

# ANALOGUE TO DIGITAL SWITCHOVER FOR THE BROADCASTING SECTOR:

THE CURRENT POSITION

NATIONAL BROADCASTING COMMISSION  
NIGERIA

The **NBC** recognises the following facts on **digitisation**:

- It is an important global movement driven by the **International Telecommunications Union, ITU**
- **Digitisation** improves the quality of reception and ensures a more efficient use of the spectrum
- The transition to digital terrestrial broadcasting will affect all segments in the broadcasting chain namely:
  - content production
  - transmission
  - and reception

## The NBC as the arrow head of the digitization process in Nigeria :

- attended several fora in and outside Africa organized for this transition, notably South Africa and Great Britain
- organized several meetings with all the Stakeholders in terrestrial television transmission. These are :
  - Content Producers
  - Cable Operators (MMDS)
  - DSB and DTH Operators,
  - Open Television Stations (Federal, State, and Private )

The **NBC** , in November 2007, briefed the 38<sup>th</sup> National Council on Information and Communications in Jos on the following:

- The imperatives of **Digitisation**
- Urgent need for the nation to take advantage of this inevitable global phenomenon

In December 2007, His Excellency The late President Umaru Musa 'Yar-adua graciously approved the following:

- **NBC** should set in motion, and pilot, Nigeria's digitisation programme
- The target date for Nigeria's transition to digital terrestrial transmission
- The target date is **17<sup>th</sup> of June, 2012**

In a forward looking manner, **NBC**

- encouraged cable (MMDS) and DTH operators to digitise their operations.
- ensures that all MMDS, DTH, and DBS in Nigeria are now transmitting digital signals.

## STAKEHOLDERS' CONFERENCE

On June 3<sup>rd</sup> 2008 the **Commission** hosted a Stakeholders' Conference attended by the following :

- The Hon. Minister of Information and Communications as the Chairman
- Chairman, Senate Committee on Media
- Chairman, House Committee on Information
- Chief Executives of Federal and State Governments-owned, as well as Privately owned, Broadcasting Stations

Others in the Conference are:

- Policy Makers, Law Makers, Non-Governmental Organisations
- The General Public from across the nation

The total number of Participants were over 400

The Stakeholders took the following decisions:

- endorsed the necessity for Nigeria to take advantage of the global **Digitisation** movement
- urged government to drive the process through policy by providing the necessary and enabling infrastructure
- set up a digitisation implementation Task Force and provide it with adequate funds to midwife the transition

The Conference also advised that for a successful transition, broadcasters will need to overcome the following challenges:

- Digital compliant studio equipment
- Content provision to populate new channels
- New coverage planning and co-ordination
- Training for its personnel
- Public awareness

Furthermore, the Conference advises the following:

- Government has the greatest role to play in actualising the transition
- Government has to lead the movement by fashioning out appropriate policy on methodology and pace of transition
- Assist Nigerians in the acquisition of **set-top boxes** for existing receivers already in the country
- Generally giving direction to the industry in the interest of the nation

The conference concluded that the **NBC** has the following tasks:

- Educating the **Operators** and the **Public** on the implications of
  - the switchover
  - the social benefits
  - the timetable
- Execute a planned transition strategy, and midwife it up to the switch off of the analogue systems

NBC is also expected to:

- select the best standards that will give the most benefit to consumers
- set specifications for receivers to be acquired
- enforce an adequately publicised and properly phased roll out dates
- ensuring the availability of required equipment
- insist on systems synergy to permit consumer mobility between providers, etc.

Soon after the stakeholders' meeting ,**NBC** :

- Launched a sustained publicity in the press, radio and television to sensitise the public on the implications of **Digitisation** and what is expected of the various sectors.
- Conducted various studies through its Broadcast Policy and Research Directorate and submitted the reports.
- Organized several retreats , both in-house and public

## AFRICAST 2008

In October 2008 **NBC**:

Hosted its bi-annual conference, **Africast 2008**, which:

- took place between 21<sup>st</sup> and 23rd October, 2008
- had as its theme; **Digitisation and the Challenges of Broadcasting**

## PRESIDENTIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ( PAC )

On 13<sup>th</sup> October, 2008, the Federal Government set up a **Presidential Advisory Committee on Transition from Analogue to Digital Broadcasting in Nigeria (PAC)**

It was inaugurated by the then **Hon Minister of Information and Communications, Mr John Ogar Odey**, with the following *Terms of Reference*:

- Recommend a policy on digital terrestrial broadcast transition using global best practices.
- Recommend appropriate regulatory framework.



*PAC Terms of Reference, cont'd :*

- Recommend a National Broadcasting Model.
- Assess impact of digitization on the consumers and recommend possible government intervention
- Determine the quantum of expected digital dividend
- Assess environmental impact of digitization, if any, and recommend steps to be taken
- Advice government on any action relevant to smooth transition in Nigeria

**PAC MEMBERSHIP**

Chairman of **PAC** was **Engr. Isaac Wakombo**, a former Director of Engineering of the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA)

**PAC** also included veterans and serving broadcast engineers, professionals in broadcasting, telecommunication and allied fields

Different sectors were represented, which included the following Ministries, Departments, Agencies and Corporate Organizations :

1. Ministry of Information & Communications
2. National Broadcasting Commission (NBC)

**PAC MEMBERSHIP *cont'd***

3. Nigerian Television Authority (NTA)
4. Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN)
5. National Film & Video Census Board (NFVCB)
6. Ministry of Science & Technology
7. Ministry of Environment
8. Consumer Protection Council (CPC)
9. NewAge Network Kaduna
10. Nigerian Communications Satellite (NigComSat)
11. Nigerian Customs Service
12. SPEX. Nig. LTD
13. Delta Cables (ACON)
14. Silverbird Communications PLC

**PAC MEMBERSHIP *cont'd***

15. DAAR Communications PLC
16. Nigerian Film Corporation
17. Nigerian Communications Commission
18. Nigerian Copyright Commission
19. The Guardian Newspapers
20. Kemilinks International
21. Members of the public

## ACTIVITIES OF PAC

- Held two retreats to examine every aspect of the digitisation process and its implications critically
- The first retreat was held between 26<sup>th</sup> October and 1<sup>st</sup> November 2008
- The second was between 23<sup>rd</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> March 2009
- Both retreats were in MicCom Golf Resort, Ibokun Road, Ada, Osun State, Nigeria
- Held several meetings in the boardroom of NBC

## ACTIVITIES OF PAC cont'd

- An Executive Report was prepared and submitted to the Hon Minister of Information and Communications, Prof. Dora Akunyili on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2009. A summary of the recommendations to Government are given below:
  - Adoption of a new policy and regulatory framework in the broadcasting sector
  - Splitting of broadcasting services into Broadcast Content Provision and Broadcasting Signal Distribution
  - Single vs Multiple Broadcasting Signal Distributors

## **ACTIVITIES OF PAC cont'd**

- Backbone of the Broadcasting Signal Distributor
- Ownership Structure of the Broadcasting Signal Distributor
- Obligations of the Broadcasting Signal Distributor
- Restructuring of the licensing framework in the broadcasting sector
- Regulatory Framework to Guide Licensing of DTT Services

## **ACTIVITIES OF PAC cont'd**

- Reestablishment of the Public Broadcaster
- Management of the Spectrum Dividend
- Single Frequency Network vs Multiple Frequency Network
- Convergence
- Technical Standards
- Set Top Boxes

## **ACTIVITIES OF PAC cont'd**

- Development of the Content Industry in Nigeria
  - i Intellectual Property Rights
  - ii Awareness Programme for the respect of Intellectual Property
  - iii Collaboration between agencies
  - iv Creative works at tertiary institutions

## **CURRENT POSITION**

### **ACCEPTANCE OF REPORT AND WHITE PAPER**

Nigeria is now moving into the next stage of the process. This includes :

- Government consideration and acceptance of the PAC report
- The production of a White Paper
- The proposal of the appropriate bills to the National Assembly.

## **CURRENT POSITION cont'd**

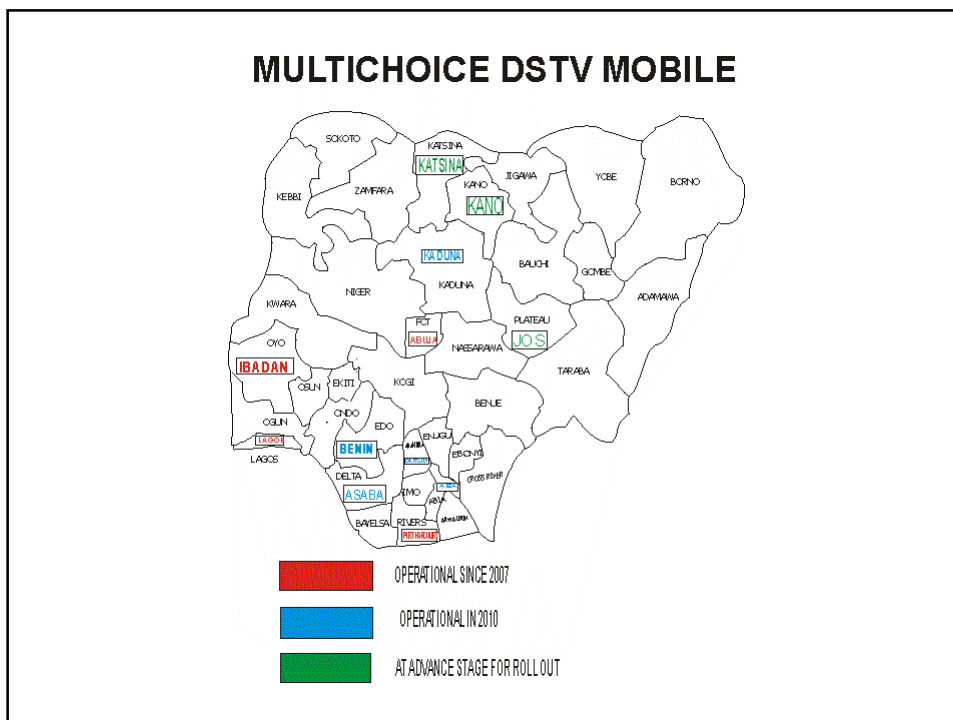
### **DIGITISATION OF CABLE AND DTH OPERATIONS**

- MMDS (DVB-C ) operations and transmissions are digital
- DTH and DSB (DVB-S) operations and transmissions are digital
- Multi-Choice (DSTV) Hand-Held, (DVB-H), has been in operation since 2007 in the following locations:
  - Abuja
  - Lagos
  - Port-Harcourt
  - Ibadan

## **CURRENT POSITION cont'd**

### **DIGITISATION OF CABLE AND DTH OPERATIONS**

- The following locations started operations in 2010:
  - Kaduna
  - Asaba
  - Aba
  - Onitsha
  - Benin
- The following locations are scheduled to come on air soon:
  - Jos
  - Kano
  - Katsina



## CURRENT POSITION cont'd

### PILOT DVB-T PROJECT

- A pilot project on DVB-T , **StarTimes**, whose idea was hatched in Africast-2008,
- incubated by **NBC** ,
- and nurtured by **NTA** and **Star Communications** of China,
- was commissioned on 29<sup>th</sup> , July 2010 as **NTA-Star TV** by the Vice-President, Arc. Muhammadu Namadi Sambo on behalf of the President, Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan.

## **CURRENT POSITION cont'd**

### **PILOT DVB-T PROJECT**

- The DVB-T in Lagos transmits 36 programmes simultaneously
- The DVB-T in Abuja transmits 36 programmes simultaneously
- The DVB-T in Kano transmits 36 programmes simultaneously
- The DVB-T in Port Harcourt transmits 36 programmes simultaneously
- The DVB-T in Kaduna transmits 36 programmes simultaneously

- The DVB-T in Ibadan transmits 36 programmes simultaneously
- Other pilot projects are in advance stage in the following locations:
  - Onitsha
  - Sokoto
  - Benin
  - Aba
  - Enugu
  - Maiduguri
  - Yola



- Uyo
- Katsina
- Ilorin
- Jos
- Keffi
- Birnin-Kebbi
- Zaria

### NTA STAR TV ROLL OUT PLAN

