

MTN Group appoints movers and shakers

By [Thabiso Mochiko](#)

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MTN Group has again tapped into the talent pools of its competitors and the banking sector to bolster its executive team.



Jens Schulte Bockum, MTN's new group chief operating officer

The appointments follow a huge fine for flouting Nigerian telecoms regulations. This forced the group to improve risk management and governance and to seek new opportunities. Electus equity analyst Mishal Emeran said the appointments included vital areas of the business, technology and operations, where MTN had "arguably dropped the ball over the recent past".

On Wednesday, MTN announced the appointment of former Vodafone Germany CEO Jens Schulte-Bockum as group chief operating officer from January.

Oliver Fortuin, the head of BT Global Services in sub-Saharan Africa, will join the mobile network operator as executive head of business enterprise, a unit that is focusing on providing services to corporations.

Bernice Samuels, the chief marketing officer at FNB, will rejoin MTN in a similar position.

Farai Mapfinya, chief investment officer at Falcon Crest Asset Managers, said the calibre and number of appointments were a "serious statement of intent" from MTN. "The appointments are pleasing. What is left is to see whether they gel as a

team. All in all we view the appointments as hugely positive for MTN," said Mapfinya.

MTN expects SchulteBockum to bring extensive experience in the consumer business. Samuels would assist in "lifting and repositioning product development and uplifting the MTN brand" in Africa and the Middle East, MTN said.

Fortuin is expected to enhance MTN's strategy in growing its enterprise unit throughout the continent.

The latest round of recruiting comes after the appointment of former Vodafone and Vodacom executive [Rob Shuter](#) as CEO of MTN Group, and a number of bankers including Ralph Mupita, the chief financial officer of Old Mutual Emerging Markets. He will be the company's chief financial officer from April 2017.

Also joining the team is former Barclays Africa head of investment [Stephen van Coller](#), as head of strategy and mergers and acquisitions, and Rand Merchant Bank's Kholekile Ndamase. The appointment of the bankers could be an indication that MTN may ramp up its financial services.

Emeran said Vodafone had a reputation for having good quality management and Shuter appeared to be bringing with him a team of individuals from Vodafone he knows and trusts.

Source: Business Day

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