



Consultation Paper

Policy Proposals for the Review of the National
Telecommunications Policy 2000

February 2026

Consultation Guidance

The Honourable Minister of Communications, Innovation and Digital Economy (Honourable Minister) has set up a Ministerial Steering Committee (MSC) and a Ministerial Technical Committee (MTC) to commence the process of reviewing the National Telecommunications Policy 2000.

This Consultation Paper is part of the expectations of Section 24 (1) of the Nigerian Communications Act 2003 which states that prior to the formulation or review of the general policy for the Nigerian communications sector, the Honourable Minister shall cause the Commission on his behalf to first carry out a public consultative process. The consultation process shall be on the proposed policy formulation or modification.

This Consultation Paper represents the first step in the public consultation process and will guide the changes, amendments and modifications that may be carried out on the subsisting National Telecommunications Policy 2000.

Hence this consultation process and its outcome will support the work of the MSC and the IC in coming up with a reviewed Policy that will meet the current challenges of the Sector and keep up with the rapid and dynamic changes in the last twenty five years since the current National Telecommunications Policy was issued in 2000.

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1. Introduction

The National Telecommunications Policy 2000 (NTP) marked a major progression from older policies, aiming for liberalization, modernization, and competition under then nascent democratic government. The NTP replaced the 1998 Policy and successfully paved the way for the growth of mobile telephony and the eventual Nigerian Communications Act (NCA) 2003 by focusing on market deregulation and stakeholder consultation.

Prior to the liberalisation, midwifed by the NTP, Nigeria's telecommunications sector was dominated by the Nigerian Telecommunications Limited (NITEL), which was a government-owned monopoly. NITEL was reputably characterized by obsolete equipment, poor quality of service and low teledensity (1:440). Critically, the National Telecommunications Policy, which was approved in 1998, quickly became outdated due to rapid global technological changes, necessitating a new approach. In 1999, the Federal Government initiated a Committee to draft a modern policy.

The key objectives of the NTP were:

- **Modernization:** The core goal was to modernize and rapidly expanding telecommunications networks and services.
- **Liberalization:** Introducing full market liberalization to foster competition and meet demands.
- **Regulatory Framework:** The policy aimed to bring all operators under the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC).
- **Efficient and Optimal Utilisation of Spectrum:** The NTP set policy goals for spectrum allocation through the National Frequency Management Council (NFMC) as well as regulatory goals for the Nigerian Communications Commission in the assignment and utilisation of spectrum in the Communications Sector.
- **Universal Access and Universal Service:** The NTP has a key objective of enhancing and deepening Universal Access and Universal Service for communications services through the Universal Service Provision Funding system.

The immediate outcome of the NTP is the GSM Licensing (2001/2002) that led to the licensing of GSM operators and the market was immediately transformed. This transformation created unprecedented mobile subscription levels that surpassed fixed-line users, revealing

huge market potential. More importantly, the NTP paved the way for the enactment of the Nigerian Communications Act (NCA) of 2003, establishing a strong statutory and regulatory environment. We must also acknowledge the role of the NTP in driving economic growth, attraction of unprecedented Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs) into the Sector, that has made it a significant contributor to GDP, enabling e-commerce and digital services. In essence, the NTP marked Nigeria's definitive shift from a state-controlled, slow-moving telecom sector to a vibrant, competitive, and rapidly growing digital economy.

2. Background

The Nigerian Communications Market has grown in leaps and bounds since the issuance of the NTP in 2000 and it has led to statutory and regulatory reforms that galvanized a sector into growth and turned a moribund service into a pillar that is driving national development in Nigeria. These growth levels can best be deduced from the current statistics and data on market performance and a proven contribution to Nigeria's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). In fact Nigeria's telecom sector is Africa's largest by subscriber number and market size, a major GDP contributor, driven by mobile growth, data services, and heavy investment in 4G/5G and it is transitioning from voice to being data-centric, which is crucial for the growth of the digital economy notwithstanding challenges like foreign exchange volatility and rising inflation.

Nigeria currently has a teledensity of 84.82% with a subscriber number of 177,426,286 and an internet subscription number of 144,787,281, both as at November 2025. Another important data relates to broadband penetration in Nigeria, projected to reach 70% by the end of 2025 under the subsisting National Broadband Plan. Although the sector was unable to reach that projection, Broadband penetration as at November 2025 stood at 50.58%, which is a remarkable growth compared to 21.69 as at January 2017.

Nigeria's internet usage also reached a record 1.24 million terabytes in November 2025, according to the latest data from the Nigerian Communications Commission. The figure, up modestly from 1.235 million terabytes in October 2025, reflects steady growth in digital activity across the country and reflect a steady, sustained growth, rising by an average of 1.8% in the second half of the year 2025.¹

Beyond these numbers, the sector provides increasingly vital infrastructure backbone which continues to power growth across all other sectors of the Nigerian economy, justly referred to as the “infrastructure of all infrastructures”.

¹ Comprehensive monthly data on key market indices is available on the NCC website at: <https://www.ncc.gov.ng/market-data-reports/industry-statistics>

Lastly, in our analysis we must acknowledge the commendable contributions of the Nigerian Communications Sector to the Country's GDP. Nigeria's telecommunications sector is a significant economic driver, consistently contributing over 10% to the GDP, reaching peaks of around 14-16% in Q1 2023 (14.13%) and Q2 2024 (16.36%), and in recent times it has been showcasing strong resilience, growth in data services, and vital support for Nigeria's non-oil economy, making it one of the nation's strongest economic pillars.

3. Policy Proposals

These proposals form the baseline for the review and potential changes to the existing National Telecommunications Policy (NTP) and provide both the context and policy purpose for these changes. These Policy Proposals are deduced from an in-depth Policy Impact Analysis (PIA) conducted by the Implementation Committee (IC) set up the Honourable Minister of Communications, Innovation and Digital Economy. Therefore, these Fifteen (15) Policy Proposals are based on identified gaps, shortcomings and proposed areas of improvement of the NTP after the PIA.

Policy Proposal	Basis for Policy Proposal
<p>Policy Proposal 1</p> <p>We propose to expand the objectives in Chapter Two (2) of the NTP to accommodate new objectives, remove outdated ones and address current challenges impacting the digital economy.</p> <p>Stakeholders are invited to make recommendations on what new objectives should drive telecoms Policy in Nigeria, how these objectives would be met and what criteria should be in place to measure success in the short, medium and long term.</p>	<p>All the objectives set in Chapter Two of the NTP 2000 have been met and surpassed. One of its nine short term objectives is to provide at least 1,200,000 mobile lines in two years. Another illustration is that one of its medium term objectives is to create a strong regulatory environment, while its position on local production of equipment is still an ambition. Therefore the review will re-evaluate the existing objectives and review them with set timelines.</p>
<p>Policy Proposal 2</p> <p>We propose to review Chapter Three (3) on Industry Structure to address sector evolution and properly outline nomenclatures and functions within an</p>	<p>The current structure makes provisions for Government; Ministry of Communications;</p>

<p>ecosystem that is more complex and cross cutting than it was in 2000. Stakeholders' comments and recommendations are invited in this regard.</p>	<p>Nigerian Communications Commission; and Telecommunications Service Providers. Under Government it included the National Frequency Management Council, that was eventually set up under Section 26 of the Nigerian Communications Act 2003 as well as a bouquet of communications services that have been overtaken by market evolution.</p>
<p>Policy Proposal 3</p> <p>We propose to review Chapter Four (4) on Competition Policy to further highlight the uniqueness of competition management in the Nigerian Communications Sector. Stakeholders are invited to make comments on the sufficiency or otherwise of current economic regulation and competition management framework, as well as policy measures needed to enhance competition and competitiveness of the sector.</p>	<p>This Chapter made limited provision for interconnection, licensing, anti-competition and ownership. The current market dynamics arguably demand a more elaborate policy direction on competition management in the Nigerian Communications Sector.</p>
<p>Policy Proposal 4</p> <p>We propose to review Chapter Five (5) on Restructuring and Privatization and to replace the entire Chapter with the theme of 'Manpower and Capacity Development' so as to enhance economic growth and national competitiveness through policy reform. Stakeholders' views are requested in this regard.</p>	<p>The current Chapter Five (5) is a transitional aspect of the Policy as it relates to restructuring of government enterprises, privatization of NITEL/MTEL and managing the staff after the process, which has since been completed.</p> <p>Secondly, the Policy Impact Analysis (PIA) conducted by the MTC has shown</p>

	gaps in manpower development and capacity building within the Sector.
<p>Policy Proposal 5</p> <p>We propose to update Chapter Six (6) on Economic Regulation as it relates to interconnection, access to infrastructure, tariff regulation and sustainable market practices. Stakeholder comments and suggestions are invited on the ideal policy direction in this regard.</p>	<p>The current Chapter Six (6) made some allusion to rebalancing NITEL tariff as well as legacy challenges. Therefore, a review will bring up Policy guidance on managing a matured market that has gone beyond initial liberalisation challenges.</p>

Policy Proposal 6

We propose to review Chapter Seven (7) on the Internet to accommodate Online Safety, deepen Internet Exchange protocols, content moderation and outline policy directions on online platforms, digital services and activities within Nigeria. Comments are invited on the appropriate strategies to refocus the Policy to address current dynamics and diversity of platforms.

The current Chapter Seven (7) set out four strategies on the Internet and are reproduced below, for comparison vis-a-vis the current era.

- Government shall encourage the provision of the elaborate infrastructure required to have fast and reliable Internet access through institutional and private sector participation.
- Government shall encourage the development of Internet content that will promote the social, economic and political development of Nigeria.
- Government shall continue to closely monitor the emerging applications of the Internet in areas such as banking, telephony as well as e-commerce and enact appropriate legislation and incentives that will encourage their use to promote rapid socio-economic development.
- Government shall promote the use of the Internet in health, agriculture, education and research, and encourage private sector participation in this project.

Clearly these strategies must be refocused to meet the current challenges on internet service provisioning and outlier service provisioning on platforms and online services.

<p>Policy Proposal 7</p> <p>A comprehensive Review of Chapter Eight (8) on Satellite Communications is necessary to provide a Policy framework for satellite harmonization, upper and lower stream service provisioning, cohabitation between terrestrial and non-terrestrial services as well as a policy mapping on spectrum management between different segments. Comments are invited on this proposal, as well as on suggested imperatives for ensuring that the sector's spectrum policies achieve the objectives of ensuring improved quality of consumer experience, universal (cost-effective) connectivity and the achievement of government's overarching objectives .</p>	<p>The current Chapter Seven (8) set out four strategies on satellite communications and are reproduced below, for emphasis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government shall support and encourage institutional and private sector participation in all satellite systems including RASCOM, • Government shall ensure the execution of all instruments related to GMPCS (ITU- GMPCS MOU) for Nigerians to derive full benefit from this technology, • Government shall encourage the development and launching of a Nigerian communications satellite system by the private sector within this decade • Government shall encourage the deployment of V-SAT systems to improve the delivery of telecommunications services throughout the country. <p>Clearly these strategies must be refocused to meet the current challenges on satellite service provisioning and cohabitation with terrestrial services.</p>
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<p>Policy Proposal 8</p> <p>We propose a comprehensive review of Chapter Nine (9) on Universal Access to update the policy direction on Universal Service and on ensuring meaningful connectivity for all throughout Nigeria. The review will also address issues of digital literacy, supply and demand-side interventions for deepening connectivity, inclusivity for vulnerable groups and sustainable funding for the Universal Service Provision Fund. Comments are invited on these and other suggested policy proposals for enhancing access to digital services throughout Nigeria.</p>	<p>The whole provisions of Chapter Nine (9) is hinged on universal access (bearing in mind the extant issues at the time the Policy was formulated. There is a need to expand both the context and approaches outlined in the Chapter to reflect current challenges and aspirations.</p>
<p>Policy Proposal 9</p> <p>We propose a wholesome review of Chapter Ten (10) on Financing and Funding. Stakeholder recommendations can focus on appropriate monetary and fiscal support necessary to stimulate growth across all segments of the Nigerian Communications Sector (particularly vis-à-vis ongoing tax and fiscal policy reforms of the Federal Government. Recommended Policy imperatives for overcoming sectoral challenges such as multiple taxation and regulations are also invited.</p>	<p>The current Chapter Ten (10) sets out strategies on monetary and fiscal support and are reproduced below, for comparison vis-a-vis the current era:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government shall provide incentives to investors to enable them grow rapidly and efficiently. Such incentives shall include: • Taxes and import duties shall be no less attractive than those for essential electrical and electronic goods; Fiscal incentives shall be provided to encourage the local manufacture of telecommunications equipment and development of related software. • Simplification of procedures and requirements for the importation of telecommunications equipment. • Granting of pioneer status to qualified investors in the telecommunications sectors.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government will ensure that licenses granted for operation in profitable areas may include obligations for provision of telecommunications services in rural or less profitable locations; and • Government shall ensure that the NCC simplifies licensing and regulation procedure to encourage rapid inflow of private investment. <p>Clearly these strategies must be refocused to meet the current fiscal and monetary challenges in the Sector.</p>
<p>Policy Proposal 10</p> <p>The review proposes to refocus Chapter Eleven (11) on Research and Development to align with trends and set out research incentives and outcome management for the Sector. Recommendations are invited in this regard</p>	<p>The current Chapter Eleven (11) built on early research and development that will trigger growth. The market has matured to a level that Research and Development needs to be deliberate and well guided through policy guidance.</p>

<p>Policy Proposal 11</p> <p>Chapter Thirteen (13) on Domestic Hardware and Software Development will be refocused to Local Content Development and Indigenous participation that can drive both Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and Local Direct Investment (LDI). Comments/recommendations are invited in this regard</p>	<p>There is a need to outline a policy direction on local content in manufacturing, software development and indigenous participation to meet national economic growth objectives.</p>
<p>Policy Proposal 12</p> <p>We propose to refocus Chapter Fourteen (14) on Safety and National Security to address Cyber Security imperatives and modern approaches to meeting ever-evolving national security imperatives on communications and digital platforms. Recommendations for updating the Chapter are welcome.</p>	<p>The Issuance of a National Cyber Security Policy Strategy in 2014 and its review in 2021, has made cyber security an integral and indispensable aspect of the digital economy and national security.</p>
<p>Policy Proposal 13</p> <p>The review proposes to expand Chapter Fifteen (15) on International Cooperation to clearly outline the imperatives for leveraging both National and International Collaboration to address the expansive challenges of communications. This review will take into consideration the potential areas of overlaps nationally and open areas for cooperation with other jurisdictions across the globe, and stakeholder perspectives in this regard will be appreciated.</p>	<p>The growth of the Nigerian Communications Market has made collaboration, both nationally and internationally, a necessary policy and regulatory requirement. Hence there is a need to set out clear policy objectives, expectations and guidance in that regard.</p>

Policy Proposal 14

We propose to redraft Chapter Sixteen (16) on Policy Implementation and Review by charting a detailed Implementation matrix, milestones, dependencies and responsible parties/entities. It will also set a definitive timeline for the next review of the Policy. We look forward to recommendations in this regard.

The current Chapter Sixteen (16) set out three implementation strategies and policy review and are reproduced below, for emphasis:

Policy Implementation

The National Telecommunications Policy shall be implemented through the following instruments:

- An implementation machinery shall be set in motion immediately after approval of the policy;
- A National Telecommunications Forum shall be organized by the Ministry of Communications with the participation of relevant organizations and stakeholders; and
- Annual reports on telecommunications development in Nigeria shall be prepared and published by the Ministry of Communications.

Policy Review

The policy shall be reviewed from time to time by government to take cognizance of changes in standards, technologies, markets, and any other matters that may arise from its implementation.

The redraft will add a detailed Implementation matrix, milestones, dependencies and responsible parties/entities. It will also set a definitive timeline for the next review of the Policy.

<p>Policy Proposal 15</p> <p>We propose a new Chapter on Broadband Objectives, Critical National Infrastructure protection, harmonization of Right of Ways (RoWs) across tiers of government and One-Stop permitting process for the Communications Sector within the Federal, State and Local Governments in Nigeria.</p>	<p>The Policy Impact Analysis (PIA) conducted by the MTC has shown several gaps on broadband, harmonization of permits and approvals, protection of Critical National Information Infrastructure (CNII). Therefore this new Chapter is intended to close the identified gaps and enhance the Policy's effectiveness.</p>

4. Policy Consultation Process

Interested Stakeholders are invited to respond to this Consultation Paper within for thirty (30) days from the date of its publication on the Commission's website . The expected feedback will guide the review and amendment of the NTP in line with the expectations of Section 24 of the NCA, 2003. The Process is open to licensees in the Nigerian Communications Sector, consumers, agencies of government, international agencies/partners/entities, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), Individuals and other interested stakeholders.

5. Submission and Feedback Process

All feedback and comments on this Consultation Paper should be submitted via email to stakeholders@ncc.gov.ng on or before **Friday March 20, 2026.**

Feedback and comments should please be submitted using the Feedback and Comment

Template in the Schedule to this Consultation Paper. Additional comments and/or supporting documentations can be sent as attachments to the mail. The subject of the mail should contain the specific name of the Consultation Paper.

6. Conclusion

This Consultation Process will lead to the development of the First Draft of the National Telecommunications Policy 2026 to replace the existing NTP (after twenty five years of implementation). The Draft will also undergo further consultations to enable stakeholders make more inputs before a Final Draft will be subjected to the statutory Policy approval and validation processes. Hence, this is a first step in the consultation process and there will be other layers of engagements, to ensure that the Final Draft accommodates varied expertise, feedback and inputs from a cross section of stakeholders. Thus, Stakeholders are implored to take the opportunity to participate in developing the Policy that will take the communications sector to the next level after the immeasurable successes attained since 2000.

Dated: February 9, 2026

Dr. Aminu Maida

EVC/CEO

Nigerian Communications Commission

Abuja, Nigeria.

Schedule



Feedback & Comments Response Template

Please complete this form in full and return to stakeholders@ncc.gov.ng

Consultation Paper	
Name of Respondent	
Mobile Number/Contact Number	
Representation (If on behalf of any Organization or entity)	
Name of Organization/Company/Licensee	
Nature of Industry/Business/Licence	

Website & Email Address	
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Confidentiality & Restrictions	
Do you want all your comments/responses published?	Yes/No
Do you want all your comments/responses kept confidential?	Yes/No
Do you want some of your comments/responses kept confidential? Please specify below	Yes/No
Please specify Questions to be kept Confidential	

Specific Responses

Policy Proposal	Response/Comment
Policy Proposal 1 Expand the objectives of the Policy in Chapter Two (2) of the NTP to accommodate new objectives, remove outdated ones and include current challenges.	
Policy Proposal 2 Review Chapter Three (3) on Industry Structure to meet the changes in the Sector and properly outline nomenclatures and functions within an ecosystem that is more complex and cross cutting than it was in 2000.	

Policy Proposal 3 Review of Chapter Four (4) on Competition Policy to further highlight the uniqueness of competition management in the Nigerian Communications Sector.	
Policy Proposal 4 Review of Chapter Five (5) on Restructuring and Privatization and replacing the entire Chapter with the theme of 'Manpower and Capacity Development'.	
Policy Proposal 5 Review of Chapter Six (6) on Economic Regulation as it relates to interconnection, access to infrastructure, tariff regulation and sustainable market practices.	
Policy Proposal 6 Review of Chapter Seven (7) on the Internet to accommodate Online Safety, deepen Internet Exchange protocols, content moderation and outline policy directions on online platforms, digital services and activities within Nigeria.	
Policy Proposal 7 Comprehensive Review of Chapter Eight (8) on Satellite Communications to provide a Policy framework for satellite harmonization, upper and lower stream service provisioning, cohabitation between terrestrial and non-terrestrial services as well as a policy mapping on spectrum management between different segments.	
Policy Proposal 8 Comprehensive review of Chapter Nine (9) on Universal Access to accommodate clear policy direction on Universal Service. The review will also add digital literacy, inclusivity of vulnerable groups and sustainable funding for the Universal Service Provision Fund.	
Policy Proposal 9 A wholesome review of Chapter Ten (10) on Financing and Funding to focus on monetary and fiscal support to the Nigerian Communications Sector.	
Policy Proposal 10 The review will refocus Chapter Eleven (11) on Research and Development to align with trends and set out research incentives and outcome management for	

the Sector.	
Policy Proposal 11 Chapter Thirteen (13) on Domestic Hardware and Software Development will be refocused to Local Content Development and Indigenous participation that can drive both Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and Local Direct Investment (LDI).	
Policy Proposal 12 Chapter Fourteen (14) on Safety and National Security will be refocused to Cyber Security as well as modern approaches to meeting ever evolving national security imperatives.	
Policy Proposal 13 The review will expand Chapter Fifteen (15) on International Cooperation to clearly outline both National and International Collaboration in meeting the expansive challenges of communications. This review will take consideration the potential areas of overlaps nationally and open areas for cooperation with other jurisdictions across the globe.	
Policy Proposal 14 The review will redraft Chapter Sixteen (16) on Policy Implementation and Review by charting a detailed Implementation matrix, milestones, dependencies and responsible parties/entities. It will also set a definitive timeline for the next review of the Policy.	
Policy Proposal 15 The review will draft a new Chapter on Broadband Objectives, Critical National Infrastructure, harmonization of Right of Ways (RoWs) across tiers of government and One-Stop permitting process for the Communications Sector within the Federal, state and local governments in Nigeria.	

General Comments/Additional Responses

Please complete this form in full and return to stakeholders@ncc.gov.ng