

Brief on Nigerian National Broadband Council Presented by Engr. Ngozi O. Ogujiofor, Director (Telecoms & Postal Services Department) at the Inauguration of the Re-constituted Nigerian National Broadband Council holding at Musa Yar'Adua Centre, Abuja on 3rd May, 2017.

Introduction

The Nigerian National Broadband Plan provided for the establishment of the Nigerian National Broadband Council (NNBC). The maiden Council was inaugurated by the former Honourable Minister of Communication Technology, Dr. Mrs Omobola Johnson in 2013. The Council served for two years and was dissolved in 2015.

The Council was re-constituted by the Honourable Minister of Communication in 2016 but its inauguration could not hold due to funding challenges. However, the NNBC Secretariat has continued to carry out back end activities to keep tab on the development in the sector.

Responsibility of the NNBC

The mandate of the NNBC is to provide periodic report of the progress of implementation of the Nigerian National Broadband Plan (NNBP), facilitate coordination and collaboration of stakeholders in the delivery of the broadband plan as well as highlight areas of programme adjustment to permit the realization of new and emerging opportunities.

To ensure a comprehensive evaluation of the various aspects of ICT development, four technical Sub-Committees have been proposed including;

- i. Policy and Regulation Sub-Committee;
- ii. Infrastructure Sub-Committee;
- iii. Communication Sub-Committee; and

- iv. Investment and Finance Sub-Committee.

The sub-committees are to deliberate and monitor developments on the specific areas and submit report to the Council for consideration and approval. These reports shall form part of the Council's report.

Achievement of the NNBC

The Council identified high cost of Right of Way charge as a limiting factor hindering broadband infrastructure roll out in Nigeria. Measures were taken to bring down the high cost of Right of Way and streamline modalities for broadband deployment, and encourage innovation. To this end, a number of programs were initiated including;

- i. Smart State Initiative
- ii. Smart City Initiative
- iii. Licensing of Infracos
- iv. ICT incubation centres, etc.

Smart State Initiative

The Smart State Initiative was intended to attract partnership of interested States to adopt the harmonized right of way rate of N145/metre or reduce the existing charges to an acceptable rate as well as establish a single control/Authority for the management of ICT related issues. The Smart State Initiative aims to address the following;

- i. Multiple taxation: through the establishment of a one stop office to interface with Telecom Operators;
- ii. Right of Way (RoW): harmonized charges and concessions for RoW approvals by States;
- iii. Harmonized fees for site building and approvals/planning permits;

- iv. Dig-once and share policy: encourage the first Operator to secure RoW to make provision for other user and share same;
- v. Deploying usable fibre to public schools and other State Institutions that are within 1km of RoW route procured from the State Government as part of the Corporate Social Responsibility (SSR) of the Telecom Company;
- vi. Where applicable, Telecom Operators will use ducts built by the State Government for fibre infrastructure deployment; and
- vii. Repairing damaged roads after deployment of the Optic fibre infrastructure using State Government contractors involved in the Initial road construction, subject to agreement of reasonable commercial rate.

Smart City Initiative

Smart City Initiative is intended to transform the management of interested cities with integrated ICT and Internet of Things solutions for secure, effective and efficient service delivery.

Infracos initiative

The Infracos initiative was designed to license seven Infrastructure development Companies to build and manage segments of a National backbone. Lagos and Abuja segments have been licensed but details of actual implementation is yet to be received from NCC.

Incubation Centres

Incubation Centres were designed to provide an enabling environment for talented individuals to learn, develop ICT applications and devices. Two centres are currently operational in Lagos and Calabar.

Council is expected to review the progress made so far and advise appropriately.

The Way Forward

Considering the limited time frame to achieve the 30% broadband penetration by 2018, Council is expected to develop an implementation work plan to achieve the set goal.