

BOTSWANA COLLABORATES WITH FIVE SADC MEMBER STATES TO SUBSTANTIALLY REDUCE AND HARMONISE INTERNATIONAL ROAMING TARIFFS

The Botswana Communications Regulatory Authority (BOCRA) informs the public that Botswana and five other SADC Member States have collaborated to substantially reduce and harmonise mobile roaming tariffs in line with the One Network Area (ONA) framework. The participating Member States drew inspiration from Botswana and Namibia which were the first within SADC to successfully implement reduced and harmonised roaming rates in August 2024.

Botswana implemented the ONA framework jointly with Malawi, Lesotho, Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The ONA initiative is aligned to efforts by SADC Member States to reduce and harmonise roaming charges across the region and it is intended to progressively expand to include other SADC Member States.

The ONA initiative fulfills the commitment made by the Minister of Communications and Innovation, Honourable David Tshere during the meeting of the SADC Ministers responsible for ICT, which was held in Harare, Zimbabwe in February 2025. Honourable Tshere assured his SADC counterparts of Botswana’s intention to replicate the Namibia/Botswana roaming arrangements to other SADC Member States in order to promote a single digital market for the region.

Recognising the critical role of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in promoting trade, investment, mobility and digital inclusion, ONA seeks to harmonise roaming tariffs to ensure cost-reflective pricing and create a seamless communications environment across participating countries. The initiative places emphasis on reduction of data prices given the vital role played by data services in the digital transformation of any economy.

The tables below depict price reductions by Mobile Network Operators (MNOs) ranging between 10% and 98.6% for Data, Voice and SMS. The reductions reinforce Botswana’s commitment to affordability and deeper regional integration. The initiative has also facilitated conclusion of new bilateral roaming agreements among operators, which hitherto did not exist.

REDUCTIONS IN DATA ROAMING PRICES BY MNOs

Table 1: Data Roaming Prices Between Botswana MNOs and SADC MNOs

Botswana MNO	Country	Roaming Partner	Old Price (BWP per Megabyte)	New Price (BWP Per Megabyte)	% Change
Orange Botswana	Zambia	Airtel MTN Zamtel	22.13	1.61	-92.7
	Lesotho	Vodacom Econet	28.50	1.61	-94.4
	Malawi	Airtel TNM	28.50	1.61	-94.4
	Zimbabwe	NetOne Telecel Econet	22.13	1.61	-92.7
BTC	Zambia	Airtel	-	1.60	New Roaming Agreement
		MTN Zamtel	20.32	1.60	-92.1
	Lesotho	Vodacom Econet	56.90	1.60	-97.2
	Malawi	Airtel	-	1.60	New Roaming Agreement
		TNM	114.02	1.60	-98.6
	Zimbabwe	NetOne Telecel Econet	29.15	1.60	-94.5
Mascom Wireless	Zambia	Airtel	24.98	1.60	-93.6
		MTN	9.12	1.60	-82.4
		Zamtel	49.23	49.23	Negotiations On-going
	Lesotho	Vodacom	23.42	1.60	-93.2
		Econet	49.23	1.60	-96.8
	Malawi	Airtel,	23.42	1.60	-93.2
		TNM	49.23	1.60	-96.8
	Zimbabwe	NetOne Telecel Econet	34.15	1.60	-95.3

REDUCTIONS IN VOICE AND SMS ROAMING PRICES BY MNOs

ORANGE BOTSWANA

Table 2: Tariffs between Orange and Airtel, MTN and Zamtel Zambia

Call Type	Old Price (BWP)	New Price (BWP)	% Change
Calls within visited country/minute	8.30	5.16	-37.8
Calls to Home country/minute	11.95	8.06	-32.6
Sending an SMS	2.11	2.55	+20.9

Table 3: Tariffs between Orange and Vodacom/Econet Lesotho

Call Type	Old Price (BWP)	New Price (BWP)	% Change
Calls within visited country/minute	19.95	5.16	-74.1
Calls to Home country/minute	19.95	8.06	-59.6
Sending an SMS	2.85	2.55	-10.5

Table 4: Tariffs between Orange and Airtel/TNM Malawi

Call Type	Old Price (BWP)	New Price (BWP)	% Change
Calls within visited country/minute	19.95	5.16	-74.1
Calls to Home country/minute	19.95	8.06	-59.6
Sending an SMS	2.85	2.55	-10.5

Table 5: Tariffs between Orange and Netone/Econet/Telecel Zimbabwe

Call Type	Old Price (BWP)	New Price (BWP)	% Change
Calls within visited country/minute	8.30	5.16	-37.8
Calls to Home country/minute	11.95	8.06	-32.6
Sending an SMS	2.11	2.55	+20.9



MASCOM WIRELESS

Table 6; Tariffs between Mascom and Airtel Zambia

Call Type	Old Price (BWP)	New Price (BWP)	% Change
Calls within visited country/minute	9.04	5.11	-43.5
Calls to Home country/minute	13.45	7.98	-40.7
Sending an SMS	3.57	2.20	-38.4

Table 7; Tariffs between Mascom and MTN Zambia

Call Type	Old Price (BWP)	New Price (BWP)	% Change
Calls within visited country/minute	3.06	3.06	0
Calls to Home country/minute	3.06	3.06	0
Sending an SMS	1.53	1.53	0

Table 8; Tariffs between Mascom and Zamtel Zambia

Call Type	Old Price (BWP)	New Price (BWP)	% Change
Calls within visited country/minute	10.39	5.11	-50.8
Calls to Home country/minute	21.08	21.08	0
Sending an SMS	5.08	4.00	-21.3

Table 9; Tariffs between Mascom and Econet Lesotho

Call Type	Old Price (BWP)	New Price (BWP)	% Change
Calls within visited country/minute	10.39	5.11	-50.8
Calls to Home country/minute	21.08	7.98	-62.1
Sending an SMS	4.0	2.20	-45.0

Table 10; Tariffs between Mascom and Vodacom Lesotho

Call Type	Old Price (BWP)	New Price (BWP)	% Change
Calls within visited country/minute	7.01	5.11	-27.1
Calls to Home country/minute	7.01	7.98	+13.8
Sending an SMS	3.06	2.20	-28.1

Table 11; Tariffs between Mascom and Airtel Malawi

Call Type	Old Price (BWP)	New Price (BWP)	% Change
Calls within visited country/minute	7.01	5.11	-27.1
Calls to Home country/minute	7.01	7.98	+13.8
Sending an SMS	3.06	2.20	-28.1

Table 12; Tariffs between Mascom and TNM Malawi

Call Type	Old Price (BWP)	New Price (BWP)	% Change
Calls within visited country/minute	10.39	5.11	-50.8
Calls to Home country/minute	21.08	7.98	-62.1
Sending an SMS	4.00	2.20	-45.0

Table 13; Tariffs between Mascom and Netone, Econet, Telecel Zimbabwe

Call Type	Old Price (BWP)	New Price (BWP)	% Change
Calls within visited country/minute	9.41	5.11	-45.7
Calls to Home country/minute	14.52	7.98	-45.0
Sending an SMS	2.62	2.20	-16.0

BOTSWANA TELECOMMUNICATIONS CORPORATION

Table 14; Tariffs between BTC and Airtel Zambia

Call Type	Old Price (BWP)	New Price (BWP)	% Change
Calls within visited country/minute	-	5.11	New Roaming Agreement
Calls to Home country/minute	-	7.98	New Roaming Agreement
Sending an SMS	-	1.40	New Roaming Agreement

Table 15; Tariffs between BTC and MTN/Zamtel Zambia

Call Type	Old Price (BWP)	New Price (BWP)	% Change
Calls within visited country/minute	3.04	5.11	+68.1
Calls to Home country/minute	11.68	7.98	-31.7
Sending an SMS	1.93	1.40	-27.5

Table 16; Tariffs between BTC and Econet/Vodacom Lesotho

Call Type	Old Price (BWP)	New Price (BWP)	% Change
Calls within visited country/minute	4.00	5.11	+27.8
Calls to Home country/minute	17.10	7.98	-53.3
Sending an SMS	3.42	1.40	-59.1

Table 17; Tariffs between BTC and Airtel Malawi

Call Type	Old Price (BWP)	New Price (BWP)	% Change
Calls within visited country/minute	-	5.11	New Roaming Agreement
Calls to Home country/minute	-	7.98	New Roaming Agreement
Sending an SMS	-	1.40	New Roaming Agreement

Table 18; Tariffs between BTC and TNM Malawi

Call Type	Old Price (BWP)	New Price (BWP)	% Change
Calls within visited country/minute	3.05	5.11	+67.5
Calls to Home country/minute	22.98	7.98	-65.3
Sending an SMS	3.42	1.40	-59.1

Table 19; Tariffs between BTC and Netone, Econet and Telecel Zimbabwe

Call Type	Old Price (BWP)	New Price (BWP)	% Change
Calls within visited country/minute	3.96	5.11	+29.0
Calls to Home country/minute	15.17	7.98	-47.4
Sending an SMS	2.24	1.40	-37.5

NB:

- "Receiving SMS" is free across all countries
- MNOs are yet to conclude roaming pricing for "Receiving a Call"
- Engagements with Mozambique are ongoing.
- Sending an SMS applies to messages sent within the visited country as well as those sent to the subscriber's home country.

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