



Burkina Faso

Priority Areas



Country Profile

2023

**Blockchain and Digital
Transformation in Africa.**

Table of Contents

04

Fintech

1. Mobile Banking and Digital Payments
 2. Microfinance and Microcredit
 3. Financial Education and Literacy
 4. Agricultural Finance and Insurance
 5. Remittance and Cross-Border Payments
-

07

DeFi

1. Regulatory Development Legal and Compliance
 2. Financial Inclusion and Digital Financial Services
 3. Decentralized Lending and Credit Platforms
 4. Cross-Border Remittance and Payment Systems
 5. Decentralized Insurance and Risk Management Solutions
-

9

Copyright and Disclaimer

10

References

Note: The information presented here highlights crucial focus areas for the country, especially in the context of the emerging industries of Fintech, DeFi (Decentralized Finance), NFTs (Non-Fungible Tokens), and cryptocurrencies. The information presented sheds light on several developments and pioneering enterprises that are fueling the country's digital progress in the blockchain domain. However, it is important to note that this is not an exhaustive list; rather, it provides a glimpse into the country's direction and ability to achieve key milestones in the blockchain sector.

Fintech

Mobile Banking and Digital Payments

Orange Money: Orange's mobile banking service is popular in Burkina Faso. It enables mobile money transfers, bill payments, prepaid top-ups, and merchant payments. It provides a nationwide network of agents for mobile wallet deposits and withdrawals.

MobiCash: Another Burkina Faso mobile banking service is MobiCash. It permits mobile money payments, bill payments, and merchant payments. MobiCash customers can seamlessly transfer funds between their mobile wallets and bank accounts.

Ecobank Mobile App: One of Burkina Faso's largest banks, Ecobank, offers a smartphone app for banking services. The smartphone app allows users to check accounts, transfer payments, make bills, and apply for loans.

Coris Bank International offers mobile banking through Coris Money. It allows mobile money transfers, airtime top-ups, bill payments, and merchant payments. QR code payments make Coris Money convenient for merchant payments.

Wizall Money allows smartphone users to store, transfer, and pay bills. These Burkina Faso innovators deliver unique and affordable financial services to the unbanked and underserved. Wizall Money makes things easier. Money transfers, merchant payments, phone credit purchases, and bill payments are simpler and free. Its extensive agent network allows free money withdrawals. Wizall Money makes personal finance easy.

Microfinance and Microcredit

BearingPoint, KfW, and the Burkina Faso Finance Ministry implemented Système Intégré de la Gestion des Financements Extérieurs (SIGFE), a blockchain-based platform. SIGFE, formerly TruBudget, was built for Burkina Faso to improve financial management and donor-recipient data sharing. The platform's interface with local IT systems and KfW's node enabled real-time data access, financial transparency, and expedited validation for over 25 development projects run by multiple line Ministries and donor countries.¹ With BearingPoint's support for a five-year period on diverse projects, SIGFE reduced administrative workload by digitally handling disclosure, procurement, and disbursement.

Première Agence de Microfinance Burkina Faso (PAMF-B) is one of Burkina Faso's leading mid-sized microfinance institutions. PAMF-B, part of the Aga Khan Agency for Microfinance, serves 86% of rural consumers.² Rural consumers use its group loan

¹ Alexander Bock, "The Finance Ministry of Burkina Faso Traces Development Funds by Using Blockchain Technology," [www.bearingpoint.com](https://www.bearingpoint.com/en/about-us/news-and-media/press-releases/the-finance-ministry-of-burkina-faso-traces-development-funds-by-using-blockchain-technology/), June 20, 2023, <https://www.bearingpoint.com/en/about-us/news-and-media/press-releases/the-finance-ministry-of-burkina-faso-traces-development-funds-by-using-blockchain-technology/>.

² AKDN, "Burkina Faso - Microfinance," Aga Khan Development Network, June 26, 2023, <https://the.akdn/en/where-we-work/west-africa/burkina-faso/microfinance-burkina-faso>.

solutions for agriculture to get input materials with flexible repayment terms. PAMF-B is serving trade and small businesses in metropolitan regions to diversify its clientele. After updating its main banking infrastructure, it is focusing on rice, cassava, maize, and animal goods and digital financial services. Thus, PAMF-B promotes financial participation and gender equality in Burkina Faso by serving 30% women.

Microfinance enterprise Agence de Crédit pour l'Entreprise Privée (ACEP) operates in Burkina Faso and other African nations. It lends modest sums to small firms who have trouble getting bank loans. ACEP is Burkina Faso's premier microfinance institution thanks to investors including the Luxembourg Microfinance and Development Fund and the European Investment Bank.³ The company's concept of building offices, recognizing local needs, and offering quick and easy loan applications has attracted over 24,000 clients. It has a flexible and efficient approach. As it grows, ACEP wants to embrace digitalization and financial inclusion to better serve its customers and attract new ones.

Financial Education and Literacy

The merger of fintech and technological advances in Burkina Faso has the potential to revolutionize learning throughout the country. Mobile money for school fees has expanded financial services for students and their parents, especially in distant locations without banks. Zoom and Microsoft Teams have let students keep learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. Besides, e-Jangolo and Kavalow offer courses, exam papers, and other learning tools.⁴ Despite these advances, rural digital divides, and the demand for digital skills in teachers and pupils persist. By developing fintech solutions with local perspectives and training teachers and students, the banking and technology industry will help make education accessible to all and enhance society.

Agricultural Finance and Insurance

Farafina Agri-Funding, a social venture, uses digital crowdfunding to enhance Burkina Faso's agriculture. The platform educates media and agriculture businesses by offering technical support.

Compagnie Nationale d'Assurance Agricole du Sénégal (CNAAS) Index: After nine years, just 100,000 of Senegal's eight million farmers had insurance, including index insurance.⁵ A coordinated and integrated strategy involving every stakeholder is essential to overcome distribution and agricultural credit restrictions. Understanding loan repayment failures, especially in relation to climate impacts like drought, is essential

³ European Investment Bank, "Microfinance Gets out on the Streets in Burkina Faso to Build Small Businesses," European Investment Bank, 2020, <https://www.eib.org/en/stories/burkinafaso-microfinance>.

⁴ Shlok Dubey, "FinTech for Education: The Burkina Faso Story," Investor's Cabin, 2023, <https://investorscabin.com/articles/fintech-for-education-the-burkina-faso-story>.

⁵ OXFAM, "Agricultural Insurance In Burkina Faso: Challenges and Perspectives," OXFAM, 2018, <https://oxfamlibrary.openrepository.com/bitstream/handle/10546/620538/rr-agricultural-insurance-burkina-faso-050918-en.pdf;jsessionid=1EF009214AE0B49ECD70B05DE594A01D?sequence=4>.

for building efficient insurance solutions. Scaling insurance requires index design capacity, technological alliances, data gathering infrastructure, and stronger cooperation. Burkina Faso's agricultural system and risks are like CNAAS' index insurance products for smallholder farmers. Insurance opportunities should be facilitated by international organizations and development projects, particularly those related to financing and inputs.

Remittance and Cross-Border Payments

Due to its rapid economic growth and young population, West Africa—including Burkina Faso—offers several chances. Digital solutions are filling infrastructure gaps and serving rising corporate and consumer sectors, especially the unbanked. Burkina Faso and other West African countries are adopting mobile money to access financial services like savings, loans, and payments. The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated digital payments, and Thunes, which serves 14 West African nations, provides an interoperable payments infrastructure that facilitates wallet-to-wallet payments between countries and boosts financial inclusion and economic growth in Burkina Faso and the region.⁶

Mobile money interoperability has changed remittances in Burkina Faso and elsewhere. Mobile money systems make sending and receiving remittances easy, especially in rural places. Besides, AML/CFT monitoring ensures maximum security and meets global standards and regulations. Mobile money providers and hubs have made it a trustworthy and safe transfer method. Interoperability allows frictionless cross-border transactions, giving senders and recipients more financial power. For example, Orange Money in Burkina Faso recorded large informal transactions.⁷

⁶ Thunes, "West Africa: Payment Trends and Popular Payment Methods | Thunes," [www.thunes.com](https://www.thunes.com/news/cross-border-payments-west-africa/), June 27, 2022, <https://www.thunes.com/news/cross-border-payments-west-africa/>.

⁷ GSMA, "Mobile Money: Competing with Informal Channels to Accelerate the Digitisation of Remittances," 2018, https://www.gsma.com/mobilefordevelopment/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Mobile_Money_Competing_with_informal_channels_to_accelerate_the_digitisation_of_remittances.pdf.

DeFi

Regulatory Development and Legal Compliance	<p>The West African CFA Franc zone (WAEMU) prohibits cryptocurrencies like Bitcoin. Cryptocurrencies lack counterparts and value guarantees, he said. The governor said cryptocurrency uncontrollability and price volatility threaten regional economies. This rejection of cryptocurrencies and lack of regulatory backing hinderS decentralized finance (DeFi) in Burkina Faso and other BCEAO-governed West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA) member states.</p>
Financial Inclusion and Digital Financial Services	<p>Since 2015, the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) zone's digital financial services (DFS) environment has grown rapidly, benefiting thousands of West Africans through novel collaborations between financial institutions, fintechs, mobile network vendors, and other stakeholders. The project intends to create an open-loop, equitable digital payment network that allows person-to-person transfers across account types and channels with AfDB and Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation support⁸. The platform will improve financial inclusion, minimize cash-based transactions, and boost regional integration for over 116 million people, including low-income people, women, and small companies. It will enable a robust digital economy in the region.</p>
Decentralized Lending and Credit Platforms	<p>E-money issuance has grown in the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU). The Banque Centrale des Etats de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (BCEAO), the central bank of WAEMU member countries, approved two models for e-money issuance: the financial sector model, where credit institutions or microfinance institutions issue it, and the non-bank model, where electronic money institution (EMEs) issue it. By September 2015, 33 e-money issuers have emerged thanks to an innovative 2006 legislative framework and a 2015 revision. As a result, e-money transactions increased by 346.9 million to USD 8.5 billion between January and September 2015⁹. Thus, digital financial services have improved WAEMU financial access.</p>
Cross-Border Remittance and Payment Systems	<p>The BCEAO manages two WAEMU payment systems. First, SICA-UEMOA automates retail payments such transfers, cheques, bills of exchange, and promissory notes. The second system, STAR-UEMOA, allows real-time gross settlement of important transactions. Through the Guarantee Fund and Intra-</p>

⁸ Africa Digital Financial Inclusion Facility, "WAEMU Digital Financial Services Interoperability Platform," Africa Digital Financial Inclusion Facility, February 1, 2020, <https://www.adfi.org/projects/waemu-digital-financial-services-interoperability-platform>.

⁹ AFI, "Digital Financial Services in West African Economic and Monetary Union," Digital financial services in West African Economic and Monetary Union, 2016, <https://www.afi-global.org/newsroom/news/overview-of-digital-financial-services-in-the-west-african-economic-and-monetary-union/>.

	<p>Daily Advances (AIJ) for participants, the BCEAO ensures system continuity, risk management, and financial stability.¹⁰ Hence, the purpose is to improve service quality and participant satisfaction to promote regional integration and WAEMU cross-border transactions.</p>
<p>Decentralized Insurance and Risk Management Solutions</p>	<p>Digital health efforts have proliferated in low-income nations, but most are modest pilots that fail to scale, sustain, or gain widespread adoption. A digital health effort in Burkina Faso has supported millions of consultations. Interoperability, standardization, and infrastructure adaption are necessary for scale, as are health effect and affordability. The experience in Burkina Faso revealed that many stakeholders' support contributed to the beneficial conclusion¹¹. From the Ministry of Health to child carers, many stakeholders might have obstructed or supported the digital health program. Hence, a thorough, time-consuming, and targeted stakeholder strategy avoided various actor obstacles and gained their engagement.</p>

¹⁰ BCEA Central Bank of West African States, "Payment Systems Management | BCEAO," www.bceao.int, June 1, 2016, <https://www.bceao.int/en/content/payment-systems-management>.

¹¹ Riccardo Lampariello and Sonia Ancellin-Panzani, "Mastering Stakeholders' Engagement to Reach National Scale, Sustainability and Wide Adoption of Digital Health Initiatives: Lessons Learnt from Burkina Faso," *Family Medicine and Community Health* 9, no. 3 (June 2021): e000959, <https://doi.org/10.1136/fmch-2021-000959>.

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