

## CALL FOR PAPERS

### Advancing cross-border payments: identifying opportunities and challenges for sub-Saharan Africa

The Bank for International Settlements' (BIS) Committee on Payments and Market Infrastructures (CPMI) [monitors](#) the development and implementation of payment system improvements to enhance cross-border payments. Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) has shown progress and ongoing efforts in the areas of payment system interoperability, harmonisation and extension. However, these changes have yet to translate into measurable improvements for end users.

The [key performance indicators \(KPIs\) reported](#) by the Financial Stability Board (FSB) show that in SSA both wholesale and retail cross-border payments are relatively slow, with only 54% of wholesale payments and 42% of retail payments reaching the intended recipient within an hour (the target is 75%). Additionally, retail payments and remittances continue to incur high costs. This lag between improvements in payment system infrastructures and noticeable changes in the user experience is attributed to the natural time required for modernised payment systems to fully affect end user outcomes.

Accurate, granular, timely and accessible information is critical for measuring progress in enhancing cross-border payments. Increasing market intelligence and enhancing insights on the SSA region will help identify region-specific challenges and opportunities. A better understanding of the root causes affecting cross-border payments in the region will support informed decisions on who would be best positioned to lead this work at domestic and regional levels.

### Call for research contributions

**The South African G20 Presidency and the CPMI invite submissions of papers and original work that provide deeper insights into cross-border payments data and explore potential new data sources.** While the primary focus is on the SSA region, the findings will also inform ongoing and future work in other regions.

The South African G20 Presidency and the CPMI will invite authors of selected submissions to present their work at a conference to be held in the second half of 2025. The objective of the conference is to identify practical approaches to improve key payment corridors to and from SSA, with the potential for similar exercises in other regions facing unique cross-border payment challenges.

The outcome of the conference should inform implementable actions to improve the quality of cross-border payments data, particularly in SSA and other corridors and regions that are most in need of attention.

## Areas of interest

**The South African G20 Presidency and the CPMI invite submissions from a diverse range of contributors, including academia, public institutions (including central banks), special interest groups and the private sector.** Papers should present information and analysis on a variety of topics.

Areas of interest include, but are not limited to, analysis of:

- **quantitative and/or qualitative information at the corridor and/or regional levels involving SSA countries** (eg payment values and volume, informal channels);
- **factors influencing end-user options and choices for cross-border payments in SSA** (eg informal economy, documentary requirements, inflation, financial health, digital inclusion); and
- **elements affecting conditions in cross-border payments to and from jurisdictions in SSA** (eg fast payments adoption, foreign exchange controls and liquidity, manual reporting and compliance processes, corresponding banking relationships).

## Submission guidelines and selection process

All submissions should be in English. Each submission should include the name and email address of a corresponding author. Extended abstracts of around 1,000 words will be accepted; full papers are encouraged. *Submissions do not need to follow an academic style but should provide novel insights on payments in SSA.* The deadline for submissions of extended abstracts/papers is **1 July 2025**. Please send papers in PDF format via email to the contact information provided below.

The South African Reserve Bank (SARB), the CPMI Secretariat and selected CPMI members leading the cross-border payments work will review all submissions for relevance, quality and originality. Authors will be informed **by mid-August 2025** whether their submissions have been accepted. If a paper is accepted for presentation and discussion at the conference, authors should submit a final draft of the paper by no later than 30 September 2025. Authors should also agree to consider revising their papers based on the discussion at the conference and allow the BIS to publish the papers in some form.<sup>1</sup> This will not entail any transfer of copyright and will not pre-empt later publication in a field journal. The SARB and the CPMI Secretariat are considering the possibility of publishing selected papers as a compilation on their websites or as a BIS publication.

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## Conference

Selected papers will be discussed at a hybrid conference in November 2025 in South Africa or Basel, Switzerland (exact date and venue to be determined), bringing together stakeholders from the public and private sectors. The CPMI Secretariat can, under certain conditions, provide travel and accommodation support for selected authors, with priority given to academics and representatives of non-profit organisations.

## Important dates and logistical details

- **Submission deadline:** 1 July 2025
- **Notification of review results:** on or before 15 August 2025
- **Submission of final papers:** 30 September 2025
- **Conference:** November 2025 in South Africa or Basel, Switzerland (exact date and venue to be determined)
- **Contact information:** For further details and to submit papers, please contact [cpmi@bis.org](mailto:cpmi@bis.org) and [SAG20Presidency.Payments@resbank.co.za](mailto:SAG20Presidency.Payments@resbank.co.za).