



Standard Bank PLC RESULTS FOR THE SIX MONTHS ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

Unaudited Summary Consolidated And Separate Financial Statements

FINANCIAL REVIEW

We present the unaudited financial results of the Group for the six months ended 30 June 2024.

Economic highlights

Foreign exchange demand and supply imbalances persisted in the first half of the year, leading to a 3% depreciation of the Kwacha in March 2024. This, combined with the 44% devaluation in November 2023, led to the first half closing exchange rate position of MK1,749.5 against the United States dollar compared to MK1,058.8 at the end of June 2023. High food prices and foreign exchange shortages exerted significant pressure on headline inflation. Headline inflation closed the first half at 33.3%, much higher than 27.3% in June 2023. The policy rate was hiked by a cumulative 4% to settle at 26%, and the reference rate, which is also the base lending rate, followed the same trend, as it increased to close the first half at 25.10% from 21.00% in June 2023. In addition, the liquidity reserve requirement (LRR) for local currency was adjusted upwards from 5.75% to 8.75% between June 2023 and June 2024.

Performance

The Group showcased remarkable resilience, achieving growth in a challenging economic landscape characterized by foreign currency fluctuations, high inflation and supply-demand imbalances. Despite these obstacles, the Group's revenue increased, cost growth was effectively controlled below inflation, and the balance sheet strengthened through robust funding, leading to enhanced profitability.

Profit after tax reached MK42.4 billion, marking a significant 57% increase from the previous year. Total revenue grew by 24% year-on-year, primarily driven by a 45% growth in net interest income. This surge in net interest income was fueled by a 28% increase in loans and advances to customers, which was supported by a similar rise in customer deposits. Net interest income also benefited from reference rate hikes, rising from 21.0% in June 2023 to 25.1% in June 2024 and increased yields across all tenors of government securities, offsetting a 12% reduction in the financial investments portfolio.

Non-interest revenue declined by 6% when compared to the previous year. While net fees and commissions increased by 10%, driven by higher transaction volumes, this growth was partially offset by regulatory constraints that led to the removal of fees on certain services. Trading revenue also decreased by 14% due to lower trading volumes resulting from a scarcity of foreign currency.

Credit impairments reduced by 38% compared to prior year, owing to the release of forward-looking impairments related to a reduced financial investments portfolio. The Group remains committed to recovering previously written-off loans and maintaining prudent risk management and responsible lending practices.

Operating costs increased by 25% year-on-year, primarily driven by persistent inflationary pressures on goods and services. An additional factor contributing to the rise was a one-time exchange loss on foreign currency denominated liabilities due to a 3% currency depreciation in March 2024. Furthermore, the Group made strategic one-off technology investments in its core banking system to enhance operational efficiency and elevate customer experience. These cost increases were partially offset by revised billing for outsourced services, contributing to a controlled overall cost growth. Importantly, the cost-to-income ratio remained stable at 37%, reflecting the Group's effective cost management and strong revenue growth.

Earnings per share for the half year increased from MK115.05 in 2023 to MK181.09 in 2024.

Outlook

The operating environment is expected to remain challenging in the second half of the year given the inflationary pressures from high food prices due to the low crop yield following the El Nino weather conditions and exchange rate pressures due to weakened foreign exchange supply. The International Monetary Fund staff mission to Malawi was completed, and the first performance review of the Extended Credit Facility (ECF) program commenced. Reform efforts will focus on returning to a sustainable fiscal path, rebuilding external buffers and restoring debt sustainability and external viability while mitigating the El Nino-induced disaster.

Dividend

In light of the uncertain economic environment, the Board of Directors resolved not to pay an interim dividend for the half-year ended 30 June 2024. The Board will continue to monitor the economic situation and declare a dividend when macroeconomic conditions improve. No interim dividend was paid for the half-year ended 30 June 2023.

By order of the Board.

| NAME | DESIGNATION | SIGNATURE | DATE |
|-----------------|--|-----------|----------------|
| 1. C Kapanga | Chairperson | | 01 August 2024 |
| 2. A Mkandawire | Director | | 01 August 2024 |
| 3. P Madinga | Chief Executive | | 01 August 2024 |
| 4. J Mhone | Chief Financial and Value Management Officer | | 01 August 2024 |