



STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTATIVE FORUM ON CO-LOCATION
INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT (CIP) FOR TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND
OTHER ICT SERVICES

**OPENING SPEECH BY THE EXECUTIVE VICE CHAIRMAN,
NIGERIAN COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION**

The Vice Chairman, USPF Board
USP Board Members,
Staff, Press,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to welcome you all to this stakeholders' consultative meeting on Co-location Infrastructure Project (CIP) for telecommunications and other ICT services provision.

The project is aimed at facilitating the construction of passive (shareable) infrastructures such as Mast/Tower, Perimeter fence, Generator, Storage tank for fuel, Shelter, etc, at the request of willing and capable proponents (Operators, communities, NGO's or private entrepreneurs) for the purpose of extending telecommunications and ICT services to unserved and underserved communities in Nigeria.

The CIP project is being proposed as part of the USPF Accelerated Mobile Phone Expansion (AMPE) project. The USPF in July last year initiated and placed advertisements in major Daily Newspapers requesting for wireless telecommunications operators to submit proposals for the award of subsidy to facilitate the construction of Base Transceiver Station (BTS) in unserved and underserved locations across Nigeria. The BTS project was designed to take advantage of the opportunity that the ease of deployment of wireless based technologies present to encourage the rapid deployment of mobile communication and associated ICT services to rural communities. The first set of twenty-eight (28) BTSs has been completed under this initiative and will provide access to not less than 100 communities and villages across Nigeria.

To further consolidate on the progress made in implementing the BTS project, the USPF deemed it necessary to also provide subsidy to support

the provision of co-location infrastructures in unserved/underserved communities so as to stimulate competition and reduce operating cost of ICT services provisioning in rural Nigeria. The CIP Project will also reduce or eliminate the need for each services provider to construct and own individual Mast/Towers, generators, etc and reduce the usual concerns about associated impact on the environment. In today's businesses where it is increasingly becoming best practice to out-source services, co-location and infrastructure sharing is increasingly becoming the popular option to adopt in ICT services delivery. It enables ICT Providers focus more on their core business of ICT provisioning and thereby improving overall operational efficiency.

It is for the above reasons that the NCC has always encouraged ICT services providers to co-locate and share infrastructure and take advantage of the immense benefits derivable from doing so.

To encourage ICT providers to collocate and share infrastructure and to address fears and mitigating factors such as security, sabotage, anti-competition, etc raised by Telecommunications Operators regarding collocation and Infrastructure sharing, the Commission published guidelines for collocation and infrastructure sharing as well as developed technical specifications for the installation of telecommunications Masts/Towers. Having put in place the appropriate regulatory framework, it is envisioned that this will facilitate and accelerate co-location infrastructure provisioning across the country.

The USPF CIP project is in tandem with the Commission's policy on collocation and infrastructure sharing and we would provide any necessary enabling regulatory environment to make the initiative a success.

It is important to emphasize that one of the key success factors for the project is **TRUST** between the operators and the infrastructure providers (Host). This has been identified as a major challenge for a successful co-location infrastructure project. The Commission will continue to provide appropriate oversight that will allay the fears of operators and discourage any form of anti-competitive behaviours.

The USPF intervention became expedient considering the amount of human and material resources that are needed for constructing and maintaining such infrastructure components by individual operators especially in rural areas. These are infrastructure components that are

otherwise shareable and for which the associated cost and risks can be shared. The savings by operators from co-locating with other operators could be deployed to provide additional network capacity in terms of switching, transmission, etc that will enhance their network performance and QoS. The benefits can also be transferred to subscribers in terms of better coverage and tariff reduction. It will obviously be a win-win situation for the operators the co-location providers and the subscribers if the project is fully embraced by all stakeholders.

The USPF shall be guided by the objective of covering all the states of the Federation in implementing the CIP project. However, areas of need will take precedence over other considerations in determining the co-location sites to be awarded USPF subsidy. However subsidy award shall be output-based. Hence, proponents shall be selected for the award of subsidies through a competitive tender process.

The project concept to intending proponents will be presented at this consultative stakeholders meeting to afford proponents the opportunity to make contributions and inputs to the process that will enhance the success of project, and suggestions made on the best possible approach to be adopted for the provision of co-location infrastructure facilities in underserved and unserved parts of the country. This forum is also aimed at giving opportunity to proponents to seek clarifications on issues and concerns they may have regarding the project implementation process. The USPF welcomes ideas and suggestions that will contribute to the successful implementation of the project.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I welcome you once more to this consultative forum and wish us all fruitful deliberations.

Thank you.

ERNEST C. A. NDUKWE