

Banking Awards 2014



How the top honours were shared across the region

By MUGAMBI MUTEGI

East Africa held its inaugural banking parade taking the annual ThinkBusiness survey of the industry to a new regional platform.

The survey, which compares the lenders' performance in key segments of the financial mediation industry, ranked more than 100 banks in more than 30 categories with the top honours going to Kenya's Equity Bank.

Kenya Commercial Bank (KCB) and Diamond Trust Bank (DTB) both Kenyan were ranked second and third respectively. Crane Bank, Bank of Kigali and National Microfinance Bank were crowned the best banks in Uganda, Rwanda and Tanzania respectively.

The ninth edition of the ThinkBusiness Banking Awards recognised Munnir Ahmed of National Bank of Kenya as the CEO of the year taking over from DTB chief executive, Nasim Devji, who won the 2013 edition. DTB Kenya walked away with the best



Kenya Bankers Association chief executive Habli Olaka (right) presents the winners' certificate to Kenya Women Microfinance Bank (KWMB) chief executive Mwangi Githaiga.

Kenyan bank in customer satisfaction award while Cooperative Bank walked away with two top honours, including the best bank in micro-finance and in retail banking.

The high-level awards ceremony, held at Nairobi's Safari Park, brought together more than five hundred bank CEOs and C-Suite bank managers from across East

African.

"It was important that we open up this competition to the region," said Ochieng Oloo, the founder and chief executive of ThinkBusiness adding that a number of the banks, especially from Kenya, have become regional players.

Mr. Oloo said this year's awards, besides celebrating exemplary performance in the various segments of financial mediation, also focused on customer loyalty, corporate image and use of technology. Judges also investigated customer experience with the lenders, bank personnel, range of products on offer as well as the ease of accessing the bank. A total of 170 nominees send in entries in 25 categories.



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Other than winning the top bank crown, Equity Bank also won the best bank in micro-finance, best bank in product marketing for its Beba Pay drive and retained the retained the bank with the lowest charges trophy.

Other finishing as East Africa's second best bank, KCB scooped other top honours, including the bank with the best agency network and the best bank in asset finance. Kenya's biggest lender by asset base also topped the list of SME bankers while the lender's Ugandan subsidiary won the best recovery award.

Uganda's Centenary Bank walked away with the best bank in customer care award while FMBE Bank got a similar recognition for Tanzania. In Rwanda, the award went to the Bank of Kigali.

Top honours for corporate banking went to Citibank Kenya which also won recognition as East Africa's most efficient bank.

CFC Stanbic was crowned the best bank in mortgage finance as Chase Bank walked away with the mobile banking trophy.

In the deposit taking microfinance category, Kenya Women Microfinance Bank took the crown with Faulu and Rafiki microfinance banks taking the second and third positions respectively.

The banking awards came as the banking industry continues to post strong growth across the region – led by the biggest banks that have traditionally dominated the key metrics including profitability, customer deposits and lending.

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The Central Bank of Kenya data shows that lending increased to Sh1.69 trillion in the first three months of the year from Sh1.6 trillion last December, a 5.6 per cent growth.

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Ninety two-year-old Dr. Maganlal Motichand Chandaria (C) receives the Life Time Achievement Award during the 2014 Banking Awards East Africa edition ceremony held at the Safari Park. Also in the picture is the banking awards Chief Judge James McFee (R) and Think Business CEO Ochieng Oloo (L). PHOTO | DIANA NGILA