

Western Union Company, Angola Post Office partner for money transfer services

The Western Union Company and the Angola Post Office has announced their collaboration to enable consumers to send and receive local and international payments in minutes from Angola Post Office and Western Union agent locations in Angola.



Africa has, in recent times, emerged as a hotspot of economic and investment activity. With growth estimated at 4.8% in 2014, Angola has retained its status as one of the fastest-growing economies in sub-Saharan Africa. According to an Oxford Economics report, this growth has been fuelled by significant Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) capital inflows, thanks to Angola's substantial oil and mineral reserves, as well as the period of political stability following 27 years of civil war. Additionally, Ernst and Young reports that between 2003 and 2011, over \$10bn was spent on FDI into Angola in sectors other than oil and gas.

Subsequently, the number of migrant workers in the country has increased, as investors send skilled and semi-skilled workers to assist local Angolans complete projects in industries as diverse as infrastructure development, agriculture, education and real estate.

Expand the network offering

Richard Malcolm, Regional Vice President for Southern and East Africa at Western Union, says, "We are delighted to start this collaboration with the Angola Post Office and are confident this will expand the network offering of Western Union services. We encourage investment in the country and remain positive that Angola will continue to prosper with the help of the international community."

Western Union aims to provide affordable formal remittance options for all in Angola, a key area for the company in Africa. Malcolm continues, "We are dedicated to making remittance transfers more accessible and believe this is the first step in facilitating financial inclusion in Angola. This agreement demonstrates the value our international network brings to participating agents, and in this case a national postal service operator in Angola, as it has in other parts of the world."

Maria Luisa Andrade, president of the board of the Angola Post Office agrees, stating that "The Postal Service in this country looks forward to being part of the continued economic development of the country. By partnering with Western Union, we will be facilitating connectivity across the country, keeping our services relevant for years to come."

Unique outreach to unbanked citizens

Postal networks tend to have a greater reach into rural and remote areas than do banks and are significant players for expanding remittance services. According to a study by the Universal Postal Union (UPU), more than 80% of post offices in sub-Saharan Africa are located outside the three largest cities in each country, where 82.5% of the population is concentrated - providing unique outreach to unbanked citizens and migrants. Because of this extended reach, there is a large potential for post offices to more fully participate in providing remittances and to bring the unbanked into the formal financial system.

By associating remittance services with postal account-based services, Western Union will be supporting and facilitating the possibility of creating savings accounts more easily and affordably, encouraging remittance recipients to store their money instead of immediately cashing or sending it. This in turn will contribute to the creation of an enabling environment for a more productive use of remittances as well as the creation of small enterprises.

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