

SPECTRUM WORKING GROUP PRESENTATION BY ENGR. ABRAHAM OSHADAMI

**ALLIANCE FOR AFFORDABLE INTERNET – NIGERIA
COALITION MEETING, NOVEMBER 24, 2015
AT THE CROWN PLAZA HOTEL, VI, LAGOS-NIGERIA**

TABLE OF CONTENT

- 1. INTRODUCTION**
- 2. MANDATE OF THE SPECTRUM WORKING GROUP**
- 3. WORK UNDERTAKEN/CURRENT OUTPUTS**
- 4. ACCOMPLISHMENTS TO DATE**
- 5. CHALLENGES**
- 6. RECOMMENDATIONS/CONCLUSION**

INTRODUCTION

The Alliance for Affordable Internet (A4AI) brings together prominent players from the private sector, public sector, and civil society to provide a unified voice and coordinated focus in addressing the shared goals of open, affordable access to the internet in the developing world.

The Alliance aims to increase the affordability of both mobile and fixed-line Internet access dramatically, with a focus on achieving the UN Broadband Commission Broadband Target of entry-level broadband services priced at less than 5% of average monthly income.

The A4AI-Nigeria Coalition forum identified a number of priority issues one of which is Spectrum policy and regulation identified as a challenge aimed at ***“Making more widely available Spectrum to Nigerian Stakeholders, including ease for small entrepreneurs to innovate and provide affordable access solutions in underserved areas”***.

MANDATE OF SPECTRUM WG

The A4AI-Nigeria Coalition forum identified a number of priority issues one of which is Spectrum policy and regulation identified as a challenge aimed at ***“Making more widely available Spectrum to Nigerian Stakeholders, including ease for small entrepreneurs to innovate and provide affordable access solutions in underserved areas”***.

WORK UNDERTAKEN/CURRENT OUTPUTS

1. Comprehensive policy recommendation to regulator addressing the following items
 - Transparency around spectrum assignment
 - Shared users licensing strategies
 - Accelerated development of white space regulations
 - Reduce Cost based discrimination of operation across states

WORK UNDERTAKEN/CURRENT OUTPUTS

2. New Policy and Regulatory Support to facilitate the ability of small enterprises to make use of unlicensed Spectrum. (Identifying incentives for small enterprises).
3. Proposed White Space Regulations. (This is being developed by the NCC- with A4AI feeding into the process by providing international best practices; feeding into Africa Spectrum).
4. National Network of Communities ISPs/Service Providers, experimenting with innovative technologies under Licence/ Authorization Agreement.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS TO DATE

- Spectrum WORKING GROUP is constantly monitoring the Progress of TVWS Trial Deployment in Nigeria as the process of developing the necessary framework is being coordinated by the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC)
- The push by the Broadband Council for the release of more spectrum by the National Frequency Management Council and NCC is bearing fruit as the Commission successfully auctioned the 2.3GHz spectrum band to Bitflux Communications in February 2014 and more are being planned with the approval and the opening up of 70/80 GHz bands for use to aid broadband deployment in Nigeria.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS TO DATE

- Other initiatives to further license some more bands for Broadband all these are closely being monitored by members of the Spectrum Working Group.

CHALLENGES OF SPECTRUM WG

Spectrum – the poor/non-optimized management of spectrum was identified as potential obstacle to undermine the efforts of broadband access and affordability in Nigeria.

RECOMMENDATION/CONCLUSION OF SPECTRUM WG

- Nigeria has been a pioneer in making spectrum licences available, policymakers could do more to ensure that policy and regulation keep pace with technological change.
- To encourage creative use of spectrum such as Wi-fi and Television White Spaces as this will make it easier for smaller and new operators to enter the market.
- Start-ups deploying new technologies can inexpensively use Wi-fi spectrum to provide broadband coverage by which it will greatly expand access, particularly in rural areas where large operators do not provide coverage because of its non-viability in terms of profitability for them to do so.
- Develop a study/brief looking at how much it costs to operate an unlicensed spectrum business in the provision of affordable access and the impact on local development

RECOMMENDATION/CONCLUSION OF SPECTRUM WG

- Support the establishment of a network of unlicensed wireless providers to develop and present a sound business strategy to the Federal Ministry of Communications Technology (FMCT) and the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) this could be done through the existing registration process/tool that the NCC has to get people to register to know who is providing services

CONCLUSION

- To increase access a pilot programme has been considered as a critical step towards making affordable wireless connectivity available to rural communities across the country especially the unserved and underserved areas with Universal Service Provision Fund (USPF) driving the process.
- Nigerian Frequency Management Council (NFMC) has approved the release of more frequency spectrum to aid widespread deployment of broadband services for providing low-cost connectivity, connecting rural areas to broadband, improving the building of wireless networks, creating hotspots for internet access, and offloading mobile traffic led to adopting of the pilot TV whitespace (TVWS) technology in Nigeria.

Thank you for listening
A4AI-SPECTRUM WORKING GROUP