



**Mobile & Wireless  
Forum**



PRESENTATION

**NIGERIA: ADDRESSING ILLEGAL AND COUNTERFEIT MOBILE  
DEVICES**

**AT A JOINT ITU-MWF WEBINAR  
ON “COMBATING COUNTERFEIT AND IRREGULAR MOBILE  
DEVICES: HOW TO ADDRESS THE PROBLEM” MAY 31, 2021**

**BY**

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# BACKGROUND

- ❖ The Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) is the independent telecommunications regulator in Nigeria empowered by law to establish and enforce standards for all telecommunications equipment in operation in Nigeria to ensure seamless interoperability and compliance with universal standards.
- ❖ A considerable number of counterfeit ICT devices have found their way into global and local markets, raising concerns about national security, performance, quality of service delivery and potential revenue losses for all stakeholders. This has led to the call by ITU Member States, particularly those in developing countries to address the issue, especially its negative effects and to study the impact of measures taken to address it.

# NCC'S RESPONSE/INITIATIVE

- ❖ The NCC in collaboration with Mobile Wireless Forum (MWF) held an Industry Stakeholders Forum in 2015 and 2017.
- ❖ The objective of the engagement was to work towards developing recommendations that could influence decisions and policy directions, leading to solutions for combating counterfeit and substandard ICT devices in Nigeria.
- ❖ Consequently, Nigeria through the NCC, immediately constituted a Standing Committee to develop the required regulatory framework for identifying and isolating fake and counterfeit/non-type approved mobile devices in Nigeria.
- ❖ Accordingly, the Committee came up with an action plan comprising short, medium and long term measures in prevention, public education & enlightenment as well as punitive measures.

## NCC'S RESPONSE/INITIATIVE (CONT'D)

- The NCC as matter of policy identifies and engages relevant stakeholders on matters related to regulation as was the case in this instance.
- Consequently, various solution providers were consulted by the Commission and an in-depth study and benchmarking of successful cases of deployment of “Device Management Systems” were conducted in select countries.
- The aim of this exercise was to assess the facilities deployed by Telecommunication Regulatory Agencies in those countries and its adaptability to the Nigerian situation.

# STRATEGIES FOR COMBATING ILLEGAL AND COUNTERFEIT ICT DEVICES IN NIGERIA.

➤ From studies and engagements, Nigeria adopted a number of strategies to combat the inflow and use of counterfeit devices. These strategies include:

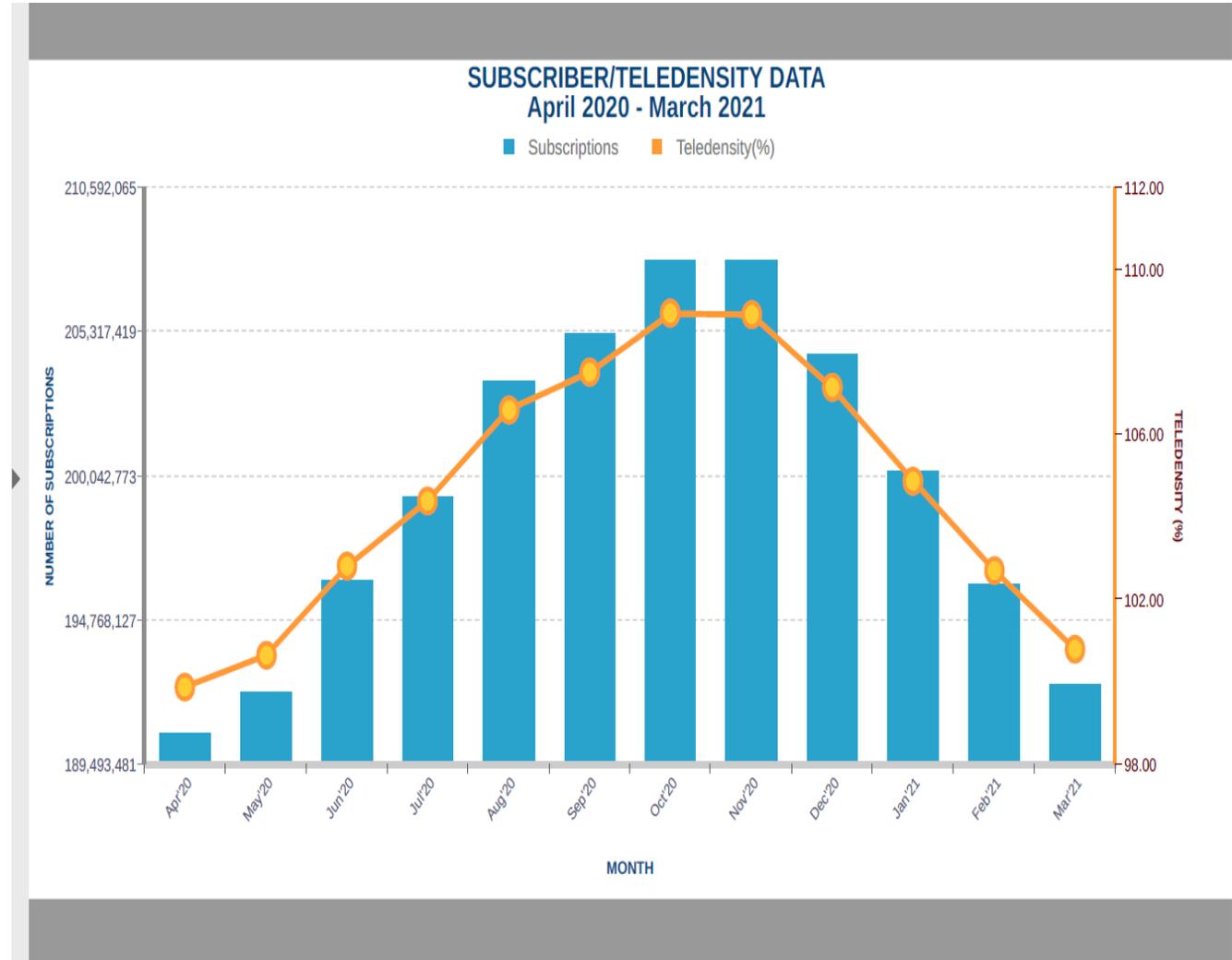
- ✓ Effective Regulation and efficient enforcement of the Equipment Type Approval processes.
- ✓ Strategic collaboration with all stakeholders within Nigeria and other international/Regional bodies such as the African Telecoms Union (ATU), ECOWAS, WATRA, GSMA, Mobile & Wireless Forum (MWF), Vendors, OEMs etc.
- ✓ Protecting consumer rights and enhancing cooperation with the industry.
- ✓ Deployment of empirical solution, the Device Management System (DMS).

# PROPOSED TRANSACTION MODEL

- The transaction model proposed by Nigeria in deploying the DMS is a Public-Private-Partnership (PPP) model.
- The DMS is expected to have the capability to address the proliferation of fake, counterfeit, substandard and cloned mobile devices in the telecommunications industry in Nigeria inline with ITU-T SG 11 recommendations (ITU-T Q 5050 and ITU-T Q 5051).

# NIGERIA SUBSCRIBER/TELEDENSITY DATA (APRIL 2020 – MARCH 2021)

- **SUBSCRIBERS: 192Million.**
- **TELEDENSITY: 100.80%.**
- ✓ Huge number of connected ICT Devices on the Nigeria Major Network Providers (Brands/Models).
- ✓ These include genuine, counterfeit/cloned devices.
- ✓ The DMS in Nigeria is key to checkmate use and sale of counterfeit devices on Nigeria networks.

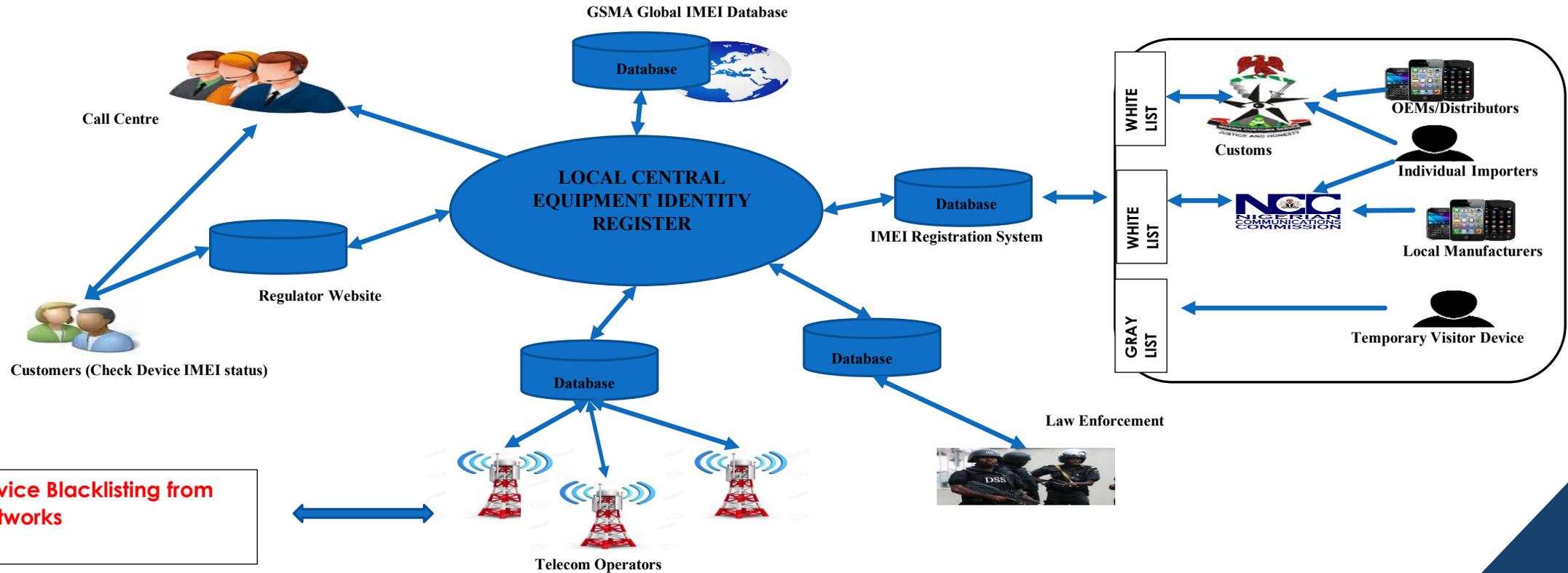


# FEATURES OF THE PROPOSED DMS

- The proposed DMS would automatically acquire the IMEI of all local ICT devices accessing the networks and synchronise with international databases of IMEI repositories to ensure device genuineness in Nigeria.
- The DMS will classify all devices on the basis of permissive and restrictive lists respectively. Only permissive devices will be allowed network access across all local providers.
- Restrictive list will be allowed to operate for a limited grace period to enable their owners acquire genuine devices after being duly advised to do so.
- The limited grace period will be determined in consultation with all internal stakeholders. It will be between 6 (six) months to 2 (two) years.
- Mobile Network Operators, Registered mobile phone technicians and other stakeholders may confirm the status (stolen, smuggled, illegal etc) devices on the basis of the permissive list.

# PARTICULARS OF THE DMS (CONT'D)

- The DMS shall provide dedicated access portals to other government agencies (Security, Customs, NSO etc) for inter-agency collaboration on security, import duties, equipment type-approval etc.



The implementation of the Device Management System (DMS) will be a phased process:

- ✓ ***PHASE 1: Create awareness campaign and undertake verification of mobile phones connected to the networks*** (signing a global database agreement with GSMA is being proposed meant to address the possible shifting of the counterfeit problem across the border to other countries)
- ✓ ***PHASE 2: phasing out of identified counterfeits noted but permitted a grace period for them to go out of service naturally.***
- ✓ ***PHASE 3: denial of services to new counterfeit phones;***
- ✓ ***PHASE 4: consolidating the project: scaling up to cover other facets to assist the security agencies etc.***

# CONCLUSION

- Counterfeit and substandard ICT devices represent huge societal problem given the centrality of mobile computing devices and phones in today's society.
- We believe that proactive regulatory frameworks and empirical digital solutions are needed to combat this menace. Nigeria's efforts in this direction will not only address insecurity in the country, it would also save the nation billions of Naira in revenue due to illegal importation while checkmating poor quality of service, health and safety of the consumer etc.

# REFERENCES

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- Status report to the Minister of Communications & Digital Economy on the proposed PPP project for the deployment of device management system (DMS) and activities of the project steering committee (PSC) and project delivery team (PDT) March, 2020.
- Status report on deployment Device Management System (DMS) presented at a tripartite meeting (NCS, ICRC & NCC) in ICRC headquarters Abuja in 2019.

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# ACRONYMS

- ICRC - Infrastructure Concession Regulatory Commission (ICRC)
- FMCDE – Federal Ministry of Communications and Digital Economy
- NCS – Nigeria Customs Services
- FMF – Federal Ministry of Finance
- BPP – Bureau for Public Procurement
- SON – Standard Organization of Nigeria

**THANK YOU**