



OPERATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE
PAPU/OTC/SCG/01/2022 - Doc No.06

SUPPLY CHAIN WORKING GROUP
9th JUNE 2022 (VIRTUAL)

CROSS BORDER E-COMMERCE WORKSHOP REPORT

Subject Cross Border E-commerce Workshop Report	
Decision expected i. Note the Report ii. Report and make appropriate recommendations to the Committee	

1.0 BACKGROUND

The PAPU General Secretariat organised a Virtual Workshop on the theme, “Rebooting Cross Border e-Commerce in Africa in the Post Covid-19 Era”. The Workshop took place on the 21st April, 2022.

The overarching objective of the workshop was to position the postal sector, with its expansive infrastructure, as a vehicle for harnessing greater intra-African trade.

The specific objectives of the Workshop were to equip participants with knowledge on the following:

- i. The role of the post in the pursuit and achievement of economic integration under the Continental Free Trade Area;
- ii. The link between the post and its contribution to digital trade initiatives;
- iii. The strategies required to enhance cross border e-commerce at the African continental level;
- iv. How far stakeholders have assisted members in the sensitization and promotion of e-commerce on the continent;
- v. How to access funding for implementation of e-commerce solutions;
- vi. The established and existing mechanisms for achieving regional integration through e-commerce;
- vii. The effect of regulatory activities on in e-commerce including its effect on international financial gateways;
- viii. The Customs processes and their contribution to e-commerce development;
- ix. How e-commerce can boost the supply chain in the existence of disasters, e.g during the Covid-19 pandemic.

2.0 PARTICIPATION

The Workshop was attended by CEOs & Senior Managers from Designated Operators, Senior Officials from Regulatory Authorities, and Government officials, among others. The participants were from twenty-nine (29) countries as follows: Algeria, Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The following organisations participated in the workshop: Universal Postal Union (UPU), Mastercard, African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), Southern Africa Postal Operators Association (SAPOA) and West Africa Postal Conference (WAPCO).

3.0 PRESENTATIONS

The following presentations were made:

- 3.1 UPU International Bureau Trade Expert, Mr. Paul Donohoe - **An overview of e-commerce business via the post;**
- 3.2 AfCTA Investment Expert, Dr. Talkmore Chidede - **The role of the AfCTA in facilitating intra-African trade etc. and how the post office can play its rightful role in this discourse;**
- 3.3 Mastercard Foundation, Dr. Cynthia Saab & team - **How the Post can explore collaborative opportunities with Mastercard Foundation's principal business of processing payments for making purchases in the digital era;**

The following Designated Operators also shared their experience:

- Cameroon - E-commerce in Cameroon, the operator's perspective;
- Côte d'Ivoire - E-commerce in Côte d'Ivoire, the operator's perspective;
- Morocco - E-commerce in Morocco, the operator's perspective;
- Kenya - E-commerce in Kenya - a regulatory perspective;
- Zimbabwe – The Zimbabwemall.post

4.0 KEY TAKE-AWAYS

The following were the key takeaways from the Workshop:

- 4.1 Covid-19 has taught the Post to be innovative and the need for it to take advantage of the opportunities brought about by e-commerce in recovering from the pandemic as well as remaining relevant in the new environment;
- 4.2 Africa should take advantage of the global boom in e-commerce and packets business and tap into the market;
- 4.3 The post should be a key enabler and Government partner for social inclusion, financial inclusion digital inclusion and trade inclusion;
- 4.4 The existing relationships among players in the e-commerce ecosystem must be maintained;
- 4.5 Need for a collaborative approach involving all stakeholders (Governments, Operators, Regulators, Business, Customers etc);

- 4.6 Member States should actively collaborate with PAPU and UPU in implementation of the RDP for 2022-2025 covering the following toolkit:
- i. Operational Readiness for E-commerce (ORE);
 - ii. Digital Readiness for E-commerce (DRE);
 - iii. Payment Readiness for E-commerce (PRE);
 - iv. Regulatory Reform E-commerce (RRE);
 - v. Sustainability Readiness E-commerce (SRE);
 - vi. Technical Assistance and Training.
- 4.7 The Post needs to work together with other partners to implement payment gateways e.g. the Mastercard payment gateways services - Simplify e-commerce (an all-in -one platform);
- 4.8 Take advantage of the opportunities offered by the AfCFTA agreement which aims at lowering the cost of cross border trade, eliminate poverty, attract investment etc;
- 4.9 The Post can ride on the AfCFTA Protocol on Digital Trade to promote cross border e-commerce, facilitate trade for SMEs, youth and women and connecting remote areas to the digital economy;
- 4.10 Export facilitation can be enhanced through the Post by implementing projects such as easy export as well as working with SMEs at national level by giving them access to e-shop platforms, connecting them with buyers and giving them access to payment platforms;
- 4.11 Member States should benchmark on best practices and success stories in Africa and beyond to implement ecommerce initiatives and programmes;
- 4.12 UPU and PAPU should endeavor to facilitate Member States' integration of their platforms with established e-sellers such as Alibaba, Amazon, E-Bay and others.

5.0 RECOMMENDATION

Member States should promote cross border e-commerce through collaboration with various stakeholders in the sector since it is a lifeline for the parcel post and packets business as dictated by the customer preferences and expectations.

6.0 CONCLUSION

Cross border e-commerce will guarantee both inbound and outbound volumes for the Post and enhance its sustainability.