

**THE ROLE OF THE NCC IN THE DIGITAL
TRANSFORMATION OF NIGERIA**

**THE WELCOME ADDRESS
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**PRESENTED BY
DR. AMINU MAIDA**

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is with great honour that I welcome you to this forum. I must also congratulate the organizers of this event, as it contributes remarkably to the digital transformation of Nigeria, which as you all are aware is top of the priority of the Ministry of Communication, Innovation and Digital Economy, and in extension, the Nigerian Communications Commission.

Globally, there is an unprecedented digital renaissance taking place across the world. After the Covid-19 pandemic the acceleration of this transformation took a geometric dimension. Today, the digital world has redesigned how we communicate, trade, and engage with the world around us.

Digital transformation has contributed in no small measure to the world's increasing productivity, providing data-driven decisions, contributing to the growth of Micro and Small-Scale Entrepreneurs, job creation, and poverty reduction. This transformation is also providing climate enthusiasts with innovative solutions to address environmental challenges across the world.

Nigeria has not been left behind in the fast-paced digital culture. From Mobile Money Services, to a billion dollar thriving Fintech ecosystem, to growing e-commerce, and even the implementation of various digital initiatives, such as the National Identity Number (NIN) by the Federal Government are testimony to Nigeria's adoption of digital innovations.

Underpinning this global digital transformation is the indispensable role of telecommunications infrastructure. Today, universal, affordable, reliable, and fast telecom services are becoming social rights, as mobile networks and data centers form the backbone of digital transformation by enabling the storage and processing of large amounts of data as well as integration of digital technologies into numerous use cases.

The Nigerian Communications Commission's (NCC) is responsible for the regulation of the telecommunications sector in Nigeria, a role that has been pivotal in facilitating Nigeria's digital transformation journey. In fact, the telecommunications sector is one of the major success stories of the Nigerian economy since its full deregulation in 2001.

The NCC has been able to facilitate digital transformation through the enactment of contemporary and relevant regulatory guidelines and policies, licensing of telecommunications operators, providing a conducive market environment for the deployment of telecommunications infrastructure, equipping Nigerians with digital literacy and skills, providing Small and Medium Scale (SME) entrepreneurs & innovators with necessary support, while supporting indigenous ICT manufacturers.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE

The National Broadband Plan 2020-2025 had set certain metrics as targets for national broadband deployment; some of these parameters include: to achieve a 50% improvement in Quality of Service

(QoS) by the end of 2024; to boost Nigeria's broadband penetration rate to 70% by the end of 2025; to deliver data download speed of 25Mbps in urban areas and 10Mbps in rural areas by the end of 2025; to provide coverage for at least 80% of the country's population, especially the underserved and unserved populations by the end of 2026; to reduce the gap of unconnected Nigerians in rural areas from 61% to less than 20% by 2027; and to secure between 300 to 500 percent increase in broadband investment by the end of 2027.

Lofty as these targets may seem, the NCC is poised to achieve and deliver on these goals through its reinvigorated leadership and the adoption of an approach that seeks to meet the needs of its key critical stakeholders in the telecommunications value-chain, that is: the Consumers, the Industry or our Licensees, and the Government.

The Commission, in order to ensure the delivery of optimal services to consumers is undertaking a review of its extant Regulatory Instruments and Licensing Frameworks. For Instance, Quality of Service Regulations have been reviewed to incorporate Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for 5G and other participants that are critical to Quality of Service.

In line with its objectives to bolster Nigeria digital economy, the Commission has constructed Computer Laboratories in secondary schools across the 6 geopolitical zones through its Digital Awareness Project (DAP). The Commission has also supported JAMB with the construction & furnishing of CBT Centres across the nation. So far, 10 digital parks have been established, while Public Hospitals across Nigeria have over the years benefited from the Commission's e-health Data Sharing Platform.

In addition, the NCC has supported the incubation of various ICT innovators, including:

1. **Gamol Studio**, a startup that focuses on the digitalization of Indigenous African Systems using AI Innovations,
2. **Ashiri.ng**, a startup that focuses on digitizing informal financial systems in Africa,
3. **Hebronplug**, which is an e-commerce platform that provides University students who run businesses a place to connect within and outside their university communities,
4. **Lalita, an Indigenous application**, developed for FinTech solutions enabling Smart Payment, and
5. **Octagon Hybrid Inverter**, developed to provide an alternative power source on standalone telecom equipment through a continuous battery recharging system.

FINANCIAL INCLUSION & CYBER SECURITY

I must mention that the NCC's role as regulator of the telecommunication's sector is crucial to the seamless delivery of the connectivity that provides the backbone for seamless financial services. Through a robust and vibrant telecommunications ecosystem, banks are able to offer Unstructured Supplementary Service Data (USSD) banking services. This has made banking services more

accessible to people in rural areas and other underserved communities. The Commission also provides Fintech Companies & other DFS providers with short-codes; type-approves telecommunications equipment to ensure conformity to global standards and equipment interoperability with relevant technologies.

In conclusion, the future of Nigeria's digital transformation holds great promise, driven by the unwavering commitment of the Nigerian Communications Commission. By fostering connectivity and championing digital initiatives, the Commission is not only laying the groundwork for Nigeria's economic growth and social inclusion, but also positioning the nation as a leader in the global digital landscape.

Thank you.

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