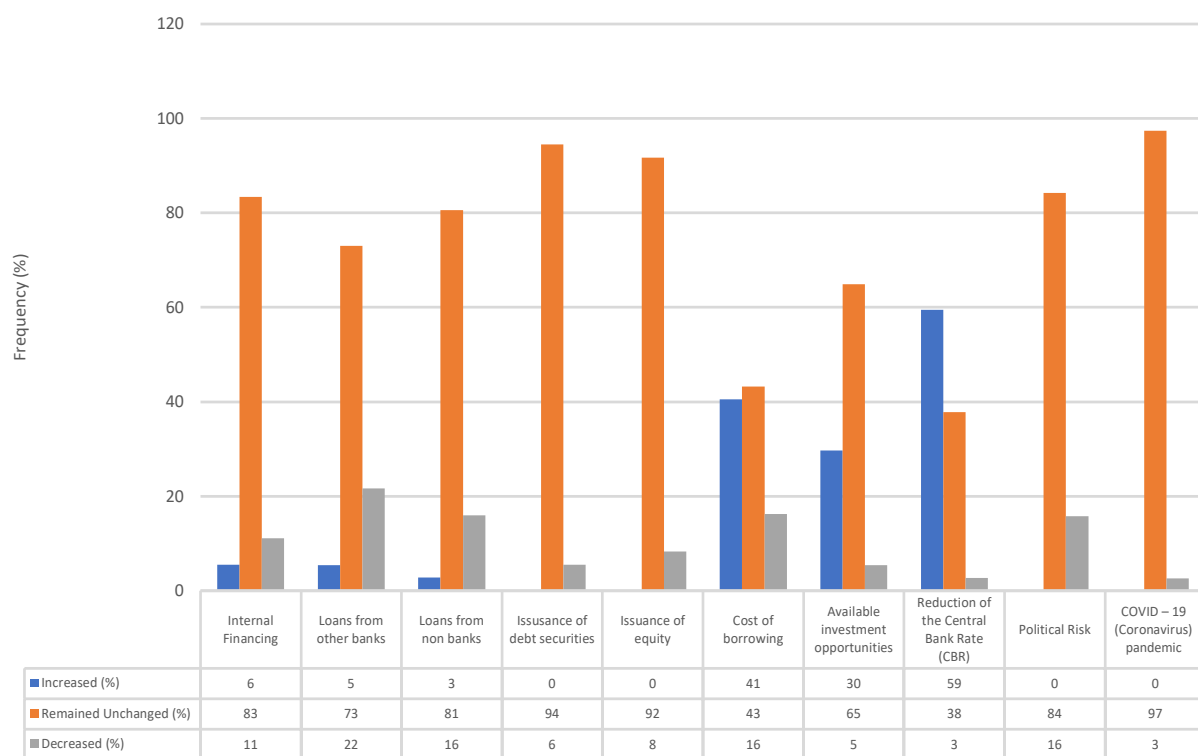
2.2 Factors Affecting Demand for Credit

- In the quarter ended March 31, 2026, nine factors affecting demand for credit had no significant impact. This is depicted in **Table 2** and **Chart 2**.
- Reduction of the Central Bank Rate led to increased demand for credit.
- COVID-19 pandemic, Issuance of debt securities and equity, Internal Financing, and Loans from non-banks were cited as having had the least impact on the demand for credit during the quarter under review. (These were reported by 97 percent, 94 percent, 92 percent, 83 percent, and 81 percent of the respondents respectively.)

Table 2: Factors Affecting Demand for Credit (Percentage, %)

	December 2025			March 2026		
	Increased	Remained Unchanged	Decreased	Increased	Remained Unchanged	Decreased
Internal Financing	5	81	14	6	83	11
Loans from other banks	6	64	30	5	73	22
Loans from non-banks	0	77	23	3	81	16
Issuance of debt securities	0	94	6	0	94	6
Issuance of equity	0	89	11	0	92	8
Cost of borrowing	43	43	14	41	43	16
Available investment opportunities	32	57	11	30	65	5
Retention of the Central Bank Rate (CBR)	59	41	0	59	38	3
Political Risk	3	74	23	0	84	16
COVID – 19 pandemic	0	95	5	0	97	3

Chart 2: Factors Affecting Demand for Credit



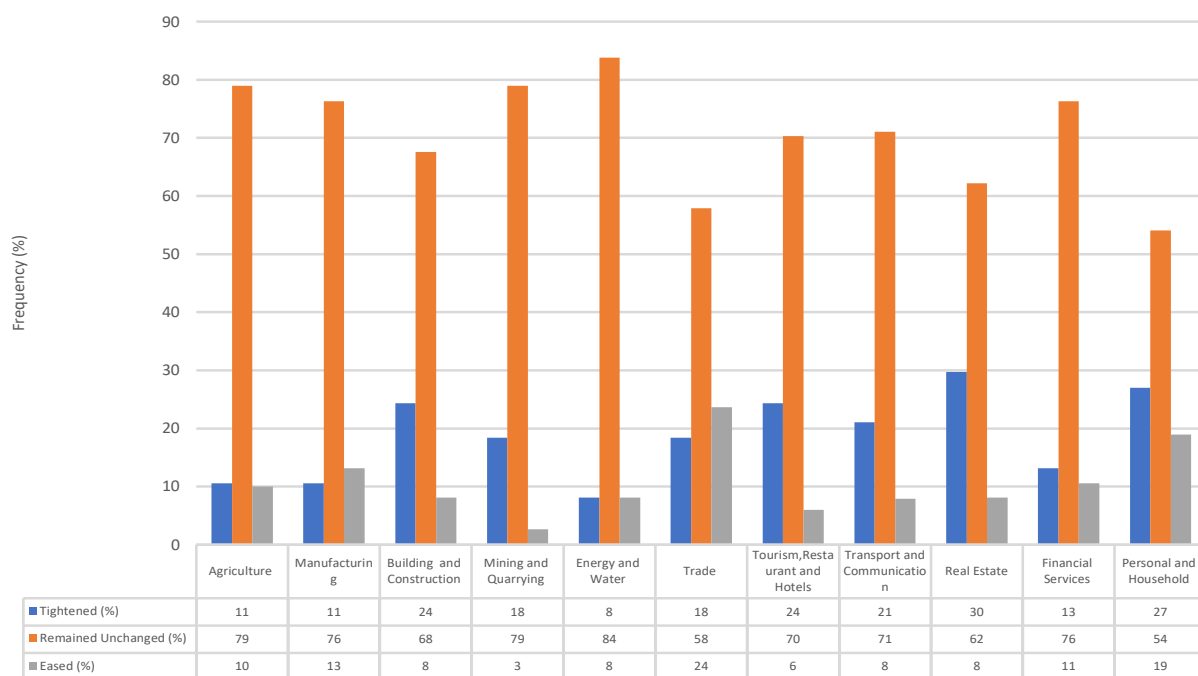
2.3 Credit Standards

- In the first quarter of 2026, credit standards remained unchanged in all economic sectors.
- This is presented in **Table 3** and **Chart 3**.

Table 3: Credit Standards for Loans to Various Economic Sectors (Percentage, %)

	December 2025			March 2026		
	Tightened	Remained Unchanged	Eased	Tightened	Remained Unchanged	Eased
Agriculture	14	68	18	11	79	10
Manufacturing	5	79	16	11	76	13
Building and Construction	35	54	11	24	68	8
Mining and Quarrying	21	76	3	18	79	3
Energy and Water	8	84	8	8	84	8
Trade	21	53	26	18	58	24
Tourism, Restaurant and Hotels	22	73	5	24	70	6
Transport and Communication	18	66	16	21	71	8
Real Estate	30	62	8	30	62	8
Financial Services	8	79	13	13	76	11
Personal and Household	28	53	19	27	54	19

Chart 3: Credit Standards



2.4 Factors Influencing Credit Standards

- In the quarter ended March 31, 2026, all factors had little impact on credit standards.
- COVID-19 pandemic, Investment in Government Securities, Political Risks, and Competition from DTMs, Saccos, and other Credit Providers are the main factors that had no impact on

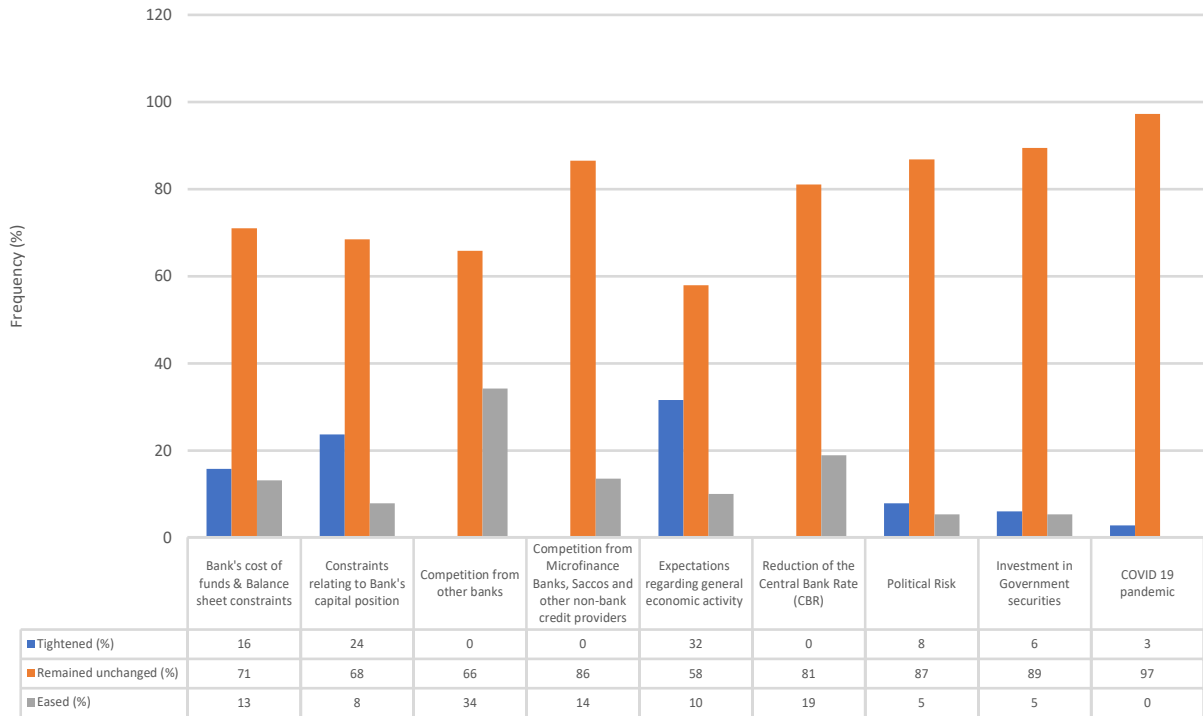
credit standards. These were reported by 97 percent, 89 percent, 87 percent, and 86 percent of the respondents respectively.

- A comparison of the trend in the factors affecting the banks' credit standards are shown in **Table 4** and **Chart 4**.

Table 4: Factors affecting credit standards (Percentage, %)

	December 2025			March 2026		
	Tightened	Remained Unchanged	Eased	Tightened	Remained Unchanged	Eased
Bank's cost of funds and Balance sheet constraints	18	68	14	16	71	13
Constraints relating to Bank's capital position	26	66	8	24	68	8
Competition from other banks	3	61	36	0	66	34
Competition from DTMs, Saccos, and other Credit Providers	0	84	16	0	86	14
Expectations regarding general economic activity	26	61	13	32	58	10
Retention of the Central Bank Rate (CBR)	0	82	18	0	81	19
Political Risk	16	81	3	8	87	5
Investment in Government Securities	5	84	11	6	89	5
COVID -19 pandemic	5	95	0	3	97	0

Chart 4: Factors Affecting Credit Standards

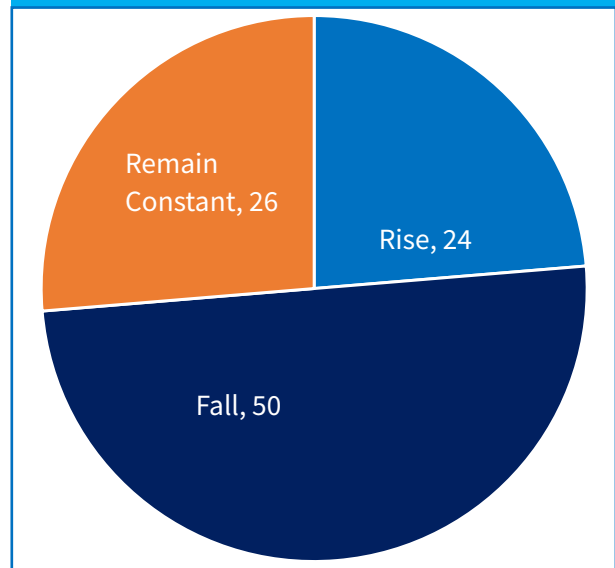


2.5 Non-Performing Loans (NPLs)

2.5.1 Expected Movements of Non-Performing Loans in the next quarter

- 24 percent of the respondents expect the level of NPLs to rise, and 26 percent of the respondents expect the level of NPLs to remain constant in the second quarter of 2026. These are depicted in **Chart 5**.
- 50 percent of the respondents indicated that NPLs are likely to fall in the second quarter of 2026.

Chart 5: Expected movements of NPLs in the next Quarter (%)



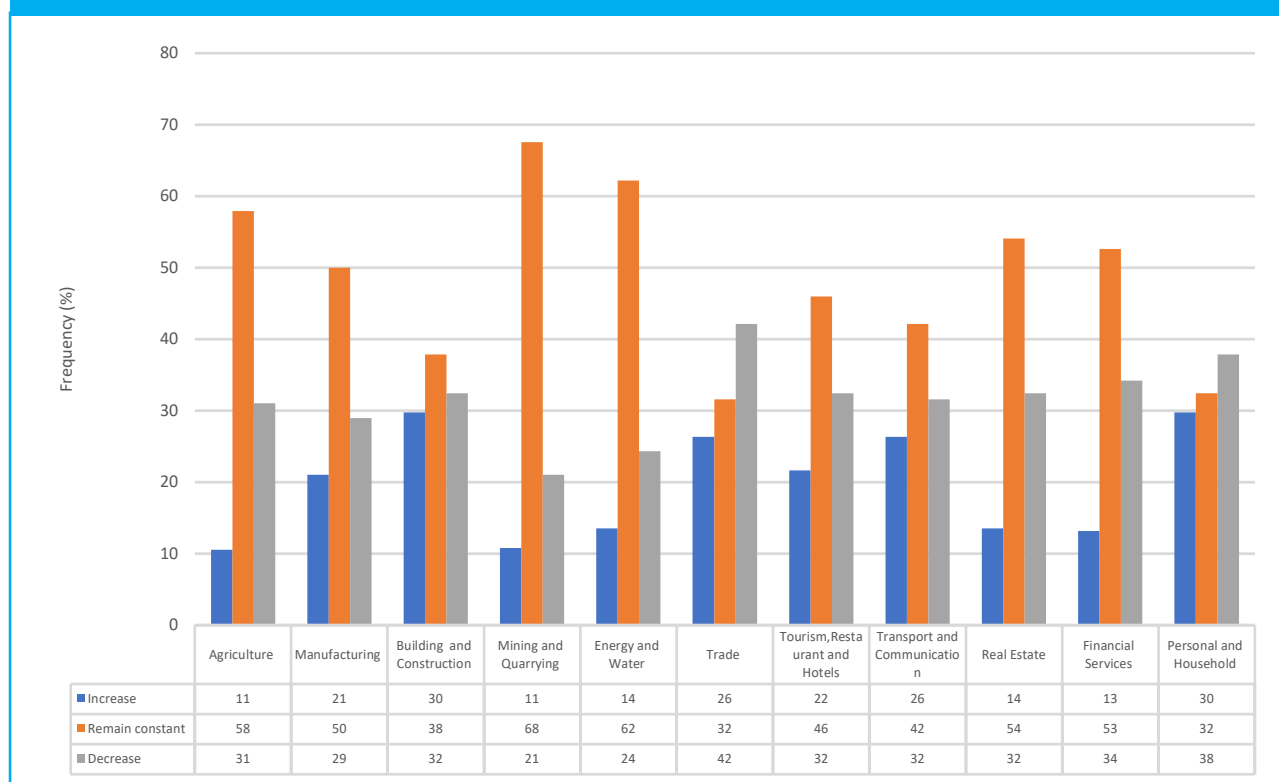
2.5.2 Expected Non-Performing Loans per sector during the next quarter

- Respondents indicated that the level of NPLs is expected to remain constant in nine economic sectors but increase in the Personal and Household and Trade sectors during the next quarter.
- **Table 5** and **Chart 6** depict this.

Table 5: Non Performing Loans Trend Per Economic Sector (Percentage, %)

	December 2025			March 2026		
	Increase	Remain Constant	Decrease	Increase	Remain Constant	Decrease
Agriculture	16	58	26	11	58	31
Manufacturing	24	47	29	21	50	29
Building and Construction	24	46	30	30	38	32
Mining and Quarrying	8	76	16	11	68	21
Energy and Water	10	74	16	14	62	24
Trade	35	30	35	26	32	42
Tourism, Restaurant and Hotels	17	58	25	22	46	32
Transport and Communication	22	49	30	26	42	32
Real Estate	25	47	28	14	54	32
Financial Services	19	57	24	13	53	34
Personal and Household	36	33	31	30	32	38

Chart 6: Non-Performing Loans



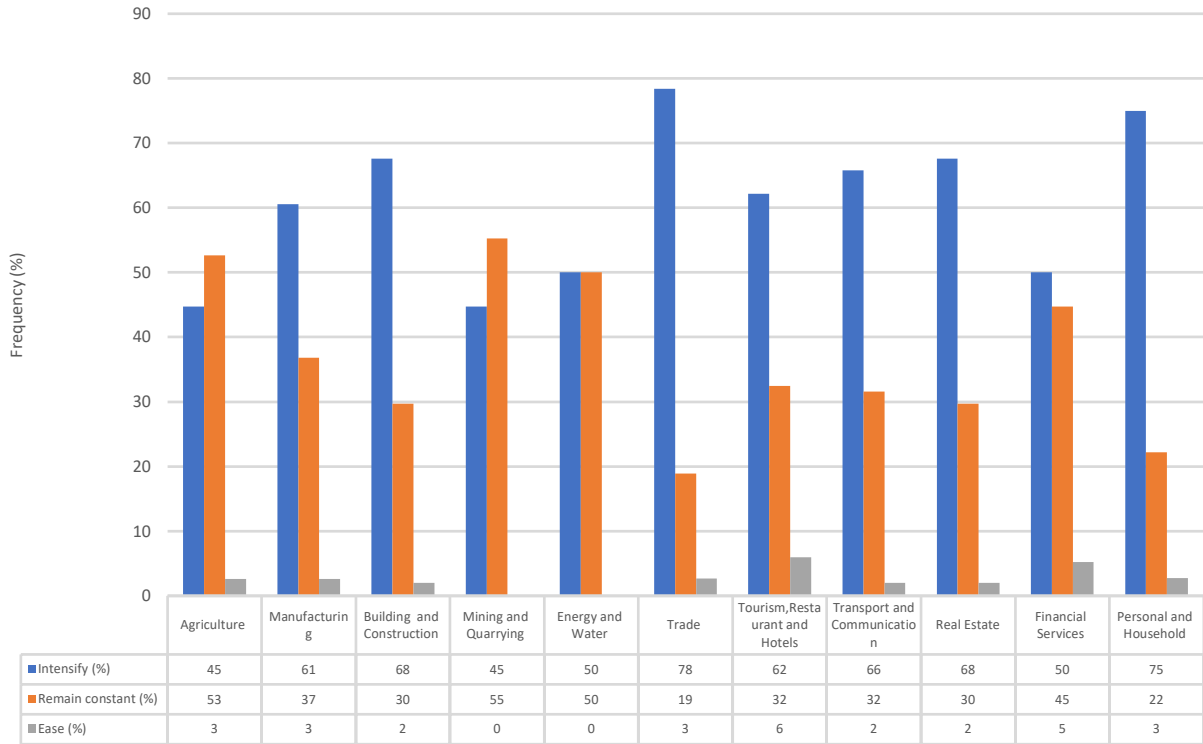
2.6 Credit Recovery Efforts in the next quarter

- For the quarter ending June 30, 2026, banks expect to intensify their credit recovery efforts in nine economic sectors. The intensified recovery efforts are aimed at improving the overall quality of the asset portfolio.
- Credit recovery efforts are expected to remain stable in Agriculture and Mining and Quarrying sectors.
- The main sectors that banks intend to intensify credit recovery efforts are:
 - i) Trade (78 percent).
 - ii) Personal and Household (75 percent).
 - iii) Real Estate (68 percent).
 - iv) Building and Construction (68 percent).
 - v) Transport and Communication (66 percent).
 - vi) Tourism, Restaurant and Hotels (61 percent).
- The responses on the expected credit recovery efforts by the banks are depicted in **Table 6** and **Chart 7**.

Table 6: Credit recovery efforts (Percentage, %)

	December 2025			March 2026		
	Intensify	Remain Constant	Ease	Intensify	Remain Constant	Ease
Agriculture	47	47	6	45	53	3
Manufacturing	63	37	0	61	37	3
Building and Construction	76	24	0	68	30	2
Mining and Quarrying	45	55	0	45	55	0
Energy and Water	44	53	3	50	50	0
Trade	82	18	0	78	19	3
Tourism, Restaurant and Hotels	62	38	0	62	32	6
Transport and Communication	66	34	0	66	32	2
Real Estate	81	19	0	68	30	2
Financial Services	47	53	0	50	45	5
Personal and Household	78	22	0	75	22	3

Chart 7: Credit Recovery Efforts



2.7 International Financial Reporting Standard (IFRS) 9 on Financial Instruments

- The International Financial Reporting Standard (IFRS) 9 on Financial Instruments became effective from January 1, 2018. This standard replaced International Accounting Standard (IAS) 39 on Financial Instruments (Recognition and Measurement).
- IFRS9 introduced a new method of determining provisions for expected losses on loans extended by lending institutions.

- Institutions are required to always recognize expected credit losses and to update the amount of expected credit losses recognized at each reporting date to reflect changes in the credit risk of financial instruments.
- In the quarter ended March 31, 2026, the Central Bank of Kenya assessed:
 - The challenges banks still experience in the implementation of IFRS 9, and the mitigation measures implemented.
 - Whether banks have made any changes in the assumptions used in IFRS 9 and if they are more reliable.

2.7.1 Challenges experienced in the Implementation of IFRS 9

- Implementation of IFRS 9 has had some challenges. The prevalent challenges pointed out by the respondents are:
 - i) Constant model redevelopments that occur with the emergence of new information. This is a costly matter as the banks must keep improving and updating their existing models.
 - ii) Incorporation of forward-looking information.

2.7.2 Mitigation Measures implemented in dealing with challenges faced in the Implementation of IFRS 9

Most banks have adopted a tight credit risk appraisal, ensuring that facilities are well secured and that alternative sources of repayment are available. Banks have implemented the following mitigation measures:

- i) Seeking for additional capital injection to accommodate the rise in Credit Losses.
- ii) Realignment of business models to minimize credit losses on unutilized limits and to enhance efficiency in internal operations.

2.8 International Financial Reporting Standard (IFRS) 16 on Leases

- The International Financial Reporting Standard (IFRS) 16 on Leases became effective from January 1, 2019. This standard replaced International Accounting Standard (IAS) 17 on Leases.
- The main difference between IAS 17 and IFRS 16 is the treatment of operating leases by lessees. Under IAS 17, a lessee was not obligated to report assets and liabilities from operating leases on their balance sheet but instead report the leases as off-balance sheet items. IFRS 16 changes this by requiring lessees to recognize operating leases right of use (ROU) assets and lease liabilities on the balance sheet.
- IFRS 16 aims to improve the quality of financial reporting for companies with material off-balance sheet leases.

2.8.1 Impact of IFRS 16 on Banks' Financial performance and position

Most banks indicated that implementation of IFRS 16:

- Increased their total assets and total liabilities because of recognition of the right of use asset (ROU) and Lease Liability as per IFRS 16.
- Eliminated rent and service charge expense in banks' income statement, which is covered by the introduction of depreciation on right of use asset and interest expense on lease liability as charges to the income statement.

2.8.2 Financial indicators for Leases

Following the implementation of IFRS 16 on January 1, 2019, the value of the financial indicators for leases in the banking industry as at March 31, 2026, are indicated in **Table 7**.

Table 7: Financial elements bank value as at March 31, 2026

Banking Industry (Ksh '000)	December 2025	March 2026	Change
Right of use (ROU) assets	43,395,196.05	46,589,067.14	3,193,871.09
Lease liabilities	29,519,581.41	20,858,198.38	(8,661,383.03)
Depreciation of the right of use asset	9,875,740.16	3,959,567.19	(5,916,172.96)
The finance charge associated with the lease liability	3,479,321.85	837,924.05	(2,641,397.80)

2.8.3 Challenges experienced in the Implementation of IFRS 16

- Delays experienced in the lease renewal process leading to the use of estimated lease rates hence inaccuracy of the data.

2.8.4 Mitigation measures on the challenges experienced in Implementation of IFRS 16

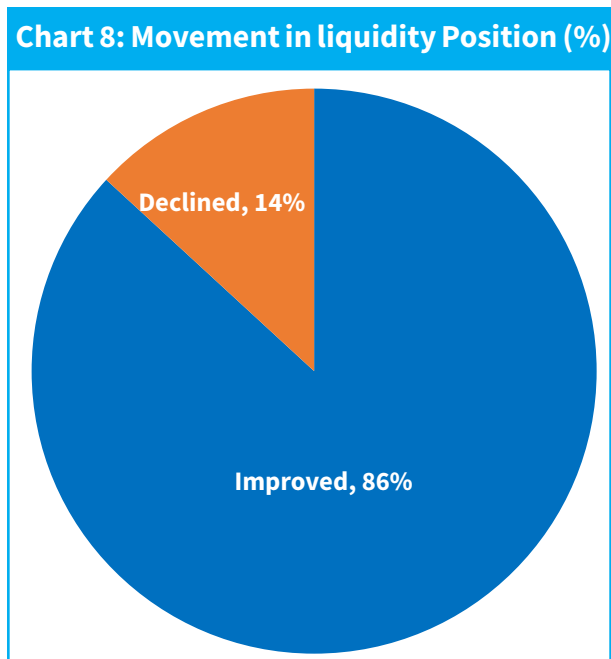
- Banks renew their leases on a timely basis to mitigate the challenges experienced in implementing IFRS 16.

2.9 Liquidity Risk

- Banks were required to state the status of their liquidity positions, factors that led to improved liquidity, their plans with improved liquidity, measures being taken to address deteriorated liquidity and their involvement in interbank activities during the quarter ended March 31, 2026.

2.9.1 Commercial Banks' liquidity positions

- During the quarter ending March 31, 2026, 86 percent of respondents indicated that their liquidity position had improved as indicated in **Chart 8**.

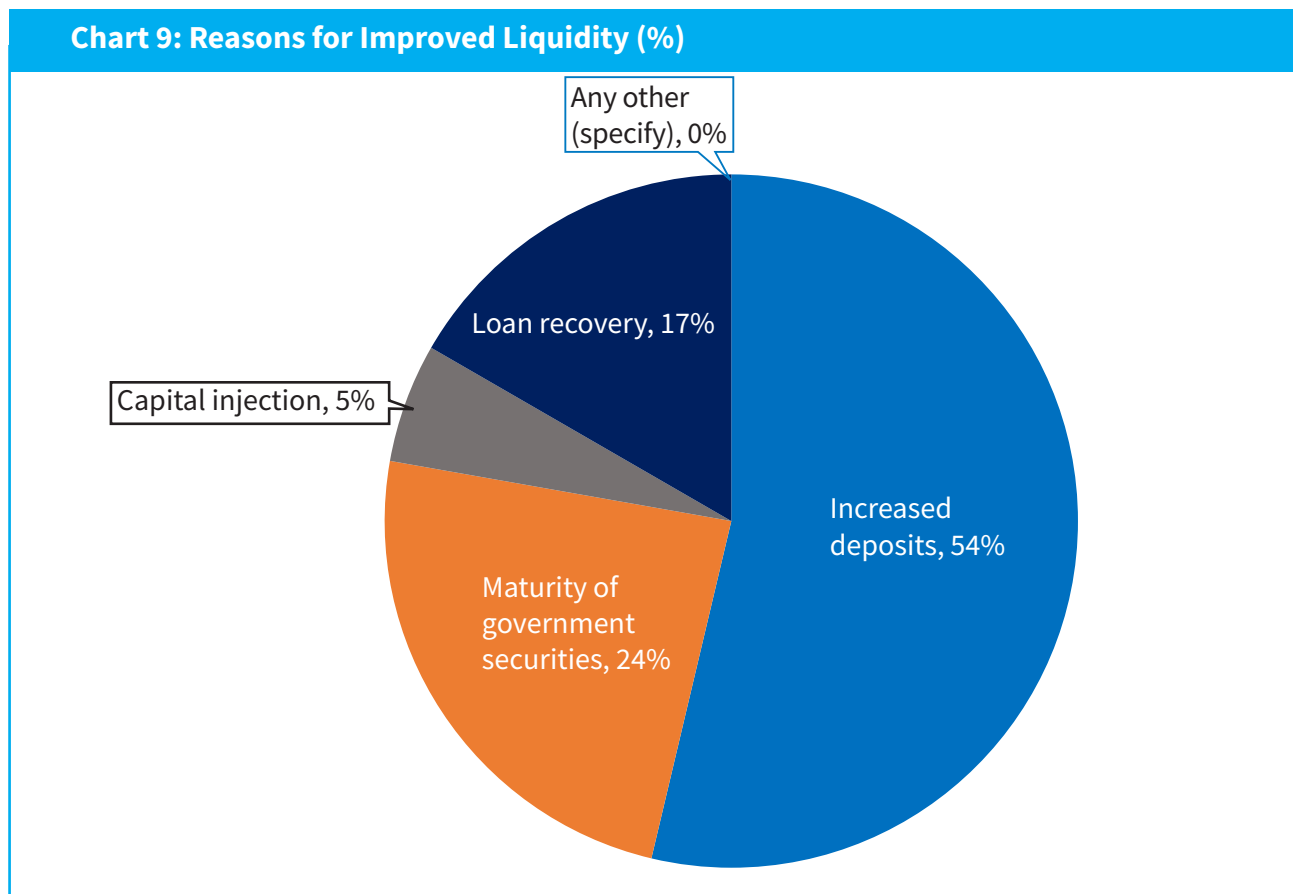


2.9.2 Factors that led to improved liquidity in the quarter under review

During the quarter ending March 31, 2026, liquidity improved mainly because of:

- i) Increased deposits (54 percent).
- ii) Maturity of government security (24 percent).
- iii) Loan recovery (17 percent).
- iv) Capital injection (5 percent).

The drivers of improved liquidity are indicated in **Chart 9**.

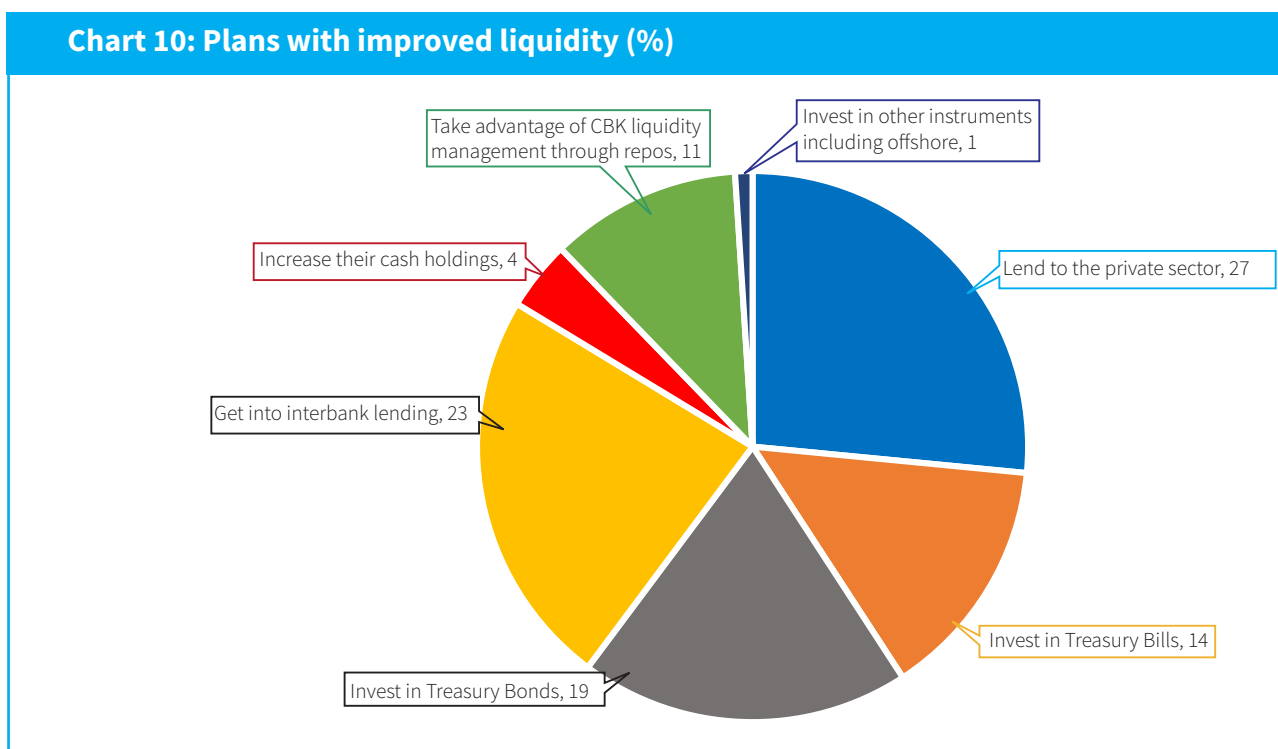


2.9.3 Commercial Banks' plans with improved liquidity

- As indicated in **Chart 10**, with the improved liquidity, it is expected that in the second quarter of 2026, credit to private sector will increase as several banks intend to deploy the additional liquidity towards lending to the

private sector (27 percent), interbank lending (23 percent), investing in Treasury Bonds (19 percent), investing in Treasury Bills (14 percent), taking advantage of CBK liquidity through repos (11 percent), increase their cash holdings (4 percent), and invest in other instruments including offshore (1 percent).

Chart 10: Plans with improved liquidity (%)



2.9.4 Measures being taken by Commercial banks to enhance deteriorated liquidity

- During the quarter ending March 31, 2026, 14 percent of respondents indicated that their liquidity position had declined as indicated in **Chart 8**.
- Banks have put in place strategies to grow their deposits in the coming quarter.

2.9.5 Commercial Banks' interbank activities during the quarter under review

- During the quarter ending March 31, 2026, 68 percent of respondents indicated that their interbank lending activities increased. This is indicated in **Chart 11**.
- 86 percent of the respondents indicated that their interbank borrowing decreased as indicated in **Chart 12**.

Chart 11: Increase in Interbank Lending (%)

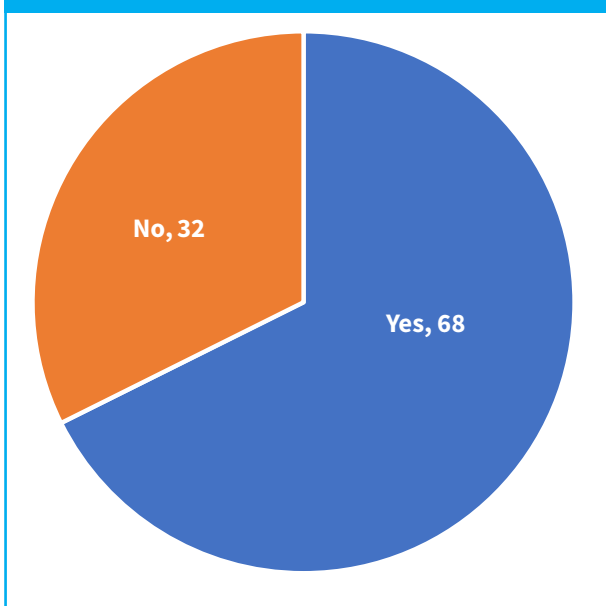
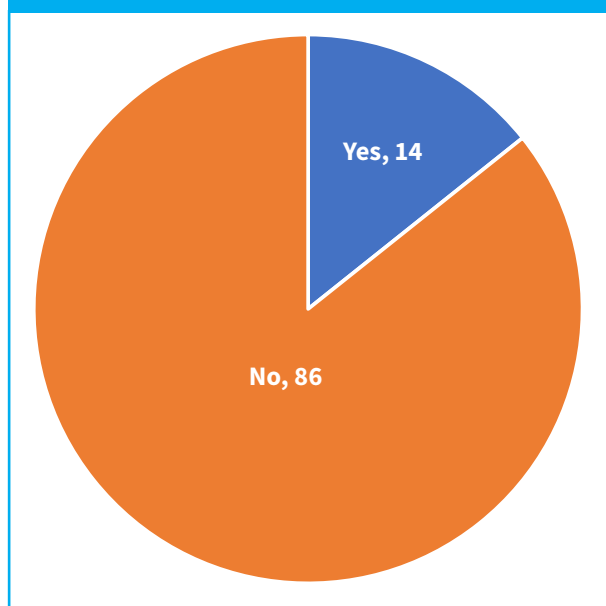


Chart 12: Increase in interbank borrowing (%)



2.10 Impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic on the Banking Sector

The economic impact of COVID-19 was adverse and wide-ranging, disrupting international trade, transport, tourism, and urban services activity. CBK through the credit survey assessed the impact of the pandemic on the banking sector. In the quarter ending March 31, 2026, the survey covered areas relating to:

- Adverse impact of the pandemic on the banks.
- Measures banks are taking to curb the adverse impact of the pandemic on banks' business.

- The key risks that have been increased by the pandemic.
- Opportunities that have arisen from the pandemic.

2.10.1 Measures taken by banks to curb the risks of coronavirus pandemic

- Banks have adopted technology in their work activities.
- Increased hygiene in banks' work environment.
- Banks have digitized their customer service.

2.10.2 Key Risks arising from Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on the banks

Some of the key risks increased by the pandemic include:

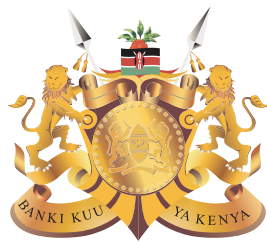
- **Credit risk:** Challenges of debt repayment, which is mitigated by the loan relief that banks are giving to borrowers which have now expired. Currently banks are still considering restructuring facilities outside the CBK waiver, which means there is likely to be an increase in provisions.
- **Operational risk:** Banks have a reduced workforce on-site and enable other staff to work from home. This leads to unbudgeted costs including Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) and transport.
- **Cyber security risk:** Due to increase in use of digital platforms to transact.

2.10.3 Opportunities arising from Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on the banks

There has been emergence of alternative working sites, which is a form of development in banks' service delivery.

List of Respondents

1. Absa Bank Kenya Plc.
2. Access Bank (Kenya) Plc.
3. African Banking Corporation Ltd.
4. Bank of Africa Kenya Ltd.
5. Bank of Baroda (K) Ltd.
6. Bank of India.
7. Citibank N.A Kenya.
8. Consolidated Bank of Kenya Ltd.
9. Co-operative Bank of Kenya Ltd.
10. Credit Bank Plc.
11. Development Bank of Kenya Ltd.
12. Diamond Trust Bank (K) Ltd.
13. DIB Bank Kenya Ltd.
14. Ecobank Kenya Ltd.
15. Equity Bank Kenya Ltd.
16. Family Bank Ltd.
17. Guaranty Trust Bank (K) Ltd.
18. Guardian Bank Ltd.
19. Gulf African Bank Ltd.
20. Habib Bank A.G Zurich.
21. HFC Ltd.
22. I & M Bank Ltd.
23. Kingdom Bank Ltd.
24. KCB Bank Kenya Ltd.
25. Commercial International Bank (CIB) Kenya Limited.
26. Middle East Bank (K) Ltd.
27. M Oriental Bank Ltd.
28. National Bank of Kenya Ltd.
29. NCBA Bank Kenya Plc.
30. Paramount Bank Ltd.
31. Premier Bank Kenya Limited.
32. Prime Bank Ltd.
33. SBM Bank Kenya Ltd.
34. Sidian Bank Ltd.
35. Spire Bank Ltd.
36. Stanbic Bank Kenya Ltd.
37. Standard Chartered Bank (Kenya) Ltd.
38. UBA Kenya Bank Ltd.
39. Victoria Commercial Bank Plc.



Central Bank of Kenya

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