



2026: Delivering Better Quality of Experience to the Nigerian Consumer.

**NEW YEAR MESSAGE TO STAKEHOLDERS IN
NIGERIA'S COMMUNICATIONS SECTOR**

1ST JANUARY, 2026

***Dear Consumers, Industry
Operators, and Partners,***

*Happy New Year
to you and your
loved ones.*

Nigeria's communications sector is today an essential service that connects families, supports businesses, enables education and healthcare, and powers our digital economy. As we begin this new year, our shared expectation is simple: better services that people can feel, delivered by a market that is fair, competitive, and sustainable.

It is clear that if consumers do not experience reliable and affordable service, the sector loses trust, and if operators cannot invest sustainably, the sector cannot grow. When this balance is right, trust is built, investment flows, innovation thrives, and more Nigerians can participate meaningfully in the digital economy.

This shared ambition aligns with the Federal Government's Renewed Hope Agenda and President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's ambition to build a \$1 trillion digital economy by 2030. A reliable, inclusive, and high-quality communications sector is a critical enabler of productivity, innovation, job creation, and

national competitiveness. The NCC remains fully committed to playing its role in achieving this vision.

As connectivity becomes more central to everyday life, our responsibility goes beyond access alone. Nigerians must be able to use the Internet with confidence. This means protecting users from risks and harm such as fraud, impersonation, cyberbullying, harmful content, and cyberattacks. This is why we are strengthening regulatory instruments like the Internet Code of Practice to ensure that as networks expand, users are better protected, and service providers act responsibly.

We are also strengthening a broader cybersecurity and trust framework for the industry, recognising that today's networks connect not only people, but also devices, machines, and critical services. This will help ensure that Nigeria's digital growth is built on strong foundations of security, trust, and resilience.

Our commitment to a healthy communications sector also means ensuring that services deliver fair value, while the market remains commercially viable for continued investment and expansion. We also recognise that market forces alone cannot deliver connectivity everywhere. We

will therefore leverage data and evidence to identify areas where connectivity remains limited and apply the right mix of incentives, partnerships, and policy tools to extend access. Our aim is clear: to ensure that no Nigerian is excluded from the digital era because of where they live or their socio-economic circumstances.

Overall, our approach remains balanced and purposeful, and that is better service and protection for consumers, a stable and predictable environment for investment, and a strong, inclusive communications ecosystem where businesses can grow and Nigerians can thrive.



2025: WHERE WE WERE, AND THE DIRECTION AHEAD

The year 2025 marked a clear turning point for Nigeria's communications sector. Investment momentum returned, network expansion increased, and measurable progress was made, while also reminding us that improving everyday service experience must remain our shared priority.

Over the year, operators deployed over 2,800 new and upgraded sites, strengthening both coverage and capacity nationwide. As a result, broadband subscriptions grew by 6% from about 96.3 million to over 109.6 million from December 2024 to December 2025, lifting broadband penetration from 44.43% to 50.58% today.

While network performance is not yet where we want it to be in all locations, measurable improvements were recorded over the year. Between December 2024 and December 2025, median mobile download speeds on 4G increased by about 24%, rising from approximately 16 Mbps to 20 Mbps, while average 4G download speeds increased by 18% from approximately 28 Mbps to 33 Mbps. This reflects steady progress as a result of increasing investments and other measures. We highlight progress on 4G performance mainly because it remains the dominant technology in use today for broadband internet access, accounting for about 52% of mobile connections nationwide

and therefore best reflects the everyday experience of most users. This expansion was underpinned by stronger network foundations, with 4G population coverage consolidating at about 85% and 5G expanding to roughly 13% of the population and continuing to grow. Together, these gains mark steady progress and set the stage for rising digital use and higher expectations for network performance and reliability.

These gains are also reinforced by broader national digital infrastructure efforts, notably Project BRIDGE, championed by the Honourable Minister of Communications, Innovation and Digital Economy, Dr. Bosun Tijani.



The initiative aims to accelerate large-scale fibre deployment, targeting up to 90,000km nationwide, to strengthen Nigeria's digital backbone, improve network resilience, and support faster, more reliable broadband services across the country.

Encouragingly, usage patterns are also shifting in the right direction. 4G now accounts for about 52% of mobile connections, overtaking 2G at approximately 38%, reflecting a steady move toward faster and more efficient networks. This shift supports better data performance, richer digital services, and more efficient use of network resources. As the digital ecosystem evolves, traditional boundaries between communications, financial services, broadcasting, data protection, and online platforms are increasingly overlapping; a global trend that means services, risks, and consumer experiences now cut across sectors. In response, the Commission has adopted a more proactive and collaborative approach, working closely with relevant

public institutions responsible for consumer protection, data privacy, financial services, broadcasting, digital innovation, to ensure that regulation remains coherent, consumer-focused, and fit for purpose.

One notable example of such collaboration is our work with the Central Bank of Nigeria, which has begun to deliver tangible results: consumers are now receiving refunds for failed airtime and data transactions within strict and enforceable SLAs. This represents an important step in strengthening accountability, restoring confidence, and ensuring that Nigerians receive fair value for the services they pay for.

However, this progress comes with new pressures. Between January 2023 and November 2025, monthly mobile data usage rose from about 518,000 terabytes to over 1.23 million terabytes. This is an increase of around 140%, meaning data traffic has more than doubled in less than three years. This surge

in demand places significant strain on networks and underscores why continued investment in capacity, backhaul, resilience, and service quality remains essential, even as coverage expands.

We recognise what many consumers still experience: inconsistent service quality in some areas, congestion in busy locations, outages linked to power challenges and infrastructure damage, and complaint resolution that must become faster and more customer-focused.

Operators, in turn, continue to face deep-rooted challenges, including rising operating costs, energy and logistics constraints, right-of-way issues, and persistent vandalism and theft of telecommunications infrastructure. These realities affect both the pace of expansion and the quality of service delivery.

The gains recorded in 2025 show what is possible. The task ahead is to deepen those gains, close remaining gaps, and raise service standards across the board.

1. What Consumers Should Expect This Year

Consumers deserve transparency, responsiveness, and real improvements. In this new year, consumers should expect:

Improved voice quality and more consistent data performance in everyday use.

Fewer avoidable disruptions and faster restoration when incidents occur.

Fewer unresolved complaints and better feedback when issues are escalated.

Simpler, more transparent tariffs and bundles.

Resilient and safe internet for citizens and businesses.

Continued expansion of coverage, especially for underserved and unserved communities.

Prompt value reversal on unsuccessful recharges, ensuring customers enjoy full value for their money.

2. What the NCC Will Prioritise

Our regulatory work this year will be anchored on outcomes that matter to the public, delivered through clear rules, active monitoring, and consistent enforcement.

A. Quality of Service and Network Resilience

We will deepen our QoS monitoring, strengthen major incident reporting and escalation, and drive practical measures that improve availability and performance, especially in high-traffic areas and persistent black spots.

B. Consumer Protection and Transparency

We will reinforce tariff transparency, accuracy of billing, customer care standards, and protections against misleading practices. Consumers will also see more consistent public communication during major service incidents.

C. Fair Competition and Market Discipline

A healthy market delivers better service and better prices. NCC will continue to promote fair competition, prevent anti-competitive conduct, and support innovation that benefits consumers and strengthens service delivery. In 2026, we will operationalise the revised Corporate Governance Code for the communications sector, thus strengthening board and management accountability and making governance a key driver of operator performance.

3. What We Expect from Operators

Operators remain the engine of investment and innovation in this sector. We will work with you—but we will also hold you accountable, because the consumer's experience must improve.

This year, we expect operators to continue to:

1. Invest deliberately in expansion, capacity and resilience.

2. Reduce avoidable outages while strengthening incident response plans, and ensure transparent communication with consumers during service disruptions by clearly explaining the cause, actions being taken, and realistic timelines for restoration.

3. Simplify tariffs and improve pricing clarity, in line with regulatory guidance.

4. Upgrade customer care and complaint handling, treating complaints as critical feedback.

5. Protect the integrity of the ecosystem, including timely settlement with critical suppliers and supporting service sustainability.

6. Comply with the Guidelines on Corporate Governance for the industry as well as other extant regulatory obligations.

Put simply: stronger networks, clearer communication, better customer care, stricter compliance.



4. What Operators Can Expect from the NCC

(Fair, Reasonable, Non-discriminatory Regulation, Constructive Engagement and Accountability)

The NCC will:

- a. Maintain clear and transparent processes for regulatory decisions.
- b. Increase efficiency in regulatory services, including licensing, approvals, and related applications, in line with extant laws and regulations.
- c. Engage with stakeholders through structured, evidence-based consultations and working groups.
- d. Improve escalation channels for urgent service-impacting issues.
- e. Support an enabling environment for sustainable investment, including continued engagement with relevant government partners to reduce barriers to deployment and protect infrastructure.
- f. Enforce compliance with regulatory obligations, particularly on service quality, good governance frameworks, and consumer protection, and apply appropriate regulatory consequences for persistent or material non-compliance in a fair, transparent, and proportionate manner.

5. How we will drive our sector priorities together

There are areas where progress requires collective action across operators, infrastructure providers, government institutions, and security partners. Key priorities include:

-  Regular publication of industry performance insights and outcomes.
-  Protection of Critical National Information Infrastructure (CNII)—reducing vandalism, theft, and disruptions, in continued collaboration with the Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA) and the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), whose increasing support has strengthened coordination, rapid response and infrastructure protection nationwide.
-  Power resilience and energy efficiency—improving uptime and stability.
-  Stronger partnership with subnational governments, including through the Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF)—whose willingness to engage has become increasingly important in addressing right-of-way challenges, easing deployment bottlenecks, protecting infrastructure and enabling faster network rollout at state and local levels.

We will continue to listen closely through consumer outreach, stakeholder consultations, and data-driven monitoring. I encourage consumers to use official complaint channels and to report service issues with clear details. I encourage operators to engage proactively with the Commission, share accurate information, and act quickly where problems arise. This year, our expectation is clear: measurable improvement in consumer experience.

To Nigeria's consumers: thank you for your patience and for holding all of us accountable. Your feedback strengthens the sector.

To operators and industry partners: thank you for the investment, innovation, and the thousands of Nigerians working daily to keep networks running—often under difficult conditions.

We wish you a peaceful, productive, and prosperous New Year.

Warm regards,

Dr. Aminu Maida

Executive Vice Chairman/CEO
Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC)