



PRESS RELEASE

MOBILE MONEY INTEROPERABILITY

The Central Bank of Kenya (CBK) welcomes the implementation of interoperability of mobile phone financial services from April 10, 2018. Customers will be able to transfer funds across networks in real time, at low cost, and in a secure environment.

The benefits of “wallet-to-wallet” interoperability to customers will be immediate and significant. Customers wishing to transfer money across networks will avoid the cost and inconvenience of needing to reload or withdraw money through network agents. Customers’ mobile wallets will reflect funds immediately these are received, regardless of the network from which these funds are sent. Customers will also be able to withdraw the money in their wallets from the agents on their network, as is currently.

In approving this step, CBK laid out three crucial principles for interoperability:

- **Cost** – the price for transferring money out of the network will be no higher than that of transferring money within the network. There will also be no interchange fees.
- **Security** – mobile money operators will ensure that the interfaces between them are as secure as possible.
- **Efficiency** – transactions will be reflected in customers' mobile wallets without undue delay.

Interoperability is another significant milestone for Kenya's mobile money. It will play an important role in enhancing the usage of mobile money services, thereby deepening financial access. CBK has licensed three Mobile Network Operators (MNOs) under the National Payment System (NPS) Act: Safaricom Plc, Airtel Networks Kenya Limited, and Telkom Kenya Limited. Under NPS regulations, the MNOs are required to use payment systems capable of being interoperable with other payment systems.

Mobile money subscriber accounts have grown to 37.8 million in January 2018. Mobile money transactions in January 2018 were valued at Ksh.323.0 billion in 1.4 billion transactions.

While encouraging innovation, CBK will continue to foster safety and efficiency in the national payment system.

CENTRAL BANK OF KENYA

April 10, 2018