

By Ali Twaha

Absa Bank has said it expects to complete the acquisition of Standard Chartered Bank's wealth and retail banking business segment before the end of the year.

Standard Chartered last year agreed to sell the unit for an undisclosed amount. The bank said it was part of a broader strategy to refocus on higher growth segments such as corporate and investment banking.

"I can't give the exact timelines. But we are more than halfway to get full regulatory approval. We should be able to complete this transaction before the end of this year and the absorption of the customers," David Wandera, the managing director of Absa, said.

Wandera was responding to *New Vision* during the bank's earnings release for the period ending December 2025 in Kampala. Under the agreement, all Standard Chartered Bank retail customers and employees in Uganda will transfer to Absa, which has pledged a seamless transition.

"Our performance in 2025 reflects the deliberate choices. This is evident in the growth of our balance sheet and a 25.1% increase in profit after tax, driven by both funded and non-funded income streams. We have focused on understanding our customers deeply, investing in digital capability,

Acquisition plans to conclude this year, says Absa



Made revelation: Wandera

and being precise in how we deploy capital," Wandera said.

BANK PERFORMANCE

After paying all its bills, staff and taxes, Absa walked away with a profit of sh222.5b in 2025. The year before, that figure was sh177.9b. That's a jump of about 25% in a 12-month period.

Absa's total assets grew from sh5.4 trillion in 2024 to sh7 trillion in 2025. That's a 29% increase. Think of total assets as everything the bank owns or controls, the loans it has given out, the cash it holds, and investments it has made, among others.

The bank also increased the money lent to customers. The bank's earnings report shows that loans and advances grew from sh1.99 trillion to sh2.14 trillion, an increase of about 7%.

Customer deposits, money that customers saved or placed in savings accounts, current accounts, and fixed deposits, surged from sh3.19 trillion to sh4.66 trillion. That is a 46% jump.

The planned acquisition of Standard Chartered wealth and retail business is likely to push Absa's customer deposit base to about sh5.3 trillion.

HOW THE BANK MADE ITS MONEY

Absa earned a total of sh829.3b in income in 2025, up from sh690.6b in 2024. That is an extra sh138.7b or a 20% jump in the review period.

Interest income on loans and advances grew to sh274.4b, representing about 33% of total income. The earnings from loans grew by 13% because the bank gave out more loans than in 2024.

Lending to Government remains the fastest growing income stream for the bank.

Investment securities are essentially government bonds and treasury bills.

BETWEEN THE LINES

Profit after tax was driven by growth in revenues coupled with costs efficiencies and prudential monitoring of credit risk," Michael Segwaya, the chief finance officer at Absa, said.

The 31% to about sh224b jump suggests the bank significantly increased how much it put into these instruments. This is a relatively safe form of income, which is reassuring, though it also means less money channelled into direct loans to customers.

Fees and commissions raked in sh136b, representing about 15% of total income in the period. The fees and commission covers bank charges, transfer fees, loan arrangement fees, card transaction fees, and similar service charges.

"Accelerated revenue growth supported by balanced growth across funded and non-funded stream. The non-funded income is a reflection that people are choosing to use our services."