

# Airtel Sierra Leone rebranded Orange

FREETOWN, Sierra Leone - Orange has launched its brand in Sierra Leone, building on its strong presence in sub-Saharan Africa, with 50 million customers in 16 countries.



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Airtel Sierra Leone becomes Orange Sierra Leone. The acquisition of Airtel Sierra Leone was finalised in July 2016 by Orange, together with its Senegal-based partner Sonatel, allowing the Orange Group to reinforce its presence in West Africa.

Following the rebranding, Orange Sierra Leone will rank with one of the world's most powerful brands and stands to benefit from being part of a large international group. As part of Orange, it will gain access to the group's expertise, technical know-how and an extensive product and service portfolio.

With its considerable presence on the African continent, a strategic focus for the group, Orange offers strong growth potential for its Sierra Leonean operation.

For Orange, every customer is unique. At the heart of Orange's Essentials 2020 strategic plan, is the ambition of listening to every customer to better address their needs by giving an unmatched experience every day.

**Extensive investment**

With a population of seven million people, Sierra Leone has significant potential for growth in mobile services. Following the acquisition of the company, Orange has committed itself to improving the quality and availability of its services by venturing into untapped and underserved geographical areas, offering to the people of Sierra Leone the innovation that Orange is delivering elsewhere.

Orange Sierra Leone disclosed earlier this year a modernisation and expansion plan to enhance the reliability, coverage and quality of its network, and voice and data services.

Since the acquisition, \$33 million has been invested for that purpose and as of mid-October, the majority of investments have already been realised with 30 new radio sites on air and over half of the entire mobile network upgraded.

Bruno Mettling, deputy chief executive officer of the Orange Group and chairman and CEO of Orange MEA (Middle East and Africa), commented: "We are pleased to bring the Orange brand to Sierra Leone, bolstering our already strong presence in West Africa. The launch of the Orange brand confirms our confidence in the country's on-going economic recovery and our commitment to bring all the benefits of new digital services to Sierra Leoneans in the framework of a fair, transparent and clear partnership that will enable it to be established over time."

## **Strategic priority**

Sekou Drame, chief executive officer, Orange Sierra Leone, added: "The launch of the Orange brand comes with a promise to meet the emerging needs of customers with innovative, affordable and relevant solutions that will empower consumers, giving them the freedom to do what they choose and provide them with the tools to meet life's daily challenges.

"We remain committed to taking our network and services deeper into the country, right up to the doorsteps of each and every Sierra Leonean, with the aim of bridging the digital divide within the country. With the support of Orange and Sonatel we can truly deliver on this. I am confident that over the coming months Orange will win the hearts of customers in Sierra Leone and emerge as one of most admired brands in the country."

Orange is present in 21 countries in Africa and the Middle East, where it has more than 127 million customers as of the end June 2017. With 5.2 billion euros in revenues in 2016 (12% of Orange's total revenues), this region is a strategic priority for the group. Orange Money, its flagship offer for money transfers and mobile financial services, is currently available in 17 countries and has more than 34 million customers. The group's strategy in Africa and the Middle East is to position itself as a leader of the digital transformation and to bring its international expertise to support the development of new digital services.

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