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DIGITALIZATION AND INNOVATION WORKING GROUP (DIGWG)
22ND JANUARY 2025 (ONLINE) 09:00 (GMT)

**REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF DIGITIZATION AND INNOVATION WORKING GROUP
ACTION PLAN FOR YEAR 2025-2026**

<p>1. SUBJECT:</p> <p>Report on Implementation of Digitization and Innovation Working Group Action Plan for Year 2025-2026</p>	<p>References/paragraphs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digitalization and Innovation Action Plan 2025-2026 • Operations and Technology Committee Action Plan 2025/2026
<p>2. Decision expected</p> <p>i) Adopt the Report and take note of the Recommendations contained therein</p> <p>ii) Table the Report to the Operations and Technology Committee</p>	

1. INTRODUCTION

Following **Decision No.02/PAPU/PC/X/2021** on Aligning the PAPU Programme of Activities with the UPU Programme of Activities taken during the 10th Ordinary Session of the PAPU Plenipotentiary Conference held on the 25th June, 2021 in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe, the current cycle and consequently the tenure of the PAPU Organs was extended to March 2026.

Given the foregoing and in line with the continuation of the Operations and Technology Committee's work, the 43rd Administrative Council approved an Annual Action Plan for the period June 2025 to March 2026.

2. THE DIGITIZATION AND INNOVATION WORKING GROUP ACTIVITIES DURING 2025-2026

PAPU participated in the launch of the new Technical Assistance Facility for Inclusive Postal Financing (FITAF 2) program. The UPU FITAF 2-PITAF programmes are described in detail below.

2.1 FITAF 2

The UPU International Bureau's Postal Financial Inclusion programme has developed a new Postal Inclusive Finance Technical Assistance Facility (FITAF2), in partnership with VISA. The new programme is intended to enhance the digital inclusive finance readiness levels of DOs, and their capability to diversify their digital solutions and offerings to enable access by underserved postal customers in support of national financial inclusion priorities.

- Providing participating DOs with comprehensive, go-to-market inclusive finance plans encompassing the latest inclusive finance innovations, knowledge transfers, and operating models, along with relevant development and expansion plans.
- Awarded projects will benefit from funding up to an estimated 150,000 USD per project, which will be covered directly by the FITAF 2 programme.
- The programme will not be offering direct project cash grant funding and will be expected to be completed within 12 months following project selection.

2.2 PITAF PROGRAMME

Postal Insurance Technical Assistance Facility Program (PITAF) offers the DOs that will apply the opportunity to work alongside the UPU and Insurance Service Providers to conduct a full assessment on their Postal Customer Inclusive Insurance needs and assess their own postal infrastructure insurance capabilities to develop the go to market plans that will enable them

- To deploy, enhance or expand their Postal Insurance products and solutions
- To enable scalable and diversified service offerings for customers.

Benefits of the Programme include:

- Providing DOs with essential inclusive insurance knowledge transfers,
- Product innovations and insurance models to enable them to support the insurance needs of postal customers.
- There will be a grant fund to support project deployments up to a maximum of 40,000 USD per project to be completed within 12 months following project selection.

The application process, project eligibility criteria, and application dates can be found at www.upu.int/en/Universal-Postal-union/Activities/Financial-Services.

2.3 UPU TRADEPOST FORUM-EMPOWERING MSMES:

How the Postal Sector Democratizes Access to Global Trade?

PAPU participated in the UPU-organized webinar on the 3rd edition of the TradePost Forum on 5th November 2025. The Webinar, which aimed at demystifying global trade, framing it not as an exclusive club for large corporations, but as an accessible opportunity for businesses of all sizes, facilitated by their local post Office.

The following presentations were made:

- **Emirate Post, 7X Group** presented Democratizing Logistics: The Physical Network advantage.
- **Chairperson of the WTO Trade Facilitation Committee** presented the contribution of the Postal sector to the implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement.

- **The Economic Affairs Officer, WTO informal Group for MSMEs** secretariat, presented how developing countries, especially the least developed countries, leverage existing infrastructure to enhance E-commerce inclusion of MSMEs.
- **Director of e-commerce, Tunisian Post** presented Easy export Tunisia, a platform with a single-window system acting as the sole point of contact and fiscal point for members of the distribution project.
- **TradePost program**: UPU expert presented the Postal Trade Facilitation and MSME Enablement.

2.4 READY-TO-MARKET INTEROPERABILITY GROUP (RMIG) WORKSHOP

The **Webinar** on “Explore potential collaboration between PAPU and the Ready-to-Market Interoperability Group (RMIG)” was held online the 1st August 2025.

- The RMIG is a UPU program designed for DOs to collaborate with private-sector partners through revenue-sharing, interoperable solutions aimed at Enhanced Postal Efficiency & Boost Growth.
- The Online Workshop organized on the 14th November 2025, in collaboration with RMIG under the theme “**from Volume Growth to Digital Sovereignty**”, introduced the RMIG initiative and explored opportunities for collaboration among PAPU members.
- Sixty-four (64) participants from African Member States, UPU International Bureau, RMIG, and PAPU General Secretariat attended the Workshop.
 - The countries represented were: **Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Egypt, Eswatini, Gabon, Kenya, Malawi, Senegal, South Africa, South Sudan, Tanzania, Tunisia, Uganda, Zimbabwe.**

2.5 AFRICAN UNION DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION STRATEGY

2.5.1 Consultation on the Draft DTS 2020-2030

A virtual Consultation meeting was held from 3rd to 4th September 2025 to review the DTS Implementation Assessment Report and gather expert feedback.

The expected outcomes are listed below:

- Consolidated feedback on the draft report;
- Validated assessment report with endorsed recommendations;
- Strengthened collaboration among key stakeholders on DTS implementation;
- Enhanced focus on regional infrastructure, digital services, and inclusive connectivity;
- A roadmap was to be agreed upon for finalization and submission to the AU policy organs.

2.5.2 DTS Validation Workshop Report

A physical validation meeting held in Maseru, Lesotho, from 7th to 9th October 2025 validated the final report in preparation for its submission to the Sixth Ordinary Session of the AU Specialized Technical Committee on Communication and ICT (CICT-6) in November 2025.

The expected outcomes are listed below:

- Consolidated feedback on the draft report;
- Validated assessment report with endorsed recommendations;
- Strengthened collaboration among key stakeholders on DTS implementation;
- Enhanced focus on regional infrastructure, digital services, and inclusive connectivity;
- A roadmap is agreed upon for finalization and submission to the AU policy organs.

2.6 BIBIMONEY WORKSHOP ON EMPOWERING AFRICA’S COMMUNITIES THROUGH THE POST

PAPU, in collaboration with **BIBIMONEY**, organized an online Workshop on 18th August 2025 under the theme “Empowering Africa’s Communities through the Post.” BIBIMONEY is a FinTech company’s solution that establishes a foothold in the financial sector by leveraging patented SIM-Skin technology to provide secure mobile money wallet services that work on any phone and any mobile network, with the following advantages.

- The solution is for Financial Inclusion for unbanked customers and under-banked through a scalable and sustainable solution.
- The solution facilitates interoperability with any network.
- it works on both smart and feature phones.
- Money can be sent anywhere in the world, international and domestic.
- It can be possible to reduce cost, to provide financial inclusion and Digital Access, to get Postal revitalization and policy alignment.

2.7 PAPU-VISA 2ND WORKSHOP

The PAPU/VISA Online Workshop was held on 4th December 2025 under the theme “**Post Offices-Becoming a Financial Institution**” to introduce the Visa initiative and explore opportunities for collaboration among PAPU Member States.

The workshop was structured around the following topics:

- Post Office overview,
- Visa Issuance & becoming a Visa Issuer,
- Use Cases-Issuance.

Each session was followed by questions and responses, as detailed in the annex.

Eighty-four (84) participants from PAPU Member States, the Visa Team, and the PAPU General Secretariat attended the Workshop.

- The Member States that were represented are as follows:

Angola, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Chad, Cameroon, Côte d’Ivoire, DRC, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gabon, Lesotho, Libya, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

Member States are encouraged to continue implementing outstanding activities and projects until they are completed.

- a) Members are urged to consider the Postal Inclusive Finance Technical Assistance Facility (FITAF2) to diversify their digital solutions and offer financial inclusion to enable access by underserved postal customers in support of national priorities.
- b) Members are encouraged to consider the Postal Insurance Technical Assistance Facility Program (PITAF) grants to diversify into postal Insurance products and solutions.
- c) Members are urged to take advantage of the UPU TradePost initiatives for the Postal Sector to access Global Trade.
- d) Members are urged to pursue the Ready-To-Market Interoperability Group (RMIG) program under UPU to collaborate with private-sector partners through revenue-sharing and interoperable solutions to enhance postal efficiency and boost growth.
- e) PAPU is encouraged to closely follow discussions on the AU Digital Transformation Strategy (DTS) to ensure that postal services are digitalized in harmony with the continental direction.
- f) Members are encouraged to work with the Union's partners like BIBIMONEY and VISA in order to benefit from the deployment of the partners' cutting-edge technologies for developing and digitalizing their products and services.

4. DECISIONS EXPECTED

The report is submitted for the Working Group to:

- a) Adopt the Report and take note of the Recommendations contained therein
- b) Table the Report to the Operations and Technology Committee.