



Press release

Paris, 22 November 2018

## Orange and MTN launch pan-African mobile money interoperability to scale up mobile financial services across Africa

**Two of Africa's largest mobile operators and mobile money providers, Orange Group and MTN Group, today announced a joint venture, Mowali (mobile wallet interoperability), to enable interoperable payments across the continent. Mowali makes it possible to send money between mobile money accounts issued by any mobile money provider, in real time and at low cost.**

Mowali will immediately benefit from the reach of MTN Mobile Money and Orange Money, bringing together over 100 million mobile money accounts and mobile money operations in 22 of sub-Saharan Africa's 46 markets. Mowali is ready to enable interoperability between digital financial service providers beyond MTN and Orange operations and markets, to support the existing 338 million mobile money accounts in Africa.

Mowali is a digital payment infrastructure that connects financial service providers and customers in one inclusive network. It functions as an industry utility, open to any mobile money provider in Africa, including banks, money transfer operators and other financial service providers.

The objective of Mowali is to increase the usage of mobile money by consumers and merchants. Mowali enables money to circulate freely between mobile money accounts from any operators in all countries. From the customer's point of view, this means "I can pay or receive money anywhere from my mobile account regardless of my operator". The system will unlock further innovation in the digital financial space within the continent.

**For Stéphane Richard, Chairman & CEO of Orange,** "by providing full interoperability between platforms, Mowali will provide an important step forward that will allow mobile money to become a universal means of payment in Africa. Increasing financial inclusion through the use of digital technology is an essential element in furthering the economic development of Africa, particularly for more isolated communities. This solution embodies Orange's ambition to be a leading player in the digital transformation of the continent. By joining forces with another of Africa's market leaders, MTN, we aim to accelerate the pace of this transformation in a way that will change the lives of our customers by providing them with simpler, safer and more advantageous services. "

"One of MTN's goals is to accelerate the penetration of mobile financial service in Africa, Mowali is one such vehicle that will help us achieve that objective. Furthermore, co-operation and partnerships that help us accelerate the pace of development and overcome some of the scale, scope and complexity of challenges that society faces are key. This

partnership with Orange is therefore an important step in helping us play a meaningful role in supporting the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals related to eliminating extreme poverty and enhancing socio-economic development in the markets we operate in and beyond. Thus giving our customers access to a bright, digital future.” **said Rob Shuter, Group President and CEO of MTN.**

The GSMA supports the Mowali initiative as interoperability at this scale is a key accelerator for both financial inclusion and Mobile Money usability across Africa.

“Today, there are over 690 million mobile money accounts around the world. Mobile money services have become an essential, life-changing tool across Africa, providing access to safe and secure financial services but also to energy, health, education and employment opportunities. The creation of Mowali will help to further transform mobile financial services throughout the African region. It demonstrates the mobile industry’s continued leadership and commitment to driving financial inclusion and economic empowerment through industry collaboration. The GSMA is proud to support its development,” **said Mats Granryd, Director General, GSMA.**

“Interoperability of digital payments has been the toughest hurdle for the financial services industry to overcome, in support of financial inclusion. With Mowali, Orange and MTN deliver a solution that will enable them, and other companies, to scale digital financial services across Africa, faster, to everyone—including the poor,” **said Kosta Peric, deputy director of Financial Services for the Poor, at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation** “This is a signal that a new wave of innovation, which can help alleviate poverty and drive economic opportunity, is coming. We’re pleased to see an implementation of Mojaloop<sup>1</sup>—an open source payment platform available to operators across the sector—help achieve that.”

#### About Orange

Orange is one of the world’s leading telecommunications operators with sales of 41 billion euros in 2017 and 150,000 employees worldwide at 30 September 2018, including 92,000 employees in France. The Group has a total customer base of 261 million customers worldwide at 30 September 2018, including 201 million mobile customers and 20 million fixed broadband customers. The Group is present in 28 countries. Orange is also a leading provider of global IT and telecommunication services to multinational companies, under the brand Orange Business Services. In March 2015, the Group presented its new strategic plan “Essentials2020” which places customer experience at the heart of its strategy with the aim of allowing them to benefit fully from the digital universe and the power of its new generation networks.

Orange is listed on Euronext Paris (symbol ORA) and on the New York Stock Exchange (symbol ORAN).

For more information on the internet and on your mobile: [www.orange.com](http://www.orange.com), [www.orange-business.com](http://www.orange-business.com) or to follow us on Twitter: [@orangegrouppr](https://twitter.com/orangegrouppr).

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<sup>1</sup> Mojaloop is open-source software for financial services companies, government regulators, and others taking on the challenges of interoperability and financial inclusion

**About the MTN Group**

Launched in 1994, the MTN Group is a leading emerging market operator, connecting subscribers in 21 countries in Africa and the Middle East. The MTN Group is listed on the JSE Securities Exchange in South Africa under the share code: "MTN". As of 30 September 2018, MTN recorded 225,4 million subscribers across its operations in Afghanistan, Benin, Botswana, Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Guinea Republic, Iran, Liberia, Nigeria, Republic of Congo (Congo-Brazzaville), Rwanda, South Africa, Sudan, South Sudan, Swaziland, Syria, Uganda, Yemen and Zambia.

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