THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA

TANZANIA COMMUNICATIONS REGULATORY AUTHORITY

ISO 9001:2015 CERTIFIED

PUBLIC NOTICE

CESSATION OF AIRTIME SCRATCH CARDS USAGE AND PROMOTION OF DIGITAL AIRTIME RECHARGE

1. Introduction

The Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA) wishes to inform telecommunications subscribers and the general public of the Government initiative to promote a cashless, digital economy and phase out airtime scratch cards.

The initiative is intended to promote cashless payments and digital financial services, increase the use of convenient digital payment and airtime recharge channels, and promote the adoption of digital financial services. It will also contribute to reducing the production, distribution and disposal of physical airtime scratch cards and their associated environmental impact, while supporting the development of a more efficient and digitally enabled communications sector.

2. Pilot Areas

As part of the initiative, a pilot programme for phasing out airtime scratch cards will commence on 1st January 2027, preceded by public awareness activities starting from 1st October 2026.

The pilot programme will cover the following regions and districts: -

a) Dar es Salaam Region: All districts;
b) Dodoma Region: Dodoma Urban, Chamwino, Kondoa Urban and Kongwa;
c) Arusha Region: Arusha Urban, Arusha, Meru and Karatu;
d) Mwanza Region: Nyamagana, Ilemela and Misungwi; and
e) Mbeya Region: Mbeya, Mbeya City and Mbarali.

Subscribers residing in, working in, or travelling within the above areas are advised to prepare for the transition from physical airtime scratch cards to digital airtime recharge channels.

3. Digital Airtime Recharge Options

Subscribers will continue to access airtime recharge services through a wide range of digital channels provided by MNOs and their authorised partners. These include: -

a) Purchase of airtime directly through mobile money accounts using USSD services or mobile applications;

Mawasiliano Towers, 20 Sam Nujoma Road, P.O Box 474, 14414 DAR ES SALAAM, TANZANIA.
Phone: +255 22 2199760-9 / +255 22 2412011-2 / +255 784558270-1 Fax: +255 22 2412009-10
Email: barua@tcra.go.tz, dg@tcra.go.tz, Website: www.tcra.go.tz

PN010/2026

b) Mobile money agents;
c) Bank ATMs and banking agents; and
d) Other digital airtime recharge channels and platforms provided by MNOs and their authorised partners.

Subscribers are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the digital recharge options available through their respective MNOs and to seek assistance from authorised agents or customer care channels where necessary.

4. Airtime Scratch Vouchers held by Subscribers

Subscribers in the pilot areas who still hold unused airtime scratch vouchers after 1st January 2027 will be required to contact their respective MNOs through designated customer care channels or authorized service points for assistance and activation of the vouchers. Subscribers are therefore encouraged to use their existing airtime scratch vouchers before 1st January 2027, where possible, and to transition to digital airtime recharge channels.

5. Public Awareness

TCRA and MNOs commenced a public awareness activities from 1st October 2026 through television, radio, social media, SMS, customer service channels and other appropriate communication platforms. The awareness campaign provides information on the phasing out of airtime scratch cards, the applicable implementation arrangements and the available digital airtime recharge options. All subscribers in the pilot areas are encouraged to begin using digital airtime recharge channels and familiarize themselves with the available options before 1st January 2027.

For further information, subscribers may contact TCRA through its official communication channels or contact their respective Mobile Network Operators.

6. Nationwide Implementation

The nationwide cut-off date for the discontinuation of airtime scratch cards will be announced later. Subscribers outside the pilot areas are encouraged to progressively adopt digital airtime recharge options in preparation for the eventual nationwide implementation.

Issued on **08th October, 2026**

Digitally Signed By
PETER PHILLIP MWASALYANDA
Thu Oct 08 15:06:02 EAT 2026

Eng. Peter P. Mwasalyanda
DIRECTOR GENERAL

Mawasiliano Towers, 20 Sam Nujoma Road, P.O Box 474, 14414 DAR ES SALAAM, TANZANIA.
Phone: +255 22 2199760-9 / +255 22 2412011-2 / +255 784558270-1 Fax: +255 22 2412009-10
Email: barua@tcra.go.tz, dg@tcra.go.tz, Website: www.tcra.go.tz