THE STATE OF INCLUSIVE INSTANT PAYMENT SYSTEMS IN AFRICA

SIIPS 2025 • Executive Summary

AfricaNenda foundation

ECA

WORLD BANK GROUP

Acknowledgements

Authors: Sabine F. Mensah and Jacqueline Jumah

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Gates Foundation

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This report includes transaction data for 30 IPS. Eleven IPS operators and 13 central banks provided data on volume, values, or both through written survey feedback. We sincerely thank the central banks of Angola, Egypt, Eswatini, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mauritius, Morocco, South Africa, Tanzania, Tunisia, and Uganda, and the IPS operators EthSwitch (Ethiopia), Gamswitch (The Gambia), Integrated Payment Systems Ltd. (IPSL) (Kenya), Natswitch (Malawi), Nigeria Inter-Bank Settlement System (NIBSS), RSwitch (Rwanda), Sociedade Interbancaria de Moçambique (Mozambique), Zambia Electronic Clearing House Limited (ZECHL), Zimswitch (Zimbabwe), and Groupement Interbancaire et Monétique de l'Afrique Centrale (CEMAC) for providing data to help close information gaps.

We would also like to thank Salon Pement Swich (SAPS) and Somalia Instant Payment System (SIPS) for submitting their responses. Because SAPS and SIPS launched within the last year, transaction data was not yet available. SIMO did not submit transaction value data.

These data have enriched the analysis of the IPS landscape, providing deeper insights into what is working and where inclusivity gaps remain. We invite additional central banks and IPS operators to share data, fostering greater transparency and knowledge exchange to expand access to digital payments. The list acknowledges contributing central banks and IPS operators in alphabetical order by country, followed by the regions.

System	Data provided by the central bank
KWiK (Angola)	National Bank of Angola
IPN and Meeza Digital (Egypt)	Central Bank of Egypt
EPS Fast Payment Module (Eswatini)	Central Bank of Eswatini
Ghana MMI (Ghana)	Bank of Ghana
Kenya Mobile Money (Kenya)	Central Bank of Kenya
LeSwitch (Lesotho)	Central Bank of Lesotho
Madagascar Mobile Money (Madagascar)	Banque Centrale de Madagascar
MauCAS (Mauritius)	Bank of Mauritius
SWAM and Virement Instantané (Morocco)	Bank Al-Maghrib
PayShap, RTC, and TCIB (South Africa)	South African Reserve Bank (SARB), BankservAfrica
TIPS and Tanzania Mobile Money (Tanzania)	Bank of Tanzania
Tunisia Mobile Money (Tunisia)	Banque Centrale de Tunisie
Uganda Mobile Money (Uganda)	Bank of Uganda

System	Data or information provided by the IPS operator
EthSwitch (Ethiopia)	EthSwitch
Gamswitch (The Gambia)	Gamswitch
GIP (Ghana)	GhiPSS
PesaLink (Kenya)	Integrated Payment Systems Ltd. (IPSL)
Natswitch (Malawi)	Natswitch
SIMO (Mozambique)	Sociedade Interbancaria de Moçambique
NIP, eNaira, and Nigeria Mobile Money (Nigeria)	Nigeria Inter-Bank Settlement System (NIBSS)
eKash (Rwanda)	RSwitch
National Financial Switch (Zambia)	Zambia Electronic Clearing House Limited (ZECHL)
ZIPIT (Zimbabwe)	Zimswitch
GIMACPAY (CEMAC)	Groupement Interbancaire et Monétique de l'Afrique Centrale (GIMAC)

About SIIPS 2025

The State of Inclusive Instant Payment Systems (SIIPS) in Africa 2025 report is a flagship annual report by AfricaNenda Foundation. The SIIPS report aims to inform public-sector and private-sector players in Africa and beyond about the developments in the instant retail payment system (IPS) ecosystem in Africa, including an assessment of the inclusivity of such systems, both in functionality (accessible to all end users) and governance (all licensed payment providers have fair access and design input opportunities). For this report, only systems with live transactions and functionality as of June 2025 were included. The authors gathered the data in this report directly from central banks and public or public-private instant payment system operators in Africa and from publicly available resources between January and June 2025. The findings also include insights from extensive stakeholder interviews conducted during the same period. The consumer research was conducted between February and March 2025.

Digital payments are transforming African economies by fostering financial inclusion and economic participation. Despite significant increases over the past decade, however, end-user adoption remains uneven due to a lack of modern, inclusive, and interoperable instant payment infrastructure that makes digital payments accessible and motivates market actors to simplify onboarding, improve the customer experience, and address security and fraud concerns that keep people using cash.

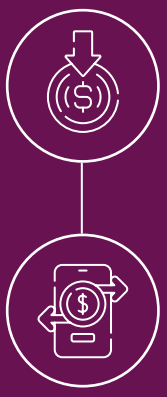
Instant payment systems (IPS) are helping counteract these barriers. These national-scale retail payment systems provide the shared infrastructure that ensures anyone in a country can pay anyone else, regardless of where (or even if) the respective parties have an account. IPS help expand access to low-cost digital payments and enable immediate access to the funds. When effectively implemented and made widely accessible to all end users and payment service providers (PSPs) in a market, these systems become inclusive IPS, or IIPS (see Box 0.1). This inclusivity can drive scale and lead to reductions in explicit and implicit costs, as well as deeper financial services usage through savings, credit, and insurance.

In this fourth annual ***State of Inclusive Instant Payment Systems (SIIPS) in Africa 2025*** report, AfricaNenda Foundation highlights efforts to develop, launch, scale, and drive inclusivity in IPS. Utilizing both supply-side and demand-side quantitative data collected between January and June 2025, as well as qualitative insights from in-depth interviews, the report serves as a key resource for Africa's payment market stakeholders, including central banks, IPS operators, payment service providers, and financial inclusion advocates.

As in previous years, the SIIPS 2025 edition begins with the premise that IIPS function as the payments layer of a country's digital public infrastructure (DPI)—the shared, interoperable building blocks that provide a market with equitable access to digital identity, digital payments, and digital data exchange services.

The report measures the progress made in expanding inclusivity while also identifying persistent gaps in inclusivity and opportunities for improvement. It starts with an update of the IPS landscape in Africa, based on data from a survey and interviews with central banks, IPS operators, and expert stakeholders. It continues with the findings from a demand-side study of digital payment users in four countries: Angola, Côte d'Ivoire, Madagascar, and Tunisia. From this data foundation, the report explores the high-profile trends and opportunities that are either driving inclusivity in the digital payments space or hampering it. Three spotlight chapters offer deep dives on the opportunity for IPS to expand scale and impact through DPI, G2P payment digitalization, and cross-border payments. Furthermore, four IPS case studies focused on Egypt, Ethiopia, Mozambique, and Nigeria offer in-depth details on the successes and challenges involved in designing and launching an IPS. Finally, the report wraps up with a set of recommendations geared to different stakeholder groups.

Box 0.1 | What is an instant payment system, and when does it become inclusive?



Instant payment systems (IPS) are **open-loop** retail payment systems that enable **irrevocable, low-value** digital credit push transactions in **near real-time** for use **24 hours** a day, **365 days a year**. IPS and fast payment systems (FPS) are synonymous.

***Inclusive* instant payment systems (IIPS)** process payments **digitally in near real time** and are available **24 hours** a day, **365 days** a year, or as close to that as possible. They enable **low-value, low-cost push** transactions that are **irrevocable** and are based on **open-loop multilateral** interoperability arrangements. Licensed payment providers have **fair access** to the scheme, and system participants have **equal input** opportunities. The **central bank** has a role in scheme governance. End users have access to a **full range of use cases and channels**, as well as transparent and fit-for-purpose **recourse** mechanisms.

Note: These definitions inform the criteria applied in the AfricaNenda IPS Inclusivity Spectrum. For a complete description of the Inclusivity Spectrum and which criteria constitute the different levels of inclusivity, refer to the full assessment in Chapter 2 of the State of Inclusive Instant Payment Systems in Africa 2025 Report.

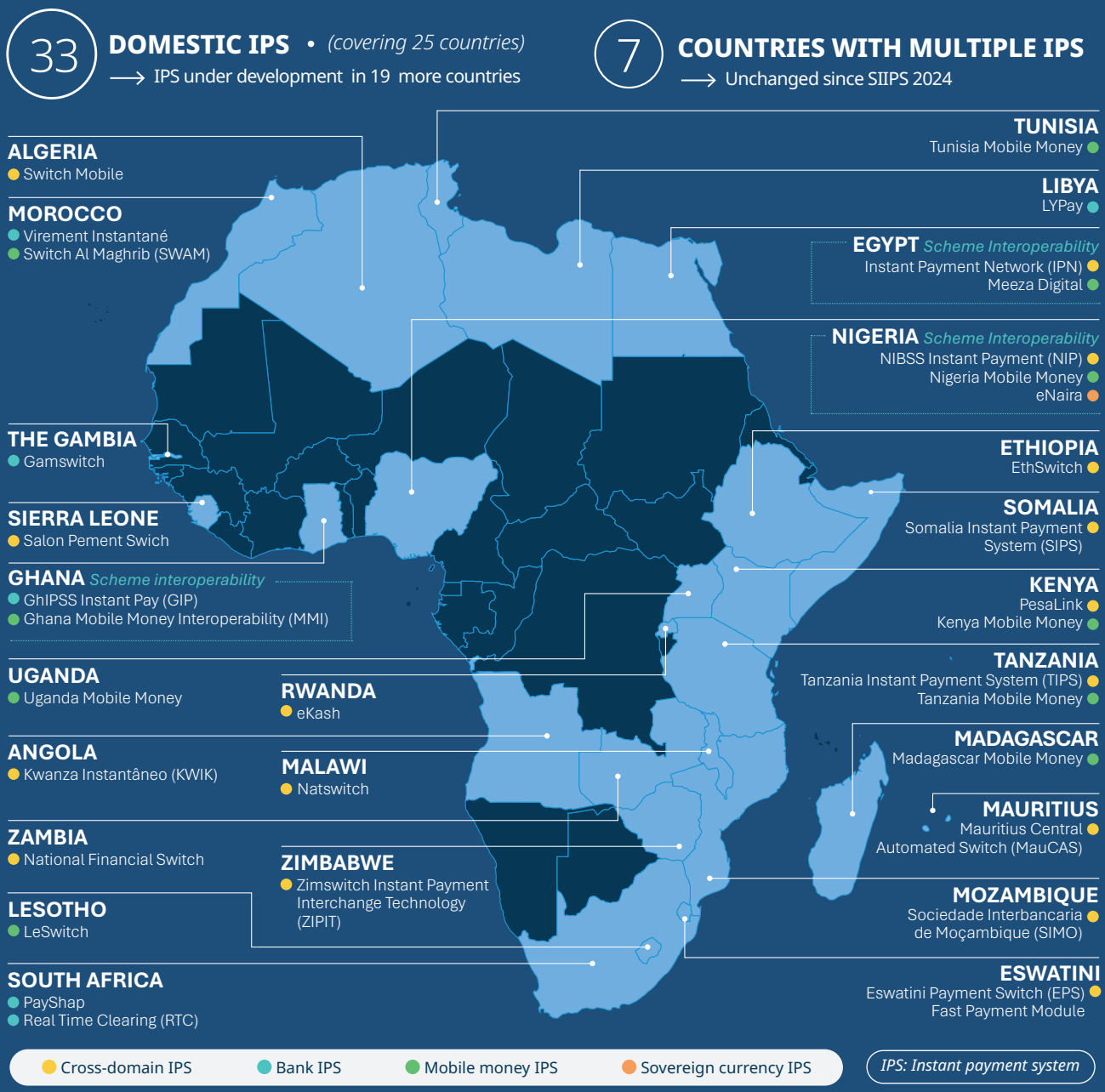
The 2025 IPS landscape: New systems launch and others progress toward inclusivity

Between July 2024 and June 2025, five new domestic IPS went live, raising the total number of domestic systems in Africa to 33 across 25 countries (see Map 0.1). This growth increased the total number of all live systems—including three live regional systems—from 31 in June 2024 to 36 as of June 2025 (see Box 0.2 for a summary of changes in the IPS landscape).

Box 0.2 | Summary of changes since SIIPS 2024

- The five new systems that launched between July 2024 and June 2025 are Switch Mobile (Algeria), Eswatini Payment Switch (EPS) Fast Payment Module, LYPay (Libya), Salon Pement Swich (Sierra Leone), and Somalia Instant Payment System (SIPS).
- Two systems in the SIIPS 2025 are listed under new names compared with SIIPS 2024 based on survey responses: MarocPay is now Switch Al Maghrib (SWAM) (Morocco), and Taifa Moja is now Tanzania Mobile Money.
- Two systems were reclassified based on the categories of PSPs they allow to participate: SWAM (Morocco) was reclassified from a cross-domain IPS to a mobile money IPS, while PesaLink (Kenya) was reclassified from a bank IPS to a cross-domain IPS.

Map 0.1 | Active domestic and regional IPS in Africa as of June 1, 2025



Four of the five new IPS are cross-domain systems, meaning that they allow banks and non-bank financial institutions to participate (see Box 0.3). The four are Switch Mobile (Algeria), EPS Fast Payment Module (Eswatini), Salon Pement Swich (Sierra Leone), and SIPS (Somalia). The IPS "type" is based on its interoperability arrangements and defines the PSPs it allows to participate (see Box 0.2).

Box 0.3 | IPS types

An IPS can fall into any one of four types:

Cross-domain IPS are characterized by their ability to facilitate all-to-all interoperability between various types of financial institutions and their respective account types. This includes enabling transactions between traditional banks, mobile money operators (MMOs), microfinance institutions (MFIs), and fintech companies, allowing all licensed payment providers to participate. All-to-all interoperability includes the ability for end users to transact between wallet accounts at different MMOs, between mobile money accounts and bank accounts, and across bank accounts.

Bank IPS are primarily operated by or for traditional banking institutions. These systems often focus on facilitating real-time transfers between accounts held at different banks and primarily serve existing bank account holders.

Mobile money IPS are primarily designed to facilitate instant payments within and between different mobile money platforms.

Sovereign digital currency IPS only process transactions in central bank digital currencies.

A notable trend is the continued gravitation towards cross-domain interoperability: 16 of the live domestic IPS are now classified as cross-domain IPS, enabling transactions between various types of financial institutions. This is followed by mobile money IPS (10), bank IPS (6), and sovereign digital currency IPS (1). Nigeria's eNaira is still the sole sovereign digital currency IPS on the continent. Seven countries (Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Morocco, Nigeria, South Africa, and Tanzania) boast multiple live IPS of different types, some of which are interoperable.

In addition to domestic systems, three regional IPS are currently active: GIMACPAY in the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC), the Pan-African Payment and Settlement System (PAPSS), which aspires to be pan-continental, and Transactions Cleared on an Immediate Basis (TCIB) in the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC). These regional systems provide regional functionality to 22 countries. The Central Bank of West Africa States (BCEAO) launched its regional IPS for the countries of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU), in September, 2025. As this is outside the data collection period for the SIIPS 2025 report, it is not reported as live in this edition.

There has been continued growth in transaction volumes and values.

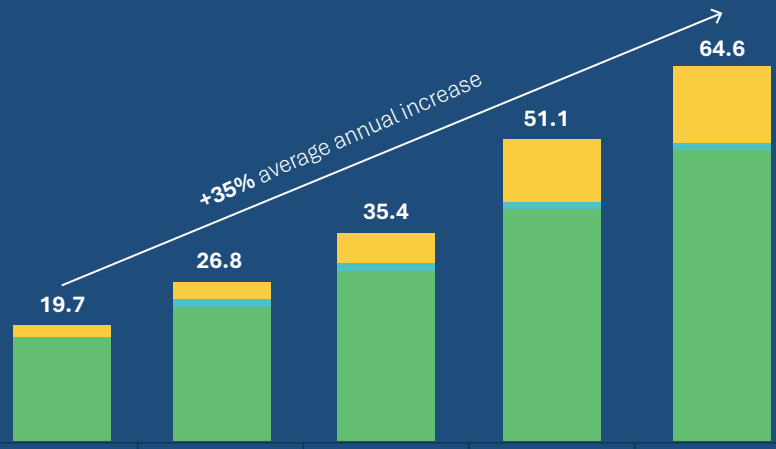
IPS across Africa are demonstrating robust adoption growth, with transaction volumes and values continuing their upward trajectory (see Figure 0.1). Between 2020 and 2024, total transaction volumes increased by an average annual growth rate of 35%, reaching over 64 billion transactions in 2024. Mobile money IPS continue to process the highest share of transaction volumes, though bank IPS grew at the fastest rate between 2023 and 2024 at 50%.

Total transaction values also saw growth, increasing by an average annual rate of 26% from $775.5 billion in 2020 to 1.98 trillion in 2024.[1] Bank IPS led this growth, with a 28% increase in transaction value between 2023 and 2024, followed by cross-domain systems (9% growth) and mobile money (7% growth). Mobile money IPS maintained a low average transaction value of $11, consistent with high-volume, low-value transactions. Cross-domain IPS saw their average transaction value decline to $95 in 2024, indicating potential use of these systems for a wider range of payment types, including smaller-value payments. Cross-domain systems processed the largest share of total transaction value in the past year.

1 To avoid distortions caused by major year-to-year exchange rate differences, AfricaNenda used the World Bank Atlas Conversion Method to convert data reported in local currencies into U.S. dollars for consistent reporting. This method smooths exchange rate fluctuations by applying a three-year, inflation-adjusted moving average. As a result of these adjustments, several values differ from those reported in past editions of SIIPS.

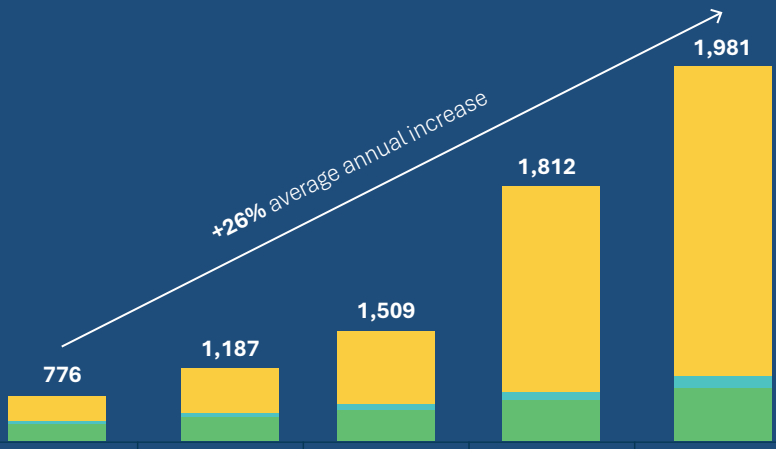
Figure 0.1 | Transaction volumes and values (n=30)

VOLUME
(billions of transactions)



	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2023/2024 Growth
Cross-domain IPS	2.1	3.5	5.3	10.5	13.6	29%
Bank IPS	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.7	50%
Mobile money IPS	17.5	23.1	29.9	40.2	50.3	25%
Total	**19.7**	**26.8**	**35.4**	**51.1**	**64.6**	**26%**

VALUES
(USD billion)



	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2023/2024 Growth
Cross-domain IPS	460	732	943	1,195	1,299	9%
Bank IPS	50	71	96	114	147	28%
Mobile money IPS	266	383	470	502	535	7%
Total	**776**	**1,187**	**1,509**	**1,812**	**1,981**	**9%**

Note: Volume and value data were unavailable for four of the new systems—Switch Mobile (Algeria), LYPay (Libya), Salon Pement Swich (Sierra Leone), and SIPS (Somalia)—and no data was received from PAPSS (continent-wide). Volume data was available for SIMO (Mozambique), but value data was not; therefore, their transaction data is not included in the analysis. As a result, these calculations include 30 IPS. Since eNaira (Nigeria) is the only sovereign digital currency IPS, and its data are included in the NIP (Nigeria) data, sovereign digital currency IPS are excluded from the IPS performance analysis.

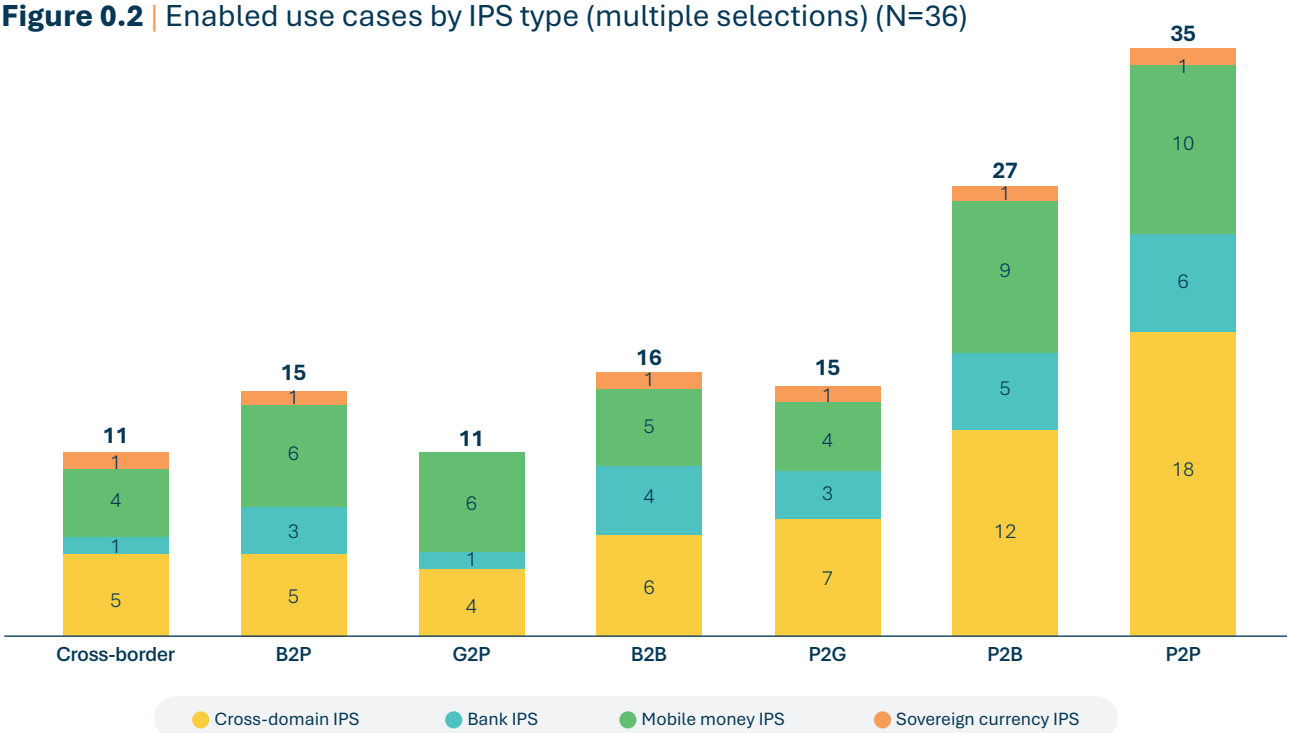
Available channels, instruments, and use cases are broadening.

IPS creates the condition for more end users to adopt them—and thereby become more inclusive—when they expand the breadth of channels, instruments, and use cases they support.

SIIPS 2025 reflects steady progress across all three dimensions:

- **Mobile phone applications (apps) remain the most widely supported channel,** enabled by 33 systems. This reflects a broader shift toward smartphone-centric design, consistent with Sub-Saharan Africa's growing smartphone penetration rate, which currently stands at 54%. **USSD and browser-based internet banking remain critical** in areas where basic phones are more common, ranking as the second and third most supported channels (25 and 22 systems, respectively). **QR code support rose notably,** and support for **human-assisted channels declined,** though they are still relevant for users with limited digital or financial literacy.
- **Credit EFT and e-money remain the most prevalent instruments,** with an equal number of IPS now supporting both (23 IPS). Fourteen IPS support debit EFT instruments, and thirteen IPS support card instruments. Only one IPS, eNaira, supports a central bank digital currency (CBDC).
- **Most IPS support the person-to-person (P2P) payment use case,** with a growing number enabling person-to-business (P2B), government-to-person (G2P), and cross-border payment use cases (see Figure 0.2).
- **User-centric innovations,** such as request-to-pay, third-party connections, real-time payment confirmation, and transaction validation, are enhancing IPS inclusivity by improving the user experience, building trust, and encouraging adoption, particularly among underserved populations.

Figure 0.2 | Enabled use cases by IPS type (multiple selections) (N=36)



Note: Out of 36 IPS, 35 are included in the use case analysis. No use case data was received from PAPSS.

Commercial banks remain the most common direct IPS participants, though an increasing number of IPS allow non-banks to participate directly.

Commercial banks continue to dominate direct participation in IPS, though inclusivity is expanding to non-bank PSPs. Of the more than 1800 total IPS participants in 2025, 42% were direct and 58% indirect (This data excludes eNaira and Nigeria Mobile Money and PAPSS (continent-wide), Madagascar Mobile Mobile, Switch Mobile (Algeria), LYPay (Libya), and Uganda Mobile Money, as the total number of participants for these systems was not available.). Nigeria's NIP accounted for 39% of total participants, followed by Ghana's GIP and CEMAC's GIMACPAY. While banks made up the majority of direct participants (463), 15 IPS enabled direct non-bank participation by e-money issuers and microfinance institutions (MFIs) : KWiK (Angola), Meeza Digital (Egypt), EthSwitch (Ethiopia), Gamswitch (The Gambia), GIP (Ghana), PesaLink (Kenya), MauCAS (Mauritius), SWAM (Morocco), SIMO (Mozambique), eKash (Rwanda), TIPS and Tanzania Mobile Money (Tanzania), Tunisia Mobile Money, National Financial Switch (Zambia), and ZIPIT (Zimbabwe). This highlights a growing push toward broader ecosystem inclusion in IPS governance and operations.

The first IPS achieved mature inclusivity.

The aggregate impact of a system's governance, structure, interoperability, channel coverage, functionality, and use cases shapes the inclusivity potential of the IPS. The 2025 AfricaNenda Inclusivity Spectrum categorizes systems into basic, progressed, and mature levels of inclusivity based on defined criteria (see Figure 0.4 for full definitions and IPS classifications), as follows:

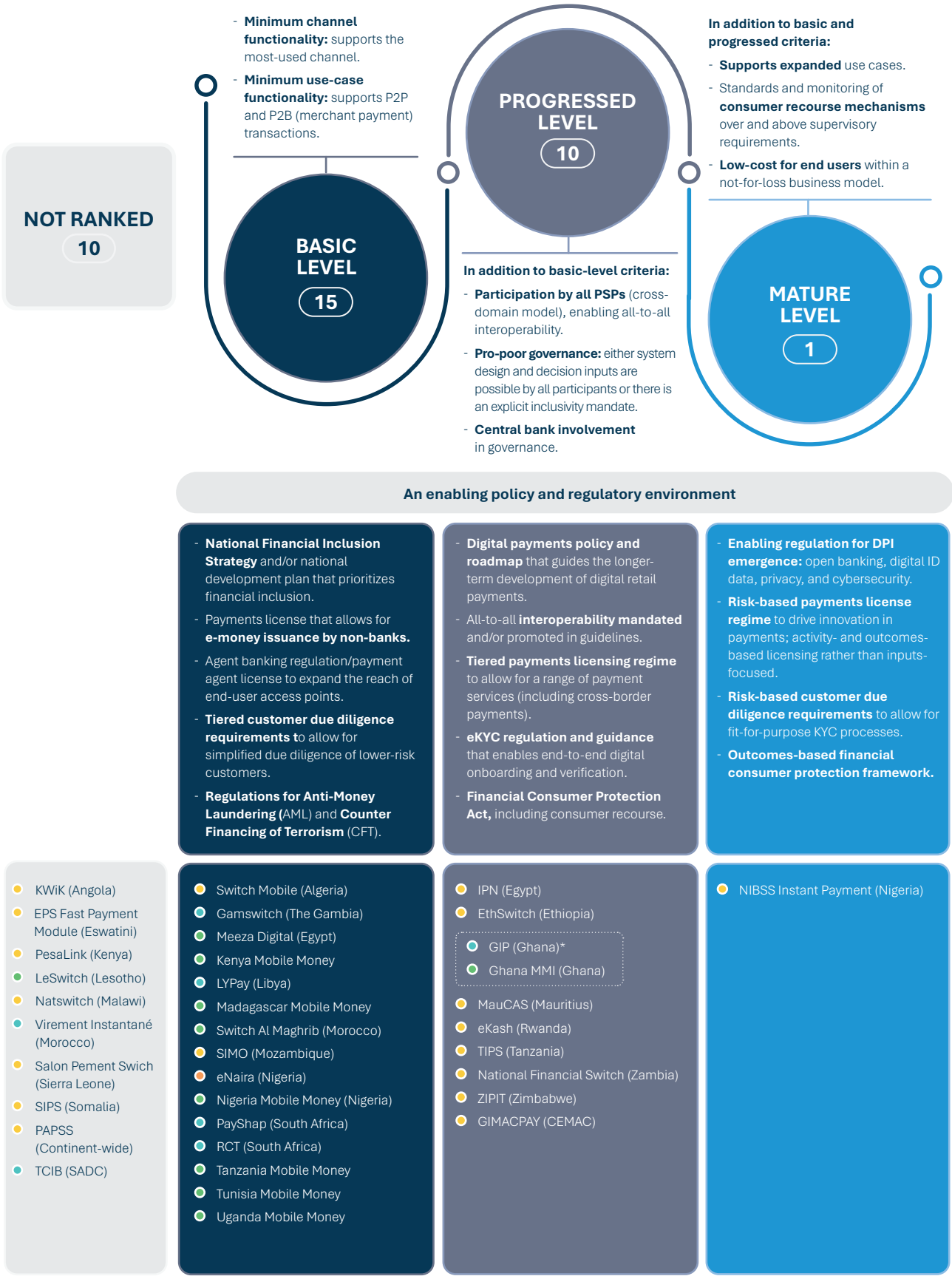
- Fifteen IPS are at the **basic** level of inclusivity. These systems support both P2P and P2B use cases and have enabled the primary channel that people use in their country. Mobile money and bank IPS cannot independently progress beyond the basic level due to the lack of all-to-all interoperability. Six of the IPS with a basic level of inclusivity are cross-domain and could progress to the next level by enabling P2B (merchant) payments.

- Ten IPS have reached the **progressed** level of inclusivity. In addition to meeting the basic criteria, these systems allow all licensed PSPs to access the system (cross-domain model), feature pro-poor governance through inclusive decision-making, and have a central bank involved in governance. In Ghana, GIP and Ghana Mobile Money jointly enable all-to-all interoperability via integration between the two schemes and therefore jointly achieve progressed inclusivity.

- **Mature** systems meet all the criteria for basic and progressed inclusivity while enabling most use cases and operating according to not-for-profit or not-for-loss principles to ensure that end-user transaction fees are as low as possible. Nigeria's NIP is the first IPS in Africa to reach the **mature** level of inclusivity. The biggest challenges progressed systems face in reaching mature inclusivity are enabling expanded use cases and additional recourse mechanisms.

- Ten IPS remain **unranked**, either because they do not support P2B functionality, lack the minimum channel functionality, or have insufficient data available to enable assessment. Although the number of unranked systems remains the same as in 2024, the addition of new systems and improvement across the spectrum show progress.

Figure 0.3 | Mapping IPS across the Inclusivity Spectrum



* Ghana MMI runs on the GhIPSS GIP rail. Through this integration, the two Ghana systems jointly achieve the progressed level of inclusivity.

End-user insights

As with previous editions of the SIIPS report, AfricaNenda Foundation carried out in-depth end-user research to better understand the experiences and perspectives that individuals and micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) have around digital payments. This year's research took place in Angola, Côte d'Ivoire, Madagascar, and Tunisia, and involved one hundred end users in each country in addition to forty in-depth interviews.

The findings from the 2025 end-user research are consistent with those from previous SIIPS studies. In brief, frequent income earners are particularly likely to be active users. Relatedly, adults older than 30 years of age use digital payments more often than younger adults, and men use them more often than women. Merchant adoption, however, is mixed and depends on the degree of business formality and whether there is sufficient customer demand for digital payments and easy access to digital payment services.

In all four economies, P2B payments were made more often than P2P payments. In Angola and Côte d'Ivoire, more than 70% of merchants had received a digital payment from a customer in the previous two weeks; Angola's payments were through point-of-sale systems, while Côte d'Ivoire's were through mobile apps and QR codes. Such positive signs notwithstanding, 75% of the merchants in the sample reported that they faced constraints in adopting digital payments because customers still prefer to pay with cash.

Overall, the sample participants fell into one of five common end-user profiles:

- **The digital mover** embraces a fully digital lifestyle but can occasionally encounter usability issues and inconsistent features, which push them to use cash.
- **The situational user** opts for digital payments when they offer clear benefits, but often uses cash when digital is unavailable or less reliable than cash.
- **The cash-first user** earns money through casual work or from a household kiosk. They prefer familiarity and simplicity and often face digital literacy and access gaps, which force them to rely on family members for support with digital channels.
- **The structured boss** runs a formal business and wants digital payment systems that are safe and fast, and make it easy to track expenses, supervise employees, and offer great experiences for customers and suppliers.
- **Juggling merchants** run micro businesses, and their customers differ in their payment preferences, requiring them to manage both cash and digital payment inflows.

These profiles highlight the fact that even active digital payment users in Africa live in a hybrid world that requires them to have cash when digital channels are not available, not reliable, not trusted, or not intuitive to use. Concerns about fraud and security are prevalent across the customer journey from awareness to habitual use, particularly among cash-first users: half to three-quarters of them say that fraud concerns are a barrier. Other barriers, such as network outages, inadequate training, high transaction fees, and insufficient customer support, likewise suppress both adoption and continued use for a broader array of use cases.

“I usually make my payments with cash. I don’t make digital payments because… I don’t use tools that allow me to have apps and other things. Nowadays, there are a lot of scams and clones, so I prefer to go to the bank, withdraw the money at the counter, keep the money, and do my things normally.”

—Man, merchant, urban, Angola

“What encourages me to use mobile money more often is the quick assistance it provides when necessary. I have confidence in using it.”

—Woman, individual user, urban, Côte d’Ivoire

On the other hand, end users also recognize that digital channels can be safer than carrying cash and more convenient because they do not need change. Both are viewed as adoption and usage enablers, as are merchants that only accept digital payments, convenience for large transactions, and flexibility for small transactions. These can motivate end users to embrace digital payments, though the journey can take many turns as people adopt and then sometimes abandon digital payments if the services do not fulfill expectations of safety and convenience.

Looking ahead, the keys to deepening adoption of digital payments among low-income individuals and small or informal businesses will be the broader acceptance of digital payments by payees, their usefulness for small-value transactions, and easy onboarding. At the system level, expanding use cases—such as rent, public transportation, utilities, and government-to-person (G2P) payments—will encourage broader adoption.

Key trends and opportunities for promoting inclusivity

Several emerging trends and innovations affect IPS inclusivity. They suggest opportunities for expanding IPS access and the use of instant payments. These trends play out at the market, system, and consumer levels (see Table 0.1).

Table 0.1 | Key trends and opportunities

Market trends	Importance/relevance	Opportunities for generating IPS inclusivity
IPS will enable the next cross-border play in Africa	Merchants selling across borders and emigrants sending remittances wish to avoid high costs and settlement delays in traditional channels. IPS-to-IPS links offer real-time, low-fee experiences.	• Charge less than money transfer operators and deliver instant, irrevocable funds to reduce costs and latency. • Remove intermediaries to eliminate foreign exchange currency dependency, cutting costs and de-risking pressure. • Provide universal access to counterparties under harmonized rules to expand market reach. • Monetize message conversion, routing, and low-risk FX, and layer cross-border services to generate new revenue.
Consumer-protection frameworks tighten, led by APP fraud reimbursement rules	A sharp rise in authorized push payment (APP) fraud and high levels of end-user concern about fraud are causing regulators to shift liability to PSPs.	• Offer quick, automatic reimbursement to build user trust and boost IPS volumes. • Split liability to incentivize fraud prevention. • Create demand for shared fraud-intelligence hubs to catalyze data-sharing. • Embrace third-party risk-management tools built on IPS rails.
IPS design gaps stall launches	Many live IPS process low volumes and values due to design and governance gaps, such as high/unclear transaction fees, partial/delayed participation, limited use-case coverage, weak trust architecture, and governance inertia.	• Rapidly digitalize low-value payments and increase daily active users to align pricing. • Achieve full network effects and steeper volume curves to ensure universal participation. • Create sticky, everyday relevance for consumers and small businesses to enable multi-use functionality.

Market trends	Importance/relevance	Opportunities for generating IPS inclusivity
(cont.)		• Increase user willingness for higher-value flows and attract key transfers to build visible trust. • Roll out features and policies to keep IPS competitive.
System trends	**Importance/relevance**	**Opportunities for generating IPS inclusivity**
QR code functionality is gaining traction	Growing smartphone adoption, expanding internet access, and reduced data costs present an opportunity to leverage QR codes for expanding IPS access, especially in retail and informal sectors.	Design and introduce QR systems that enhance inclusivity as follows: • Use merchant-presented QR codes with push payment functionality for real-time confirmations. • Promote shared QR codes by embedding them within the IPS for an open, interoperable platform. • Act as a QR issuer to lower entry barriers for acquirers. • Offer flexible QR payloads to allow merchants to change providers while keeping payment methods consistent. • Implement robust fraud management for stronger security through push-based methods and real-time analytics. • Set zero/near-zero merchant fees to attract small merchants.
Development of consumer-facing solutions/ applications	IPS are launching dedicated consumer-facing applications to build their brands and offer simple, convenient, and secure user experiences.	• Control the end-user experience to ensure service consistency and brand building. • Provide a single access point to the IPS to facilitate unified market entry, enabling all PSPs to go live simultaneously. • Allow users to link multiple accounts in one place to enhance accessibility, convenience, and control. • Enable expanded financial services access, such as credit, savings, and insurance. • Enable a wider range of financial service providers to participate in driving enhanced competition and innovation.

System trends	Importance/relevance	Opportunities for generating IPS inclusivity
Free fee structures jumpstart adoption	Free or affordable fee structures can reduce the cost barrier of digital payments and encourage early adoption.	• Waive transaction fees, even temporarily, to increase uptake, making the service more accessible. • Encourage initial trials and build user trust to foster greater financial inclusion and accelerate the shift from cash to digital payments.
Consumer trends	**Importance/relevance**	**Opportunities for generating IPS inclusivity**
Human-assisted channels are more (not less) essential for narrowing inclusivity gaps	Human-assisted channels like agent networks remain crucial for customer acquisition and serving underserved groups, especially first-time users and those who are less digitally confident.	• Innovate agent management and roles in the payments value chain to modernize agent models, including shared agent infrastructure models and "agents-as-a-service" offerings. • Build dependable agent networks through improved selection, training, monitoring, incentives, and support (e.g., credit-linked float management). • Reconsider reducing IPS support for human-assisted channels.
End users embracing digital payments still live in a hybrid world	Despite growth in digital payments, consumers face constraints (habit, infrastructure, fractured markets) that will keep even avid digital adopters in a hybrid payments world (cash and digital) for the foreseeable future.	• Develop digital-analog approaches designed for less digitally/financially enabled groups to innovate hybrid approaches. • Focus on providing convenient, easy, and safe options accessible with current tools (e.g., USSD-enabled options for basic phones) to serve customers where they are and foster loyalty for future transitions to app-enabled channels.
Negative experiences spread virally through social networks and discourage digital channel adoption	Negative perceptions of digital payments, driven by word-of-mouth about scams, fraud, and unsatisfactory issue resolution, deter potential users and erode trust.	• Provide information and skills for safe service use, fraud prevention, and clear grievance redressal. • Fulfill or exceed regulatory mandates, enhance user experience, and promote customer care channels for quick issue resolution and to strengthen consumer protection. • Run regular fraud awareness campaigns and promote success stories to combat negative messaging and build trust.

IIPS for what:
DPI, G2P, and cross-border payments

IPS have a foundational role to play in enabling digital public infrastructure (DPI), modernizing government-to-person (G2P) payments, and revolutionizing cross-border transactions across the continent, as follows:

DPI is Africa's next frontier for inclusive payments and digital transformation, built on digital payments, foundational digital identity, and data exchange. Integrated DPI is vital, as it enables a complete digital economy through lower-cost identification, cheaper payments, and secure data exchange. A holistic DPI stack offers substantial benefits like reduced digital service costs, efficient government services, streamlined cross-border trade, expanded credit access, increased tax revenue, and enhanced trust via transparent consent.

Despite this potential, only a few countries currently have integrated DPI layers. Instead, Africa has mostly seen progress in developing individual DPI layers, with 36 live IPS in 31 countries, 36 nations issuing digital IDs, and 36 enacting data protection laws. Integrating these into comprehensive, full-stack solutions remains a critical gap.

The barriers to closing that gap are fivefold and focused on weak institutional coordination, infrastructure deficits, human capacity shortfalls, unsustainable financing, and privacy concerns. Overcoming these barriers will require high-level political alignment, strategic investment in infrastructure and human capital, viable funding, and robust privacy safeguards. These all require strong leadership to create integrated, scalable digital platforms.

Overcoming the barriers to integrated DPI could bring particular benefits for **leveraging IPS to modernize G2P payments in Africa.** Every country in Africa has at least one social safety net program, and African countries spend 1.2 percent of their gross domestic product (GDP), on average, on social safety net payments. Roughly 70% of these funds are cash transfers, totaling around $31 billion per year.

Existing methods for sending these payments are rife with inefficiencies, leading to duplication across government agencies, time delays, leakage, and opacity. These financial flows are ripe for modernization through IPS, which could fundamentally transform disbursements by enabling immediate, secure, and cost-effective transfers. Yet only 11 of Africa's 36 live IPS support the G2P use case.

Scaling IPS-enabled G2P payments faces substantial technical and infrastructural hurdles, including fragmented digital identity systems, limited government digital readiness, and API standardization deficiencies. Policy and regulatory limitations, such as insufficient political will, restrictive frameworks for non-bank providers, and reliance on sponsor banks, further impede progress. Overcoming these requires deploying universal ID coverage, establishing dedicated government digital units, standardizing APIs, ensuring interoperable last-mile infrastructure, and amending rules to allow tiered, risk-based access for non-bank financial institutions. By addressing these challenges, IPS can become a robust backbone for G2P payments, delivering immediate benefits to recipients and strengthening the broader financial system.

Finally, interlinking IPS has the potential to facilitate cross-border payments for global trade, investment, and remittances. There are multiple models for achieving this interlinking, including connections to aggregators, direct PSP linkages, and IPS-to-IPS connections. Any of these options could deliver real-time, low-fee experiences that eclipse traditional methods. To date, 11 of Africa's 36 IPS enable cross-border payments, including the three regional systems.

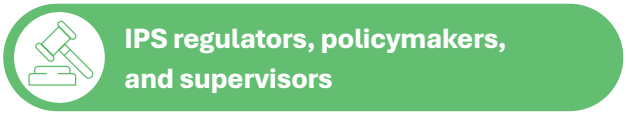
Scaling cross-border payments via IPS faces significant hurdles. These include fragmented policy and regulatory frameworks between corridor countries (e.g., varying KYC, AML/CFT rules), diverse infrastructure and technical limitations (e.g., disparate messaging standards, unclear business cases for PSP participation), complex exchange rate and settlement dynamics (e.g., USD dependency, liquidity management), and challenges in governance and scheme rulebook development across multiple jurisdictions. Opportunities to overcome these involve harmonizing policies and regulations, implementing license passporting, adopting ISO 20022 and API integration layers, enabling local currency settlement, exploring Central Bank Digital Currencies (CBDCs), and fostering collaboration to develop common scheme rulebooks. Realizing this potential will require concerted efforts to align diverse legal and technical frameworks across the continent.

Advancing inclusivity: building on progress

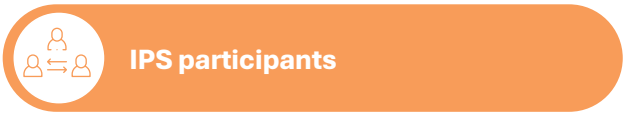
The ***State of Inclusive Instant Payment Systems in Africa* 2025** report showcases the continent's progress toward increasing digital payment access and usage through IPS, while calling attention to the systemic barriers and accelerators that could help drive significant short-to-medium-term impact.

Stakeholders could help accelerate continued progress through the following actions:

can prioritize collecting granular transaction data to inform design for low-adoption segments, adopt affordable pricing models to jumpstart and sustain adoption, and strengthen user trust and confidence through key features like account lookup and transaction confirmation. They can also expand reach and scale by enabling third-party integration, broaden use cases with advanced features like "Request to Pay," support user awareness and education, engage governments to enable G2P payments as a catalyst for adoption, and invest in shared fraud prevention infrastructure.



can mandate comprehensive ecosystem-wide data collection disaggregated by gender and age, strengthen instant payment-oriented consumer protection and fraud management frameworks, and advance a holistic DPI approach by fostering connections between IPS and other DPI components. They can also advocate for no-fee transactions, promote catalytic use cases that drive financial inclusion (like G2P and P2G), and advance digital merchant payment acceptance, especially in underserved areas.



can invest in ongoing digital and financial literacy initiatives, implement trust and confidence-enhancing features, and ensure that the low transaction costs offered by IPS operators are passed on to end users.

are well placed to facilitate knowledge sharing between IPS operators through forums, workshops, and case studies; support cross-border integration and infrastructure harmonization; and provide dedicated funding and technical assistance to enable non-bank participation in IPS. They can also support human-centered research to develop an IPS ecosystem that addresses the unique needs of underserved groups and play a catalytic role in convening stakeholders around the DPI agenda to foster alignment and joint planning.

AfricaNenda Foundation is committed to helping stakeholders build IIPS to serve all Africans. We are an avid proponent of interoperability to drive inclusivity in digital payment systems. **Together with our SIIPS partners at the World Bank and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, we are ready to support stakeholders in the IPS ecosystem.**

AfricaNenda Foundation
C1-402, 4th Floor, Block C, Grand Baie La Croisette, Grand Baie, Mauritius

website www.africanenda.org | email info@africanenda.org

@africanenda

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