Into Africa: Investment prospects in the sub-Saharan banking sector*
Once seen as unpromising and overly risky, sub-Saharan Africa is now one of the world’s fastest growing emerging banking markets and an increasingly sought-after investment destination.

Economies are expanding rapidly on the back of soaring oil and mineral prices, while steadily increasing consumer affluence is creating fresh demand for banking services. M&A activity has been growing as groups seek to increase their strategic coverage and tap into this demand.

This flyer, prepared by PricewaterhouseCoopers professionals from around sub-Saharan Africa, looks at the prospects for investment and development in the region. It focuses in particular on what, after South Africa, are the region’s 10 largest economies. South Africa’s economic size (more than all 10 featured countries, put together) and advanced market development would make it the subject for a separate report and is therefore not covered directly in this publication.

Countries included in the flyer

- **Senegal** $9 billion 12 million French
- **Ghana** $13 billion 23 million English
- **Nigeria** $115 billion 145 million English
- **Angola** $44 billion 16 million Portuguese
- **Uganda** $9 billion 35 million English
- **Kenya** $21 billion 40 million English
- **Botswana** $10 billion 2 million English
- **Zambia** $11 billion 12 million English
- **Tanzania** $13 billion 40 million English
- **Mozambique** $8 billion 20 million Portuguese

**Key**
- ■ Country included in report
- □ GDP
- ° Population
- ▲ Language

Source: International Monetary Fund and CIA World Factbook.

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1. “PricewaterhouseCoopers” refers to the network of member firms of PricewaterhouseCoopers International Limited, each of which is a separate and independent legal entity.
Sub-Saharan Africa is experiencing an economic resurgence.

Africa's GDP more than doubled between 2000 and 2006 and its economic momentum continues to gather pace. GDP grew by 5.8% in 2007 and is set to increase by 6.2% in 2008. Central Africa has experienced the fastest acceleration in economic expansion, with growth expected to rise from 3.9% in 2006 to 6.3% in 2008, although this generally remains the most underdeveloped of Africa's regions. Of the 10 countries expected to record the fastest GDP growth in the world in 2008, three are from sub-Saharan Africa, including Angola at number one.

The main driver of sub-Saharan Africa's economic resurgence is the rising prices and global surge in demand for oil and minerals, especially from the rapidly developing Asian economies. Angola and Nigeria are major oil exporters and their respective economies are expected to grow by 21% and 7% in 2008 (growth in oil-producing countries has been around 1% ahead of the overall African average). Botswana, Zambia and Mozambique benefit from the export of diamonds, copper and aluminium, respectively.

The resurgence also reflects the increasing development and diversification of the sub-Saharan economies in areas ranging from telecommunications to tourism. Mobile phone penetration in Africa more than doubled between 2001 and 2006 and is now around 25% of the population, paving the way for the rapid development of mobile banking (see page 6).

Sub-Saharan tourism is growing at around 10% per annum (Kenya and Uganda by more than 15% pa), bringing in $24 billion in receipts in 2006 and making this the fastest growing region for tourism in the world. Receipts are still only 3% of the global total and therefore there is considerable room for further growth, although considerable infrastructure development may be needed to achieve the full potential.

Further stimulus for economic expansion is set to come from the fast growth in the region's population (the population of sub-Saharan Africa is projected to grow from around 760 million in 2008 to 1.7 billion in 2050 – one of the fastest regional growth rates in the world), raising demand and ensuring a sustained increase in the supply of available labour.

The region's improving prospects have been underpinned by growing political stability, including the cessation of civil conflicts (notably Angola in 2002) and consolidation of democracy within many parts of the region. Many governments have also instituted more effective macro-economic management and taken steps to open up and improve the efficiency of commercial markets (the region recorded the largest improvement in the pace of reform of the business climate between 2002 and 2006, according to the World Bank). Programmes of reform include the growing liberalisation of the banking sector within many states.

These increasingly buoyant prospects are attracting increasing foreign direct investment (FDI) (see Figure 1 on page 4). China is a key source of investment in the development of oil and mineral extraction and related infrastructure as it seeks to secure supplies of strategic natural resources. Hu Jintao, the President of China, announced preferential credit of some $3 billion during his visit to Africa in 2007.

The Sino-African partnership has now extended to banking following the $5.5 billion acquisition of a 20% stake in Standard Bank by the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC). Jacko Maree, Standard Bank Group Chief Executive described the deal as not only a ‘vote of confidence’ in South Africa, Standard’s home market, but Africa as a whole (Standard offers services in 17 African states). ‘The partnership establishes a financial services gateway between Africa and China, through an alliance of the largest banks in these regions’, said Mr Maree. Africa is now also on the private equity radar, drawing more than $3 billion in investment in 2007, with global emerging market funds deploying around 10% of their portfolios on the continent.

The asset value of banks in our 10 featured countries has increased rapidly on the back of economic expansion (see Figure 2 on page 5), with Nigeria leading the way. Yet, market development is building up from an extremely low base, as measured by the bank asset to GDP ratio in comparison to South Africa (see Figure 3 on page 5). The total bank assets in our 10 featured countries are still less than that of South Africa’s Standard Bank ($175 billion).
While the still largely untapped potential is evident, sub-Saharan Africa faces considerable economic risks and challenges. While diversifying, many countries are vulnerable to any sustained fall in the price of commodities, although demand is likely to remain robust as Asian manufacturing continues to expand. Inflationary pressures could also continue to mount, especially in large oil exporting countries – more than half of Africa’s countries have inflation of more than 5% p.a. (more than 60% of Africa’s oil producers have inflation of more than 5% p.a.).

Political stability remains fragile, as the contested elections in Kenya, Nigeria and Zimbabwe attest. Corruption remains a concern. Of our 10 featured countries, five scored less than three out of 10 in the latest Transparency International Corruption Perception Index and three between three and four (Ghana, Senegal and Tanzania). The notable exception is Botswana, which at 5.4 is ahead of South Africa and several EU states. In recent years, a number of high-profile cases have also highlighted the risk of fraud, both of and within the banking sector, ranging from the sale of bank details retrieved from recycled computers to allegations of collusion in money laundering by corrupt officials.

Poor infrastructure can raise production costs and make it harder to reach customers. Businesses can be further hampered by high tariffs, red tape, cumbersome tax systems and arbitrary decisions by officials.

Sub-Saharan Africa also continues to grapple with the impact of climatic volatility and health issues, including HIV/AIDS (22.5 million people in the region live with the virus, although prevention campaigns and anti-retroviral treatment are beginning to slow down the increasing incidence). These issues inhibit development, especially among the poorest sections of the population. For banks and other employers, there is also the high potential cost of healthcare and sick leave.

**Figure 1 – Foreign direct investment, 2003–2006**

![Figure 1 – Foreign direct investment, 2003–2006](image)

Source: CIA World Factbook.

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18 Transparency International ‘Corruption Perception Index 2007’.
19 ‘UK bank details sold in Nigeria’, BBC News Online, 14.8.06.
20 Global Insight, 17.12.07.
21 UNAIDS (www.unaids.org), 4.4.08.
Figure 2 – GDP growth vs banking asset growth (bubble size = GDP 2006)

Source: PricewaterhouseCoopers analysis.

Figure 3 – Total banking assets as percentage of GDP (2006)

Source: Finscope and PricewaterhouseCoopers analysis.
Market Environment

The banking sector is growing rapidly, albeit from a low base.

Penetration

Apart from Botswana, the penetration of banking in our featured countries is low in comparison to the more developed South Africa (see Figure 4 on page 7), indicating the potential for growth as incomes increase in the wake of rapid economic growth. At present, many people still rely on micro-credit or informal lending and have no bank account in what remain largely cash-based societies, even among relatively wealthy citizens.

Low penetration is partly a result of income levels, although an increasingly affluent urban middle class is now emerging. The low proportion of people with bank accounts also reflects infrastructure problems that have resulted in the limited development of branch networks, especially within remote rural areas. Few countries are served by more than two branches per 100,000 people (see Figure 5 on page 7).

The potential size of the bankable population can be estimated by looking at the number of people who can afford financial services (the Finmark Trust, a think-tank, sets a benchmark of 2% of income for affordable banking). By this reckoning, there are between 40 and 60 million potentially bankable customers in sub-Saharan Africa.

Branch expansion to tap into this potential is accelerating, both through the development of fixed and mobile offices. In Nigeria, for example, local banks taking part in a 2007 PricewaterhouseCoopers survey estimated that the number of branches would double by 2010 and automated teller machines (ATMs) increase from less than 2,000 to more than 5,000. In Ghana, Barclays is targeting more than 150 branches by the end of 2008, an increase of 100% from 2006.

Further distribution potential is coming from the rapidly increasing take-up of mobile phones. A number of mobile providers have established alliances to facilitate payments, withdrawals and money transfers via short message service (SMS). Services are available to people, even if they do not have a formal bank account. A pioneering example is M-PESA, a joint venture between Kenyan mobile phone operator Safaricom and Vodafone, with worldwide remittances facilitated by Citibank.

E-banking also offers considerable potential. In 2006, more than 20 of Nigeria’s banks issued InterSwitch debit cards, which enable users to undertake e-payments and other online transactions. More than two million cards are now in circulation.

Demand

Although retail banking services were until recently quite limited across sub-Saharan Africa, local banks are now responding to increasing consumer demand. As incomes rise, consumers are seeking to move away from reliance on cash to the greater security and convenience of a bank account. A nascent market in mortgages and consumer loans is also developing. The untapped potential is indicated by the fact that the credit to GDP ratio is 18% in Africa, compared to some 30% in South Asia; in Angola it is less than 5%. A further source of demand is international money transfer. Remittances to and within sub-Saharan Africa reached $30 billion in 2007.

Stock market expansion is creating increasing demand for broking services, much of which is met by banking groups. In Nigeria, for example, banks control around two-thirds of trading activity by value. Economic growth is also driving the expansion and development of corporate banking, particularly in the areas of project finance and letters of credit.

Overall, however, both retail and corporate banking are at a relatively early stage of development, offering international groups the opportunity to leverage both their expertise and capital. Brand and reputation rather than personal relationships tend to be the determining factors in choosing a provider, which could give strongly branded international groups an advantage in entering and developing their presence. Importantly, their brand and reputation could also help to attract the best staff at a time when competition for qualified personnel is increasing.
Figure 4 – Financially served adult population 2006

Source: Finmark Trust and PricewaterhouseCoopers analysis.

Figure 5 – Number of bank branches per 100,000 people

Source: PricewaterhouseCoopers analysis.
Number of banks

The high number of banks operating in each country reflects the relative fragmentation of these markets (see Figure 6), although the top end of the market is often more concentrated. The impact of regulatory developments and increasing competition could begin to reduce the number of banks, as has already proved the case in Nigeria.

Regulation and liberalisation

Banking sectors are benefiting from market reform. Nigeria led the way by raising the minimum capital requirement to $200 million, leading to rapid consolidation (from more than 80 banks to some 25 in 2007). Streamlined, better capitalised and with more extensive reach, Nigerian banks have been able to enhance their services and are in a better position to compete and meet customer demands, while seeking to develop their international presence, both within the region and overseas. Other states may follow Nigeria’s lead, though at present their minimum capital requirement is generally below $10 million.

As Figure 7 (on page 9) highlights, South African and Nigerian institutions now dominate the list of largest banking groups based in the sub-Saharan region (certain international groups such as Barclays and Standard Chartered also have a strong presence). In all of the countries featured, a legal framework for the financial sector (including banking law) is or is in the process of being put in place (eg Zambia). All, apart from Uganda, Zambia and Mozambique, have moved to IFRS. Moreover, state holdings and restrictions on foreign investment are limited, especially in comparison to many emerging markets in Asia. However, as Figure 8 (on page 10) highlights, the degree of commercial freedom within the banking sector varies. In Kenya, no person is permitted to hold more than 25% of a bank’s capital. In Uganda, no individual or corporate body controlled by a single individual can own more than a 49% stake in a financial institution. In Angola, foreign investment was until recently restricted to a few Portuguese groups, although the market is now gradually opening its doors.

As Figure 9 (on page 10) highlights, profitability in 2006 was relatively healthy, considering that quite a number of banks had recently listed and were still putting their newly raised funds to work. The relatively low return on equity (ROE) in Nigeria and Kenya reflects a significant injection of new equity capital through IPO and private placements. In terms of asset, deposit and profitability growth, the performance is more impressive. Assets in the Kenyan banking sector grew by 20% in 2007, deposits by 18% and profits by 34%, for example.

Figure 6 – Number of commercial banks, 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Number of banks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanzania</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angola</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Botswana</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zambia</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mozambique</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: PricewaterhouseCoopers analysis.

## Figure 7 – Top 15 banking groups (by assets) based in sub-Saharan Africa

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bank name</th>
<th>Headquarters</th>
<th>Assets</th>
<th>Pre-tax profit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard Bank Group (31.12.07)</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>174,920</td>
<td>3,523</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FirstRand Banking Group (30.6.07)</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>76,901</td>
<td>2,010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nedbank (31.12.07)</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>71,454</td>
<td>1,319</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investec (31.3.07)</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>48,813</td>
<td>835</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercontinental Bank (28.2.08)</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>11,781</td>
<td>377</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access bank (31.3.08)</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>10,055</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Bank for Africa (30.9.07)</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>9,479</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oceanic Bank (30.9.07)</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>8,265</td>
<td>183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zenith Bank (30.6.07)</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>8,716</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Bank of Nigeria (31.3.07)</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>6,885</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecobank Transnational (31.12.07)</td>
<td>Togo</td>
<td>6,550</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guaranty Trust Bank (29.2.08)</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>6,225</td>
<td>232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union Bank of Nigeria (31.3.07)</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>5,460</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mauritius Commercial Bank (30.6.07)</td>
<td>Mauritius</td>
<td>3,479</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Platinum-Habib Bank (30.6.07)</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>3,001</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: The Banker, July 2008 and annual reports.
**Figure 8 – The Heritage Foundation Index of financial sector freedom**

Source: Heritage Foundation.

**Figure 9 – RoE 2006**

Source: Banking supervisory reports and national banking associations.
As Figure 10 (on page 12) highlights, international groups have already developed a strong presence in a number of our featured countries, with associations often rooted in linguistic and former colonial ties. With the exception of Nigeria, Barclays is strongly represented in the English-speaking countries, for example; French banks including BNP Paribas and Credit Agricole have a strong presence in many Francophone countries such as Senegal; Portuguese banks including Formento and Millennium BIM are active in Angola and Mozambique.

The region’s economic resurgence has been the catalyst for a renewed wave of cross-border investment (see Figure 11 on page 12). Key sources include international groups and African banks looking to develop a stronger regional/continental presence, along with a number of financial buyers. Local institutions are keen to attract foreign capital and know-how, especially the product and risk management expertise needed to develop retail and SME services.

In 2007, Barclays acquired Nile Bank, Uganda’s seventh largest bank. ‘The combination sees the scale and global capability of Barclays coming together with the local retail and regional expertise of Nile Bank. Nile Bank customers will be able to take advantage of Barclays’ comprehensive world-class range of services, products and capabilities, both here, across Africa and beyond’, said Nick Mbuvi, Managing Director of Barclays Bank of Uganda.31

Strong regional players seeking to strengthen their footprint include Standard Bank, which acquired a controlling stake in Nigeria’s IBTC Bank in 2007. Craig Bond, Chief Executive of Standard Bank Africa, said that ‘Standard Bank is proud to add Nigeria to its repertoire of success stories’.32

In 2007, Standard took control of CFC Bank in Kenya and merged it with its local subsidiary. CFC is a medium-sized, primarily corporate-focused bank. ‘Large corporate and institutional deals will be enabled through the improved technical support and the global market distribution capabilities of Standard Bank Group, which will be sustained by the larger balance sheet of the merged businesses’, said a CFC media statement outlining the rationale for the deal.33

One of the most interesting developments is Ecobank’s acquisition of a controlling stake in EABS of Kenya. Ecobank, which is active in most West African states, has ambitions to be a pan-African bank. ‘Our vision is to become the largest bank in Africa and our entry into East Africa is part of that strategy. We have been looking for a partner who will be able to give us a countrywide footprint in Kenya, which is the most important financial hub in the region – we feel that EABS Bank fits the bill’, said Michael Monari, Ecobank’s Kenya representative. ‘The African banking landscape is undergoing change and only banks with a pan-African footprint will remain competitive.’34

Greenfield development is an alternative option. Standard’s expansion plans include seeking a licence as part of a reported move into Angola,35 for example. However, developing the necessary branch network to achieve competitive scale can take many years. In an interview with the Ghanaian Chronicle in 2007, Craig Bond said that the group would not be able to reach the scale it needed in many of its target markets through organic growth alone. ‘A lot of our growth strategy has to be acquisitive’, he said.36

In what is still a relatively under-developed market, an acquirer would have considerable freedom to select target markets and develop an innovative operating model without the encumbrances of legacy systems and practices. However, investors need to weigh the benefits of acquisition against the cost and potential availability of suitable targets. Increasing recognition of the growth potential, along with deal size and control premium considerations, have led to price-to-book ratios of between five and seven.

Potential buyers will need to develop a strong relationship and agreement on shared objectives with both the target and the local regulator – despite the relative openness to foreign investment, a predatory takeover would be virtually inconceivable. They will also generally need to be closely involved in the development of strategies for transformation and growth in areas ranging from HR to service and product enhancement. The transfer of expertise is likely to include bringing in managerial and technical personnel from more established markets.

31 Barclays Bank media release, 27.2.07.
32 Standard Bank media release, 31.3.08.
33 CFC media release, 22.6.07.
34 Ecobank/EABS media release, 27.1.08.
35 Reuters, 30.1.08.
Figure 10 – Share of total assets held by foreign banks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Foreign owned %</th>
<th>Locally owned %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Botswana</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mozambique</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zambia</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanzania</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angola</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: PricewaterhouseCoopers analysis.

Figure 11 – Significant foreign investments in 2007 and 2008 to date

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Announced Year</th>
<th>Target Company</th>
<th>Bidder</th>
<th>Stake %</th>
<th>Price ($m)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Ecobank Transnational (Togo)</td>
<td>Ecobank Transnational (Togo)</td>
<td>75.00</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Loita Bank (Malawi)</td>
<td>Ecobank Transnational (Togo)</td>
<td>73.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Uganda Microfinance (Uganda)</td>
<td>Equity Bank (Kenya)</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>I BTC (Nigeria)</td>
<td>Standard Bank (South Africa)</td>
<td>33.30*</td>
<td>620.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Equity Bank (Kenya)</td>
<td>Helios Investors</td>
<td>24.90</td>
<td>176.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Compagnie Bancaire de L’Afrique Occidentale (Senegal)</td>
<td>Attijariwafa Bank (Morocco)</td>
<td>79.15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>CFC Bank (Kenya)</td>
<td>Standard Bank (South Africa)</td>
<td>60.00*</td>
<td>273.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Investment &amp; Mortgages Bank (Kenya)</td>
<td>Consortium including PROPARCO and DEG Bank, Germany</td>
<td>12.00</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>BDC (Mozambique)</td>
<td>First National Bank (South Africa)</td>
<td>80.00</td>
<td>18.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Diamond Bank (Nigeria)</td>
<td>Actis Capital LLP</td>
<td>19.10</td>
<td>134.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Zambia National Commercial Bank (Zambia)</td>
<td>Rabobank (Netherlands)</td>
<td>49.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Nile Bank (Uganda)</td>
<td>Barclays Bank (UK)</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Banque Internationale pour Centrafrique (Central African Republic)</td>
<td>Ecobank Transnational (Togo)</td>
<td>75.00</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Bank of Commerce, Development and Industry (Rwanda)</td>
<td>Ecobank Transnational (Togo)</td>
<td>90.00</td>
<td>11.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Holding merged with existing national subsidiary – percentage is share in merged entity.
PricewaterhouseCoopers provided transactional support for seven of the deals listed.
Source: M&A Global and company announcements.
Demand for banking services is likely to expand and become more sophisticated as economies move up a gear and wealth begins to permeate a growing consumer class. Banks are enhancing their product and distribution capabilities to tap into this expanding market. Market development is likely to include both branch and more innovative mobile/e-banking strategies.

Acquisition offers the fastest way to develop a competitive presence in local and regional markets. Now is still a good time to secure a share of this exciting growth, but potential buyers need to move reasonably quickly. Prices are already high and could conceivably increase still further, while the choice of suitable targets may decline as interest and acquisition accelerate. International groups are set to face ever-stronger competition for the most attractive opportunities from ambitious regional and pan-African players.

While much of the investment to date has sought to deliver a fairly quick financial payback, the scale of the necessary investment in acquisition and market development is likely to grow and require a more long-term strategic approach in securing a favourable return. This includes sustained investment in product and talent development.

Naturally, investors need to consider the risks of a still volatile and poorly developed region. Yet, the potential rewards certainly merit a fresh look and could make investment ultimately worthwhile.
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- Entering the Gulf financial services market

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