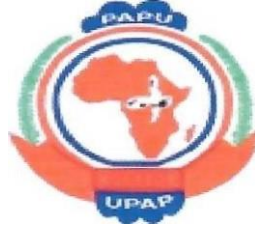


A Specialized Agency of the AU



Institution spécialisée de l'UA

CONCEPT NOTE Rev 1

CEOs FORUM
(Hybrid format)

7th July 2022, Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

Theme: " Gearing the Post for Digital Transformation"

1. INTRODUCTION

With its unparalleled reach to everyone, everywhere in the world, the Post is an essential partner in bridging the digital divide to support the UN Sustainable Development Goal 9 on building resilient infrastructure, promoting sustainable industrialization, and fostering innovation. This is well supported by the Goals & Priority Areas of Agenda 2063 which underscore the need for well educated citizens and skills revolution underpinned by Science, Technology and Innovation. Furthermore, the PAPU Strategic Plan 2022-2025 emphasizes on Leveraging on technology to mobilize customer needs and taking advantage of the booming e-commerce and international trade.

With the majority of Posts currently offering a wide range of digital services, people and small businesses around the world are able to access a variety of e-commerce, e-government, e-logistics and e-payments services through their local post offices. This access fosters their digital, financial, trade and social inclusion.

According to the UPU publication on the digital economy and digital postal activities – a global panorama” (2019), in 104 countries, more than 20% of the youth population is still offline. However, a growing body of evidence suggests that access to, and use of, financial, e-commerce and e-government services contributes to socio-economic development. Furthermore, studies undertaken by many other stakeholders show that Posts can play a key role in contributing to that agenda.

In the UPU publication (cited above), currently, 93% of Posts (116 out of 125 responding to our survey) provide digital postal services, either directly or in partnership with other companies. Posts are comparatively well positioned to provide e-government, e-commerce and e-finance services to populations that tend to be excluded, such as women, the poor, the less well educated and those in the informal economy. As such, postal networks should be an integral part of discussions in which governments, policymakers and international organizations design strategies for fostering digital inclusion.

The call to action is therefore to implore the Post in Africa to increase the pace of digital transformation with the world embracing digital technology at an ever-faster rate since customers (both senders and receivers) are increasingly expecting to interact directly with the Post through digital channels. In addition, Posts need to increase their investment levels in digital postal services. With this approach, it is clear that the digital postal services landscape will continue to evolve in the positive direction. Posts are therefore deemed to be at a turning point where they need to adapt in order to remain relevant, compete favourably with competitors in different areas of their product portfolio. To be able to achieve this effectively, Posts need to speed up the digitalization of their products. This means that postal operators that have not fully digitalized need to do so urgently, or risk being excluded as digital service providers for e-government, e-commerce and e-finance services as well as other e-services.

Stemming from the above, the forum is organized in 2 sessions:

- **Session 1: The Smart Post Office: The target for full digitalization of Postal Services;**
- **Session 2: The Post: The Ultimate Digital Financial Services Jewel for Africa**

2. FORUM'S OBJECTIVES

The overarching objective of the Forum is to ensure that all key stakeholders, namely Governments, Regulatory Authorities and Operators appreciate the need to digitalize the post in order for their entities be able to offer sustainable digital postal services and achieve competitive advantages as well as transform key aspects of their businesses.

The specific aims of the Forum are to equip participants with knowledge on:

- a) The recognition the postal network as a tool for advancing digital inclusion: it is critical for Posts be part of regional and national digital strategies where their role is recognized;
- b) The importance of digital transformation in the Post for the business sustainability;
- c) The establishment of a fully digitalized post office i.e., establishment of a smart post office;
- d) The importance of participation and the implementation of UPU innovative technological projects such as ORE, DRE and PRE for e-commerce readiness.
- e) The support and tools available for digital transformation for use by the industry;
- f) Appreciating the role and position of digital payment gateways to the Post;
- g) The importance of partnerships in the digital transformation journey etc.

3. TARGET GROUP

The main stakeholders to explore the theme will include CEOs & Senior Managers from Designated Operators, Senior Officials from Regulatory Authorities, Policy Makers, among others.

4. WORKSHOP METHODOLOGY

4.1 Date and Venue

The Forum will be held in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) on 7th July, 2022 from 08:00 hrs. (GMT). The workshop will be organized in a hybrid format. The link will be availed to participants a day before the Forum.

4.2 Forum programme

The Forum's Programme is herewith attached.

4.3 Opening

The Forum will be opened by the Chairman of the CEOs Forum, Egypt and the PAPU Secretary General.

4.4 Interpretation

Simultaneous interpretation in French and English will be provided.

5. CLOSING

While the PAPU Secretary General will deliver his closing remarks, the Chairman will close the Workshop.