

# South Africa's 700,000-Location POS Reach and New Lightning Tools Broaden Payment Signals

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## South Africa's 700,000-Location POS Reach and New Lightning Tools Broaden Payment Signals

*By Bitcoin Payment Adoption Tracker • March 27, 2026*

MoneyBadger's large South African POS footprint leads this cycle, alongside Lexe's public self-custodial Lightning wallet release and continued grassroots payment activity in Kenya, Ghana, the Bitcoin Ekasi community, and the Dominican Republic. Regulatory developments were absent, and hard volume data remained limited.

### Major Adoption News

#### **South Africa — MoneyBadger pushes Bitcoin onto existing merchant POS rails**

MoneyBadgerPay integrated Bitcoin payments into existing merchant POS systems, enabling Lightning payments at **700,000 locations nationwide** [1]. The cited background says CEO Carel van Wyk had built an on-chain Bitcoin payments product in 2017, but resumed work after Lightning Network progress and everyday use in Bitcoin Ekasi reignited interest in Bitcoin as a payment network [1].

**Significance:** The integration is built into existing POS systems rather than a separate checkout stack. In the current source set, it is also the clearest large-scale distribution figure for Bitcoin payments [1].

#### **Dominican Republic — tourism is being framed as a live satspending channel**

The cited material describes the Dominican Republic as becoming a Bitcoin tourism hub, with tourists arriving ready to spend sats at merchants and early adopters positioned to benefit [2].

“Tourists are arriving ready to spend sats. Merchants who get it early... win.” [2]

**Significance:** This links merchant acceptance to inbound travel demand, not only local circular-economy use cases [2].

### **Kenya — Bitcoin Babies extends Bitcoin payments into marketplace commerce**

Bitcoin Babies describes its app as an online Kijiji-style platform where users can buy and sell items using Bitcoin while learning about Bitcoin [3].

**Significance:** The cited model expands Bitcoin payments from merchant check-out examples into peer marketplace activity [3].

## **Payment Infrastructure**

### **Global — Lexe Wallet brings self-custodial Lightning wallets to public app stores**

Lexe Wallet was publicly released on the App Store and Google Play with SDKs for creating and controlling self-custodial Lightning wallets. The cited description emphasizes real channels managed by always-online Lightning nodes running inside secure hardware on Bitcoin mainnet [4]. A demo shows wallet creation, funding, and payment in **3 minutes** [4]. Steve Lee said the release is powered by LDK [5], while calle described the architecture as running a Lightning node in a cloud TEE inaccessible to the provider and called it a major technical feat [6].

**Significance:** The current materials present this as public Lightning tooling that combines self-custody, real channels, and always-online node operation in one wallet stack [4, 6].

### **Africa — feature-phone support remains relevant for payment access**

Machankura is described as a Bitcoin financial services provider that works on non-internet-connected feature phones, devices the cited material says are ubiquitous across Africa [1].

**Significance:** This extends Bitcoin payment access beyond smartphone-only users in markets where feature phones remain common [1].

### **Malawi — hands-on Lightning training produced first live transactions**

At the University of Malawi, participants learned to set up secure Bitcoin wallets, use the Lightning Network for fast, low-cost transactions, and send and receive Bitcoin in real time [7]. The session included participants making their first transactions [7].

**Significance:** The cited program moves from awareness to operational payment use, which matters for future merchant and user readiness [7].

## Regulatory Landscape

### Africa

No new legal or regulatory changes affecting Bitcoin payments were cited in the provided material.

### Americas

No new legal or regulatory changes affecting Bitcoin payments were cited in the provided material.

### Global

This cycle's evidence is operational rather than policy-driven, centered on merchant onboarding, POS integration, wallet design, and payment education.

## Usage Metrics

Hard transaction-volume data were not included in the current material. The clearest quantified indicators are merchant reach and payment-setup speed.

### South Africa

- MoneyBadger's POS integration is described as enabling Lightning payments at **700,000 locations nationwide** [1].

### Global

- Lexe's demo shows a self-custodial Lightning wallet being created, funded, and used for payment on Bitcoin mainnet in **3 minutes** [4].

### Location not specified in the cited BTC Shule posts

- Merchant checkout and Fedi Wallet payments were described as taking **seconds** [8, 9].

## Emerging Markets

### Kenya — Bitcoin is appearing in everyday food commerce

A Digital Mutura vendor in Kenya accepts Bitcoin sats for affordable local everyday food and is listed on BTC Map with a Blink address [10].

**Why it matters:** This places Bitcoin acceptance in a low-ticket, everyday food category [10].

### Ghana — student spending shows low-ticket consumer use

In Ghana, a student bought a Vitamilk drink with sats using the Blink wallet, and the merchant is listed on BTC Map [11].

**Why it matters:** This is a practical day-to-day checkout example in a low-value beverage purchase [11].

### Bitcoin Ekasi community — sats-only retail remains visible inside a circular economy

Visitors bought water at Jabulani Shop using Bitcoin, with the post emphasizing “no cash, just sats moving in the community” and describing it as a real taste of circular-economy activity in Bitcoin Ekasi [12]. The merchant is listed on BTC Map and tagged with a Blink address [12].

**Why it matters:** The cited example shows spendability inside a community merchant network rather than a single isolated checkout [12].

## Adoption Outlook

The strongest momentum in the current material is still operational. South Africa contributes the largest scale signal through POS integration, Lexe adds new self-custodial Lightning infrastructure, and multiple emerging-market examples show Bitcoin being spent on food, drinks, water, and marketplace activity rather than only discussed in theory [1, 4, 10, 11, 12, 3].

The main limitation is measurement. Outside the **700,000-location** South African reach figure and the **3-minute** Lexe demo, the source set provides little hard data on transaction volume or growth rates. Current evidence of momentum comes mainly from merchant listings, live checkout demonstrations, and first-time transactions rather than regional throughput statistics [1, 4, 7].

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## Sources

1. X post by @BitcoinEkasi
2. X post by @btcdominicana
3. X post by @BtcBabies
4. X post by @lexeapp
5. X post by @moneyball
6. X post by @callebtc
7. X post by @BitcoinBoma
8. X post by @btcshule
9. X post by @btcshule
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11. X post by @bitcoin\_aves
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