

Rwanda Central Bank (BNR) has given a green light to a merger between KCB Group's two subsidiaries, Banque Populaire du Rwanda (BPR) and KCB Bank Rwanda effective April 1, 2022.

The National Bank of Rwanda, BNR's approval means the lender will now operate as one entity known as BPR Bank Rwanda Plc, with KCB Group as the majority shareholder in what will become Rwanda's second largest bank.

KCB Group Chief Executive Officer Johua Oigara has said this will give the lender a stronger edge in deepening the ongoing Group strategy to scale regional presence.

"BPR as we know it today has a lot of potential. The success of this business will build on our era of undisputed leadership in the market and contribute towards Rwanda's economic success journey. I am confident that we can re-write Rwanda's next chapter of development and economic growth," said Oigara.

Oigara says BPR Bank Rwanda will now have a wide presence in the East African Community (EAC) member state in terms of branch network enabling it to roll out products and services to Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and the rural community.

Subsequently, the BPR Bank Rwanda Plc Board has approved a new organization structure for the integrated entity which takes effect immediately subject to governance approvals obtained from BNR, the group said.

George Odhiambo, who is the immediate managing director for KCB Bank Rwanda will now head BPR Bank Rwanda Plc.

"The structure has considered the necessity of smooth post-integration transition with minimal business and human capital disruption whilst retaining key talent resources as well as alignment to the KCB Group Structure for support and governance," added Oigara.

The new bank has now aligned products and services for the market, integration of core banking system, credit process automation and rebranded branches and customer touch points as it assumes operations on Friday.

The newly acquired BPR is a strong retail and SME Bank with the largest branch network in Rwanda having been founded 45 years ago.

Oigara says the merger will provide current KCB Rwanda's customers with access to a larger network of branches and agents across the country, while BPR's customers will benefit from best-in-class digital capability, transactional banking solutions, trade finance expertise and international banking offering from KCB.