Universal Service **Provision Fund**

Universal Service Provision Fund
Strategic Management Plan
2023-2027

Revised Version 1 - December 2024

Approved

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Abbreviations

Accelerated Mobile Phone Expansion	AMPE-
Average Revenue Per User	ARPU
Backbone Transmission Infrastructure	BTRAIN
Base Transceiver Station	BTS
Digital Nigeria Centre	DNC
Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development	FMARD
Fifth Generation	5G
Gross Domestic Product	GDP
Information Communications Technology	ICT
International Telecommunications Union	ITU
Local Government Areas	LGAs.
Long Term Evolution	LTE
National Digital Economy Policy and Strategy	NDEPS
National Primary Health Development Agency	NPHDA
Nigerian Communications Commission	NCC
Nigerian National Broadband Plan	NNBP
Quality of Experience	QoE.
Quality of Service	QoS
Rural Broadband Initiative	RUBI
School Knowledge Centre	SKC
Strategic Vision Plan	SVP
Tertiary Institution Digital Centre	TIDC
Tertiary Institution Knowledge Centre	TIKC
The Strategic Management Plan	SMP
Universal Access and Universal Service	UA/US
Universal Service Provision Fund	USPF
Very Small Aperture Terminal	VSAT

1. Background

1.1. Introduction

The Nigerian Communications Act 2003 mandated the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC or the Commission) to establish a Universal Service Provision Fund (USPF) to promote the widespread availability and usage of network services and application services throughout Nigeria by encouraging the installation of network facilities and the provision of network services and application services to institutions, in unserved, underserved areas or for underserved groups within the community. The Act also provided for the establishment of a Universal Service Provision (USP) Board and the USP Secretariat within the Commission to administer the Universal Service Provision Fund.

The Universal Access and Universal Service (UA/US) Regulations, 2007, were developed to provide a framework for the design and implementation of a system of universal access and universal service provision pursuant to the relevant sections of the Nigerian Communications Act, 2003.

The UA/US Regulations 2007, Part I, Section 2 states that "The ultimate objectives of the system of universal access and universal service provision described in sub-paragraph 1 of the Regulations are to:

- Promote greater social equity and inclusion for the people of Nigeria; and
- Contribute to national economic, social and cultural development of Nigeria

In addition, Section 36 of the Regulations requires the USP Secretariat to develop a Strategic Management Plan that shall include its long-term plans over a five-year period for the USP Board approval. The Strategic Management Plan (SMP) therefore guides the activities of the USP Secretariat in driving the USPF mandate.

The Strategic Management Plan (SMP) 2023-2027 builds on the foundations laid by previous SMPs, which covered the periods of 2007-2011, 2013-2017, and 2018-2022. Each of these plans were developed through extensive consultation with industry stakeholders and outlined specific goals, objectives, and strategies aimed at ensuring universal access to voice and data services across Nigeria. The plans also detailed various Universal Service Provision (USP) programmes and projects designed to achieve these goals, along with key performance indicators for each initiative.

As we approach the two-year mark of the current SMP, it is essential to conduct a comprehensive review to incorporate necessary changes and adaptations. This review will ensure that the strategies remain relevant and effective in addressing the evolving needs of the underserved, unserved and rural communities. By assessing the progress made and identifying areas for improvement, we can enhance the effectiveness of the SMP and better facilitate the achievement of the USP's objectives.

Following the review of the SMP 2023 - 2027, the development of the revised plan for 2023 - 2027 reflects our commitment to continuous improvement and responsiveness to the dynamic telecommunications landscape in Nigeria.

1.2. Overview of the SMP 2023-2027

The specific drivers of the SMP 2023 – 2027 are outlined below:

1.2.1. Vision

"ICT Access for All"

1.2.2. Mission

To facilitate universal service and access to ICT, through partnerships to stimulate development in rural, unserved and underserved communities.

1.2.3. Core Values

- o Integrity
- o Collaboration
- o Innovation
- o Service Excellence

1.2.4. Guiding Principles

The following principles have been formulated to provide guidance in the implementation of USPF Programmes and Projects:

- **Co-location/Infrastructure Sharing:** It shall be obligatory for operators/service providers to share all infrastructure supported by the USPF with other operators/service providers at reasonable prices.
- **Social Inclusion:** USPF programmes and projects shall be designed and implemented in a manner which ensures equitable and sustainable access to ICT services by vulnerable groups and disadvantaged interests i.e. the elderly, people living with disability, women and children in the community.
- **Geographic Coverage:** USPF programmes and projects shall be developed in all states of the federation to provide sustainable ICT access and connectivity to unserved, underserved communities and groups.
- **Promote Private Sector Investment:** USPF programmes and projects shall stimulate increased private sector investments in unserved and underserved areas.
- **Encourage Competition:** USPF programmes and projects will encourage competition between operators by using transparent and competitive mechanisms to allocate USPF financing and subsidies.
- **Promote Consumer Interest:** USPF programmes and projects will promote consumer interest by facilitating access to affordable, readily available and reliable ICT services.

- **Sustainability:** USPF will give priority to programmes and projects that are self-sustaining and do not require subsidies on a continuous basis.
- **Local Content: USPF will** give preference to competent indigenous facilities and service providers.
- **Foster Economic and Social Development:** USPF programmes and projects will stimulate productive use of ICTs for economic, social and cultural development.
- **Consultation, Transparency and Accountability:** USPF will develop and periodically update its programmes and projects through continuous public consultations with key stakeholders.
- **Quality of Service:** USPF will ensure compliance with Quality of Service standards with respect to its projects.
- **Technology Neutrality:** USPF programmes and projects will be technology neutral and allow the market to define the best technology solutions.

1.3. Key Universal Access and Service Definitions

The following are the proposed definitions of key universal access and service terms:

1.3.1. Universal Access

This means that 100% of a designated population can obtain at a minimum, public access to a particular service at a specified quality, through reasonably available and affordable public or community services. "Particular services" with respect to universal access means:

a) The ability to place a telephone call through a shared telephone that is within reasonable rate; and

   b) The ability to use the internet through a shared internet access point that is within a reasonable distance of a designated population.

1.3.2. Universal Coverage

This means that 100% of a designated population are:

   a) Covered by a useable cellular, mobile or fixed telephone signal,

   b) Reside within the coverage areas of a broadband network, and

   c) They are within a reasonable distance of a backbone interconnection point.

1.3.3. Universal Service

This means that 100% of a designated population can privately subscribe to and use a particular service at an affordable rate on an individual, household or institutional basis

1.3.4. Basic ICT Infrastructure

These are types of ICTs Infrastructure that may be approved by the USP Board for inclusion under universal access, universal coverage and universal service programmes.

1.3.5. Reasonable Distance

USPF operational plans and other USPF project documents may define minimum average distances for basic ICT infrastructure and services.

1.3.6. USPF Programmes

These are general framework initiatives aimed at achieving one or more USPF objectives, typically over the course of several years. USPF programmes will define specific targets in terms of specific ICT infrastructure and or services to be implemented in stages over a five-year period.

1.3.7. USPF Projects

These are the specific implementation activities carried out under USPF programmes. One or more projects may be implemented at the same time under a given USPF programme.

1.3.8. Smart Subsidies

These are one-time subsidies that are allocated using competitive tender procedures and that are granted to service providers and that are targeted to enable commercially unviable projects to become commercially viable.

1.3.9. Geographic Targeting/Classification

١.٣.٩.١. Served Areas

Geographic areas where universal coverage for a particular service can be obtained on demand.

١.٣.٩.٢. Underserved Areas

Geographic areas where there is some coverage for a particular basic service but cannot be obtained universally or where there are challenges of Quality-of-Service (QoS) / Quality of Experience (QoE).

١.٣.٩.٣. Unserved Areas

Geographic areas where universal coverage for a particular basic service cannot be obtained on demand.

١.٣.٩.٤. **Regional Clusters**

Regional clusters are groups of target areas which are clustered based on identified ICT needs and the type/class of infrastructure and/or service required to address the identified need.

1.3.10. Commercial Viability Classifications

١.٣.١٠.١. **Commercially Profitable Projects/Areas**

Projects or Areas that the USPF estimate to be commercially profitable on a sustainable basis and will not attract any USPF subsidy.

١.٣.١٠.٢. **Commercially unprofitable projects/Areas**

Projects that serve a designated population or area that the USPF estimates to be commercially profitable on a sustainable basis if the USPF provide a subsidy in a range to be defined by the fund.

١.٣.١٠.٣. **1.3.10.3 Commercially unviable projects/Areas**

A designated population or area that the USPF estimates to be commercially unviable on a sustainable basis only if:
a) USPF needs to provide a subsidy above the threshold range to be specified by the Fund, or
b) The project requires ongoing and long-term USPF subsidies.
USPF will initially not finance commercially unviable projects, except in limited cases when the USP Board agrees such project is a national priority.

١.٣.١٠.٤. **Market Efficiency Gap**

This refers to those areas where operators could provide service on a commercially sustainable basis without public sector subsidies but are yet to invest in or do not have plans to invest in within a reasonable period because of company plans/ priorities or because of policy, legal, regulatory or institutional barriers.

١.٣.١٠.٥. **Access Gap**

This refers to remote and rural areas where private operators will not invest in or provide service without public sector subsidies because they are not commercially sustainable due to high capital investment costs, high recurring operational costs and/ or insufficient demand or ability to pay.

1.4. USPF Strategic

1.4.1. Goal 1: Facilitate an enabling environment for Sustainable ICT

Objective:

Design incentives that would promote the rollout of sustainable ICT services in rural, unserved and underserved areas.

Strategies:

- Carry out relevant studies to determine the demand indices for different categories
- of ICT services within the country.
  Continuous consultation with stakeholders in the telecommunications industry to identify the issues that prevent the market from functioning effectively.
  Continuous consultation and collaboration with the Nigerian Communications Commission and relevant government agencies to design, plan and implement USPF programmes and projects.
- Facilitate programs that promote 21st century skills ICT literacy, internet literacy, data interpretation and analysis, website and applications development).

1.4.2. Goal 2: Promote universal access and universal service that facilitate ICT for development (ICT4D)

Objectives:

- Facilitate the availability and use of transmission infrastructure and connectivity to the national backbone in all Local Government Areas LGAs).
- Drive increasing access to community-based Information Communications Technology (ICT) services on a shared basis and provide a platform for universal service.

Strategies:

- Provide subsidies or other forms of incentives to eligible telecom operators and service providers to extend ICT transmission infrastructure to identified unserved and underserved areas.
- Explore opportunities to deploy a full suite of universal access and universal service initiatives to build utilisation and sustainability of ICT projects.
- Ensure the co-location and sharing of infrastructure subsidised by USPF.
  Continuous consultations and collaboration with government agencies, non-profit organisations, and community-based organisations to facilitate connectivity for development initiatives.

- Encourage community ownership of universal service projects and consequently, promote entrepreneurship in target communities.

1.4.3. Goal 3: Institutional Development
Objectives:

- Strengthen the USP Secretariat to deliver effectively on its mandate.
  Continuously update organizational processes, performance measurement systems
- and partnerships that allow the USP Secretariat to successfully monitor, evaluate and assess the impact of USPF programmes.

1.4.4. Goal 4 Sustainable collaboration with relevant stakeholders
Objectives:

− Facilitate support and obtain stakeholders buy-in to achieve the USPF mandate

Strategies:

1. Continuous engagement of relevant stakeholders
2. Creation of awareness and sensitisation of beneficiaries

1.4.5. Key Achievements of the SMP 2023 - 2027

The implementation of the SMP 2023-2027 commenced in 2023 and recorded achievements in the list of projects executed during the period as shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Projects executed by USPF between 2023 and 2024

S/N	Project Name	Project Description	Targets	Achievements
1.	Accelerated Mobile Phone Expansion – Base Transceiver Station (AMPE-BTS/RBTS)	The AMPE-BTS/RBTS project is aimed at subsidising the construction of Base Transceiver Stations in underserved and unserved communities	One Hundred and Twenty (120) BTS within access gap clusters across the country Activation of all transmission links and network integration 100% voice coverage of the population	One Hundred and Two (102) sites year 2023 BTS projects awarded in December 2023. Sixty-Four (64 sites year 2023 passive components completed. While Thirty-Eight (38) sites are ongoing. 2024 projects yet to be awarded. None
2.	Rural Broadband Initiative (RUBI)	The RUBI project facilitates the roll-out of broadband services to unserved and underserved areas	Twelve (12) RuBI sites Two (2) Public Access Venues connected to each site	

S/N	Project Name	Project Description The	Targets	Achievements
3.	School Knowledge Centre (SKC)/Digital Nigeria Centre (DNC).	SKC is aimed at providing public schools with ICT hardware and subscriptions for broadband Internet for at least one year	One Hundred and Forty Eight (148) schools 60% of the student population in the school using the facility upon completion 75% of DNC school taking ownership upon delivery	Seventy Four (74) Schools awarded for the year 2023 with a total of Sixty Two (62) Completed and Twelve (12) ongoing
4.	Tertiary Institution Knowledge Centre (TIKC)/Tertiary Institution Digital Centre (TIDC)	The Objective of the project isto promote the use of ICT inteaching and learning in Tertiary Institutions as well asthe immediate communities.	Thirty (30) Tertiary institutions targeted	Eight (8) Tertiary institutions awarded for the year 2023, Five (5) completed and Three (3) ongoing.
5.	ICT for people living with disabilities (E-Accessibility)	The objective of the project is to promote the digital inclusion of persons living with disabilities through the provision of ICTs and Assistive Technologies to institutions and schools catering for their needs.	Twenty Four (24) centres.	Six (6) schools completed
6.	Local Content and Application Deployment/ Development and Deployment of Local Content Applications (DLC)	The objective of the project is to improve the overall e-learning experience of students and teachers in USPF SKC projects	Two Hundred and Ninety Two (292) DNC schools	Eighty Five (85) schools completed
7.	E-Health	The objective of the project is to use ICT to significantly	Twelve (12) hospitals	None

S/N	Project Name	Project Description	Targets	Achievements
		improve access and delivery of healthcare services in public secondary healthcare facilities across the country		
8.	Bandwidth Aggregation	This project provides internet bandwidth for USPF projects such as (SKC, CRC, TIKC, IRC) across the country	Five Hundred and Twenty Six (526) sites	Two Hundred (200) sites in 2023
9.	Campus Connectivity Networks (Campus Connect Project)	The objective of the project is to provide high speed internet access to Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria, through the deployment of ICT Network Infrastructure	Twenty Eight (28) tertiary institutions	Eighteen (18) completed in 2023
10.	Emerging Technologies Centres (ETC) Project	The ETC project is designed to identify, demonstrate, extend and apply emerging technologies such as IOT, AI, Machine Language, Edge Computing, Robotics etc. in rural unserved & underserved regions to help drive the digital transformation agenda of the Government. The Center will also serve as an awareness, incubation, knowledge & research hub for beneficiary communities.	One (1) site	Completed
11.	Update of USPF Access Gap	The project entails the detail mapping of ICT network coverage of the country to determine and quantify accurate access gaps. It is an update of the previous studies and will allow the USPF to verifiably ascertain the areas that have not been covered as well as the current number of unserved populations in Nigeria. Also, the National Broadband Plan 2020-2025 requires the updates of Access Gaps	One (1) study	Completed

S/N	Project Name	Project Description	Targets	Achievements
		coverage on a biannual bases for monitoring of the level of achievement of the plan.		
12.	Innovative ICT Solutions and Entrepreneurship Development	The USPF supports the creation of solutions capable of generating demand for ICT services. The target is ICT inclusion by supporting software developers, data scientists, UX (User Experience) designers, ICT experts, engineers, strategists, public policy experts and students to create solutions that improve access to ICTs	Two (2)	Completed
13.	Capacity Building of Community Based Organisations (CBO)	Sensitization and awareness of USPF programmes to build capacity and improve the knowledge of CBO, local entrepreneurs, beneficiaries and other users.	Two (2)	Completed

1.4.6. Lessons Learnt from the Implementation of the SMP 2023 – 2027 In line with

its mandate, the USPF made significant progress in bridging the digital divide
in underserved and unserved areas in Nigeria. However, challenges encountered during
the period negatively impacted on the successful implementation of some of the projects.
The key lessons learnt from the implementation of the SMP 2023 – 2027 are outlined
below:

1.4.6.1 Strengths

1. Stakeholders buy-in
2. Innovation and Professionalism
3. Sustainability matrix

1.4.6.2. Weaknesses

- Inadequate Implementation of Monitoring and Evaluation framework

1.4.6.3. Opportunities

- Increased national focus on broadband penetration in line with the Nigerian National Broadband Plan 2020-2025.
- Continuing innovation in many aspects of ICT services
- Increase in awareness and demand for ICT services.
- Availability of Satellite Based Broadband services will address the Access Gap Clusters.
- The "Dig Once" Policy of the Federal Government
- The National Policy for Promotion of Ingenious Content in the Nigerian Telecommunication Sector will reduce the cost of importation of ICT facilities.
- Federal Government White Paper on National Broadband Alliance for Nigeria (NBAN)
- Critical National Information Infrastructure order
- The National Digital Economy Policy and Strategy 2020 - 2030.

1.4.6.4. Threats

- Insecurity
- Capacity of beneficiaries to adopt and manage the projects
- Foreign exchange rate volatility
- Vandalization/Theft
- Multiple taxations and Right of Way
- Funding gap
- Capability of sustaining the projects by beneficiaries
- Increase in the cost of energy
- Lack of collaboration from beneficiaries
- Increasing costs of Bandwidth

The Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats highlighted above were considered in developing the revised SMP 2023 – 2027.

1.5.   Key considerations to address the identified challenges

To address some of the challenges experienced by the USPF in the last two (2) years in implementing its SMP 2023 - 2027, the following considerations will be adopted in executing the revised SMP 2023 - 2024:

1.5.1. Continuous Engagement of Stakeholders

USPF will continue to engage relevant stakeholders to improve their buy-in and participation in the development and execution of its programmes and projects.

1.5.2. Implementation of a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

The USPF will strengthen the monitoring and evaluation framework to measure the effectiveness of its programmes and their impact on beneficiary communities. The effective monitoring and evaluation will facilitate early detection of potential project sustainability issues.

1.5.3. Criteria for SelectingandPrioritisingUSPProjects

The followingcriteriashallbeusedinselectingandprioritisingprojects to be executed under eachUSPprogramme:

- Thealignmentoftheprojectwiththe USPF'soverallgoals,vision   and   mandate.
- Theanticipatedeffectofshort-andmedium-termgovernment policies that impactontheICTenvironmentandthedeliveryofUSPprojects.
- Thenatureanddistributionoftheexpectedbenefitstobegained from the execution of the project
- Thetotalcostsassociatedwithdeployingtheprojects.
- ThespecificICTneedsandrequirementsoftargetedbeneficiaries.

Projects   willbeselectedandprioritisedbyassigningweightstoeachparameter   outlined   above andrankingthetotalweightedscoreassignedtoeachproject.

In addition,theUSPFwillalsoconsiderthefollowingparametersintailoring the type of

ICT servicestothevariedtargetareas:

- The extentofexistingICTinfrastructureanditsproximityto the selected
- community.
- The   populationdensityanddemographyofthecommunity Economicconditionssuchasaveragehouseholdincomelevels, presence of institutionse.g.(schools,hospitals,governmentofficesetc.)andlevel of commercial and businessactivities. IdentifyingtheactualICTaccessgapsasindicatedintheClusterMap
-

Express commitment of beneficiary communities (Alumni, community association, school-based management committees) etc.

1.6. Nigeria's Macroeconomic Review and Outlook

Nigeria is a key regional player in sub-Saharan Africa with approximately 234.50 million inhabitants representing 51.00%[1] of West Africa's population that has one of the largest numbers of youth in the world. The country has the potential to become a major player in the global economy by virtue of its human and natural resources endowment. The Nigerian economy is dependent on oil that accounts for over 74.98%[2] of export and foreign exchange earnings in Q2 2024. By the end of 2023 Nigeria's GDP grew at an average of 3.46%[3] year on year due mostly to volatile oil prices which drove growth to a high of 6.90% in March 2011 and to a record low of -6.10% in June 2020[4]. With the Federal Government's renewed focus on economic diversification, infrastructure development, anti-corruption, recovery of oil production, the economy is projected to grow at an average of 3.20% in 2022-2024. The government hopes to grow the economy by 7% per annum for the next 8 years.

1.6.1. Political Landscape and Outlook

Following the inauguration of the current government in May 2023, a number of economic measures were put in place to stabilize the economy towards positive direction. A stable political environment is crucial for fostering consistent growth in Nigeria's economy today. Achieving this stability requires the implementation of effective security measures and the restoration of peace in regions affected by conflict. Nigeria has encountered significant political and security challenges, particularly due to banditry, kidnappings, and various forms of social unrest. These issues have created substantial obstacles for the government, hindering the successful implementation of USPFs programmes and projects.

In light of these challenges, the government's ongoing efforts to enhance security and promote peace are vital. By addressing these issues, Nigeria can ensure a more conducive for economic development.

1.6.2. Economic Landscape and Outlook

The statistics posted by Nigeria Bureau of Statistics (NBS) indicated a cumulative economic growth of 3.2% in the first 3 quarters of 2024. This percentage is higher than the 2.5% of the corresponding period of 2023. The growth shows a sustained improvement in the Nigerian economy up to the third quarter of 2024 even in the phase of the rising cost of goods and services, transportation costs coupled with lower disposable income of Nigerians.

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[1] www.worldometers.info

[2] NBS

[3] Tradingeconomics.com

[4] ceicdata.com

The growth is partly attributed to the number of reforms embarked upon by the current government since inception in May 2023. The fuel subsidy removal, the unification of the forex market and full implementations of Petroleum Industry Bill (PIB) are part of the reforms tailored towards diversification of the economy. Also, a formulation of new fiscal policy in relation to tax reforms is transmitted to national assembly for deliberation and consideration.

In the period under review, a Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) into Nigeria stood at 29.83 million dollars. This is a significant drop when compared to 36.02 million dollars in the previous period in 2023.

[OBJ]Increased investment in infrastructure and the realization that ICT is a key enabler for other sectors of the economy. As part of its commitment to diversify the economy, the Federal Government has issued a number of policies which aim to ensure that Nigerians become active participants in different sectors of the economy by leveraging on ICTs. Private investments are also a key policy priority, aimed at driving economic diversification through entrepreneurship and industrialisation in

the lead sectors ofagribusiness, manufacturing, research and developmentand others.[5]

Increased investment in infrastructure and the realization that ICT as a key enabler for other sectors of the economy. As part of the Federal Government commitment to diversify the economy, it has issued a number of policies aimed at ensuring Nigerians become active participants in different sectors of the economy by leveraging on ICTs. Private investments are also a key policy priority, aimed at driving economic diversification through entrepreneurship and industrialisation in the lead sectors of agribusiness, manufacturing, research and development and others6..

1.6.3. Social Environment

Nigeria remains an important market for investors because of the enormous size of its population. The country's labour force is expanding due to the Federal Government's desire to ensure active participation of Nigerians in all sectors of the economy. Recent policies, strategies and Executive Orders, will ensure that Nigerians stand to benefit from developments that are more inclusive across all sectors of the economy. The country's investment in social infrastructure, has resulted in an improved standard of living and will bring more Nigerians out of poverty. However, insecurity continues to pose a major challenge to the country and will hinder progress if not addressed.

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[6] ADB

1.6.4. Information and Communications Technology Environment

The telecommunication sector has witnessed decades of rapid expansion with the introduction of mobile telephony, and accessible forms of internet. The sector contributed a GDP of 16.36% in quarter two of 2024 compared to a contribution of 16.06% in 2023, representing a growth rate of 0.3% within the period under review. Increased investment in this sector is expected in the next few years as operators unveil plans to deploy new technologies. In the same vein, a draft national Artificial Intelligence (AI) Strategy is being articulated to set the pace for global readiness and adoption of AI in Nigeria.

1.6.5. Key Implications for the USPF

The key implications of Nigeria's macro economy outlook for the USPF include the following:

▪ Nigeria has a population of over 200 million, with about 50% of the population in rural

areas. While voice services are largely accessible in these areas, a wide gap still exists to be bridged in terms of provision of data services, especially broadband

▪ Telecoms will remain a growing sector in Nigeria and investment is likely to be focused on the infrastructure expected to boost broadband uptake and improve network coverage.

▪ Improving quality of service and providing service in rural areas.

▪ Lack of economic and purchasing power will continue to exert downward pressures on Average Revenue Per User (ARPU) and may cause telecoms operators to hesitate in extending voice and data services to the rural areas.

USPF can contribute to these trends and help accelerate telecoms and broadband growth, as well as services such as mobile money, by strategically investing in both infrastructure supply and demand side support initiatives.

1.7. Overview of Nigeria's Telecommunication Industry

Nigeria's telecommunication industry has witnessed a steady growth and has emerged as one of the most vital telecommunications markets in Africa in terms of telecommunications investments. In 2005, the active subscriber lines stood at 19 million and a teledensity of 16.20%. These increased to 154,904,827 active lines and a teledensity of 71.46% by September 2024. Despite the growth recorded by the telecoms sector, the industry witnessed a decline in the past two (2) years, a decreasing ARPU and Minutes of Usage (MoU) indicating that the telephony market in Nigeria is not fast growing. Internet subscription also witnessed a declined in the past four (4) years. As at September 2020, the total internet subscription stood at 151,512,122 and decreased to 132,907,001 in September 2024, representing 12.28% decline rate during the period

1.7.1. Mobile Segment

The mobile segment is the most active and fastest growing segment of the Nigerian telecommunications industry with a subscriber base of 132,406,212 as at September 2024[7]. This growth can be attributed to strong performance of the operators in the GSM segment of the mobile market that makes up 99.80% of the entire market. The CDMA accounts for 0.00% while fixed line segments account for 0.10% and VOIP account for 0.10%. While the GSM segment continues to exhibit growth, though at a slower rate, the CDMA remains stagnant in the number of subscribers in the last few years. In the last decade, the mobile segment experienced growth primarily driven by expansion into unserved areas. The Broadband drive by the NCC also increased competition and further enhanced service differentiation.

1.7.2. Fixed Line

The fixed line segment of Nigeria's telecommunications industry has witnessed a slow growth rate over the years. The number of active fixed line subscribers stood at 103,888 as at September 2024. The sector recorded an increase from about 0.01% as at December 2021 to 0.10% in December 2022 respectively[8]. This is due to inadequate deployment of an integrated national fibre backbone infrastructure; a significant portion of fixed telephony was deployed through wireless technology.

1.7.3. Data and Internet

The Data and Internet market in Nigeria is still developing despite having grown significantly in the last four years. Subscription of internet/data services continues to grow over the past four (4) years. Total broadband subscription stood at 88,554,318 as at September, 2023 and increased to 90,102,835 as at September, 2024 representing penetration rate of 41.56%[9]. This penetration rate is relatively low when compared with Malaysia 89.60%) and Chile 92.00%), however, higher than Rwanda 26.30%) and Kenya 42.00%)[10].

The Internet market in Nigeria is currently dominated by wireless and satellite operators due to the limited and inadequate backbone infrastructure. We have witnessed the deployment of 4G/LTE and gradual rollout of 5G which has improved coverage and speed of internet services in Nigeria. We have also witnessed the availability of internet capacity from the undersea fibre optic cable providers and the licensing of Infracos by the Commission that will drive broadband service. Also, the project 774 an initiative of the Federal Ministry of Communication, Innovation and Digital Economy anchored by Nigerian Communications Satellite Limited (NigComSat) and Galaxy Backbone Limited. A major challenge to connectivity of this huge capacity is the metro fibre that will take it to both enterprise users and last mile.

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[7] Nigerian Communications Commission, ncc.gov.ng – Industry data
[8] The Communicator October – December 2017
[9] Nigerian Communications Commission, ncc.gov.ng. – Industry data
[10] The World Bank

1.7.4. Infrastructure Providers

Telecoms operators are leveraging on co-location/infrastructure sharing as a means of unbundling the telecoms value chain and ensuring focus on core aspects of the business. In the future, infrastructure companies may play a key role in reducing the overall infrastructure and energy costs associated with telecom network expansion through innovation in site design and adoption of energy efficient solutions.

1.7.5. Key Implications for the USPF

Voice Services

- As the voice segment of the industry approaches maturity, it is expected that increased competition and possible loss in market share may stimulate expansion into unserved and underserved areas.

- However, the risk exists that operators may consider switching to higher value services such as mobile data for wealthier urban consumers as opposed to extending low value voice and SMS services to rural dwellers. Thus, the USPF will continue to incentivise operators to extend services to the underserved and unserved areas.

- New technology options and business models, which offer lower-cost solutions for small rural cell sites will create additional opportunities for cost-effective deployment of voice services to remote locations.

Internet Services

Though the penetration of internet services in Nigeria has improved, there is still an infrastructure deficit. To bridge this gap, the USPF with relevant stakeholders will exert its efforts on the following initiatives:

- Expand local broadband access networks to institutions, small and medium enterprises, and other users in underserved areas, to encourage more rapid adoption of higher-end ICT services.
- Explore opportunities to implement programmes targeted at creating awareness of the benefits of internet usage and training end users of the internet in unserved and underserved areas.
- Support the development of local content and applications i.e. e-health, e-learning, e-banking, e-government applications) which stimulate demand for internet services and provide sustained socio-economic benefits for recipients of these services

1.8. Government Policies and Directions

Over the last 5 years, some major policies were introduced and midwifed by the Federal Ministry of Communications, Innovation and Digital Economy, amongst which include the following:

- Nigerian National Broadband Plan (NNBP) 2020-2025
  National Digital Economy Policy and Strategy (NDEPS) for a Digital Nigeria
- (2020-2030)

- National Policy on Fifth Generation (5G) Networks for Nigeria's Digital Economy
- 2021
  National Policy for the Promotion of Indigenous Content in the
  Telecommunications Sector 2021
- National Policy on Very Small Aperture Terminal (VSAT) Installation Core Skills
  for Nigerians 2021
- Accelerating our Collective Prosperity through Technical Efficiency. A Strategic
  Plan for the FMoCIDE 2023 - 2027
- The Presidential Priority Areas 2023 - 2027
- The NCC Drivers
  The National Critical Information Infrastructure Order 2024
- Broadband Access for All: Deepening Nigeria's National Backbone and Middle
  Mile Infrastructure 2024
- National ICT Innovation and Entrepreneurship Vision (2021-2030)

The **National Digital Economy Policy and Strategy (NDEPS)** for a Digital Nigeria

(2020-2030) is of great importance to the development of the SMP 2023-2027. The
NDEPS is based on the following 8 pillars:

1. Developmental Regulations;
2. Digital Literacy and Skills;
3. Solid Infrastructure;
4. Service Infrastructure;
5. Digital Services Development and Promotion;
6. Soft Infrastructure;
7. Digital Society and Emerging Technologies; and
8. Indigenous Content Development and Adoption.

Pillars 2 and 3 of the National Digital Economy Policy and Strategy are considered the

most relevant to the mandate of the Universal Service Provision Fund.

The **HM's Strategic Blueprint** was introduced in October 2023 to reimagine the

FMoCIDE as the public sector ecosystem that enables Nigeria's economic growth through
enhanced productivity, facilitated by technical innovation.

This encompasses 5 Pillars;

1. Knowledge
2. Policy
3. Infrastructure
4. Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Capital
5. Trade

Pillars 1, 3 and 4 of the Strategic Blueprint are considered the most relevant to the

mandate of the Universal Service Provision Fund.

The **Presidential priority areas** was introduced in January 2024 and encompasses the

following priority areas:

1. Reform the economy to deliver sustained inclusive growth.
2. Strengthen national security for peace and prosperity.
3. Boost agriculture to achieve food security.
4. Unlock energy and natural resources for sustainable development.
5. Enhance infrastructure and transportation as enablers of growth.
6. Focus on education, health and social investment as essential pillars of development.
7. Accelerate diversification through industrialization, digitization, creative arts, manufacturing and innovation.
8. Improve governance for effective service delivery.

Priority areas 5, 6 and 7 are considered the most relevant to the mandate of the Universal Service Provision Fund.

1.8.1. NCC Drivers

The following are the factors driving the Commission's leadership to accomplish these strategic goals;

1. **People**: Our biggest asset is our people. We will invest in our skills and capabilities as we take a leading role in driving the desired changes in the telecoms industry.
2. **Collaboration**: We will take a co-creative approach to our regulatory activities as well as our intervention initiatives as we transform our industry.
3. **Data Driven:** Our decision-making will be data-driven to reduce subjectivity and promote transparency, innovation and growth of the Commission and the industry at large.
4. **Compliance**: The Commission will meticulously monitor licensee activities to ensure they meet all regulatory obligations and drive improved service delivery across the industry value chain
5. **Digitalisation**: The Commission will leverage technology solutions to optimise existing processes to ultimately enhance efficiency of our regulatory activities.

All the drivers are considered the most relevant to the mandate of the Universal Service Provision Fund.

2. USPF's Strategic Outlook 2023-2027

2.1. Overview of the Approach Adopted in Developing the Revised SMP 2023 - 2027

The following activities were carried out in developing the Revised Strategic Management Plan 2023 - 2027:

▪ Review of the following documents:

- Strategic Management Plan 2023-2027.
- The Strategic Blueprint 2023-2027
- Presidential Priority Areas 2023-2027

- Sustainability Plan for USPF projects
- Nigerian Communications Commission's Strategic Vision Plan (SVP) 2023-
- 2025
- Consultation with internal stakeholders for inputs and comments
  Consideration of the Government Policies and Directions

2.1.1. Strategic Goals

The Four (4) strategic goals in the SMP 2023 - 2027 identified by the USPF to drive the achievement of its mandate were reviewed and found still relevant, as such, adopted in the revised SMP 2023 – 2027. USPF recognises the need to place priority on building the capacity of the USP Secretariat thus ensuring the possession of relevant, up-to-date information on the ICT industry to guide the design and implementation of USP projects. The other Three (3) strategic goals are geared towards achieving the USPF vision. The strategic goals of the USPF are outlined below:

2.1.1.1.   Goal 1: Facilitate an enabling environment for sustainable ICT

Objective:
  i.   Identify the impediments to the rollout and demand of ICT services in rural, unserved, and underserved areas,
  ii. Design incentives that would promote the rollout of sustainable ICT services in rural, unserved and underserved areas.

Strategies:
- Carry out relevant studies to determine the demand indices for different categories of ICT services within the country.
- Continuous consultation with Stakeholders in the telecommunications industry to identify the issues that prevent the market from functioning effectively.
- Continuous consultation and collaboration with the Nigerian Communications

Commission and relevant government agencies to design, plan and implement USPF programmes and projects.
- Facilitate programmes that promote digital skills and transformation
- Provide subsidy to encourage the roll out of ICT infrastructure in rural unserved and underserved areas

2.1.1.2.   Goal 2: Promote universal access and service that facilitate ICT for development (ICT4D)

Objectives:

- Facilitate the availability and use of transmission infrastructure and connectivity to the national backbone in all LGAs.

- Drive increasing access to community-based ICT services on a shared basis and provide a platform for universal service.

Strategies

- Provide subsidies or other forms of incentives to telecom operators and eligible service providers to extend ICT transmission infrastructure to identified unserved and underserved areas.

- Explore opportunities to deploy a full suite of universal access and universal service initiatives to build utilisation and sustainability of ICT projects.

- Ensure the co-location and sharing of infrastructure subsidised by USPF.

- Continuous consultations and collaboration with government agencies, non-profit organisations, and community-based organisations to facilitate connectivity for development initiatives.

- Encourage community ownership of universal service projects and consequently, promote entrepreneurship in target communities.

2.1.1.3. Goal 3: Institutional Development

Objectives:

- Strengthen the USP Secretariat to deliver on its mandate effectively.

- Continuously update organizational processes, performance measurement systems and partnerships that allow the USP Secretariat to successfully monitor, evaluate and assess the impact of USPF programmes.

Strategies:

- Ensure alignment of the USP Board and Secretariat's structure and functions with the vision and strategic goals of USPF.
- Identify and execute capacity-building initiatives that will equip the USP Secretariat with the relevant skills required to drive the achievement of the USPF's strategic goals.
- Identify, engage and work with relevant organisations and individuals as strategic partners.
- Develop and implement processes that will drive standardisation and efficient service delivery in the Secretariat.
- Implement Performance Management Systems Monitoring and Evaluation) of USPF projects to ascertain if the objectives of the programmes and projects are being achieved.

2.1.1.4. Goal 4 Sustainable collaboration with relevant stakeholders

Objectives:

▪ Facilitate support and obtain stakeholders buy-in to achieve the USPF mandate

Strategies:

▪ Continuous engagement of relevant stakeholders
▪ Creation of awareness and sensitisation of beneficiaries

2.1.2. Strategic Vision Plan (SVP) 2023 - 2025

Following the assessment of existing government policy frameworks, the Nigerian Communications Commission developed a course of action for the sector through the Strategic Vision Plan SVP) 2023 - 2025. The SVP has five items as follows:

1. Regulatory Excellence;

2. Universal Broadband;
3. Market Development;
4. Digital Economy; and
5. Strategic Collaboration

However, the USPF is committed to items 2, 4 and 5 through:

i. Promoting the deployment of communication services infrastructure and facilitate broadband penetration;
ii. Ensure availability, accessibility and affordability of communication services that supports digital economy;
iii. Solution-oriented partnerships and collaboration with donor agencies that stimulate digital economy in unserved and underserved communities;
iv. Engaging local and international development expertise to inform its work and provide wider global evidence for interventions targeted at unserved and underserved communities;
v. Fostering partnerships that will create awareness and support the showcase of technology innovation initiatives targeted at the social sectors of the economy.

2.1.3. Performance Perspective, Objective and Strategy Map

This section of the report highlights the performance perspectives, objectives and the strategy map for the Revised SMP 2023 - 2027 as detailed in Figure 1 and Figure 2.

Goals – Strategic Pillars

1. Facilitate the Development of the Market - Facilitate an enabling environment for sustainable ICT
2. ICT Penetration - Promote Universal Access and Service that facilitate ICT for Development (ICT4D)
3. Professional Excellence - Institutional Development
4. Strategic Partnering

Performance Perspective

Stakeholder

- Increase Stakeholder Satisfaction
- Promote Universal Access

Stewardship

- Increase Funding
- Improve Resource Management

Internal Process

- Improve Operational Efficiency
- Improve Stakeholder Relationships and Collaboration

Organizational Capacity

- Enhance Working Tools
- Improve Organizational Culture
- Improve Work Ethic

Desired Results

Goal 1

i. Drive demand for ICT
    - Increase stakeholder satisfaction
    - Promote universal access
    - Improve stakeholder relationships

Goal 2

i.   Facilitate the availability and use of transmission infrastructure and connectivity to the national backbone in all Local Government Areas (LGAs).

ii. Drive increasing access to community-based ICT services on a shared basis and provide a platform for universal service.

Goal 3

i. Empowering staff of the Secretariat to effectively deliver on its mandate

Goal 4

i. Sustainable collaboration with relevant stakeholders

2.1.4. USPF Performance Perspective and Strategy House
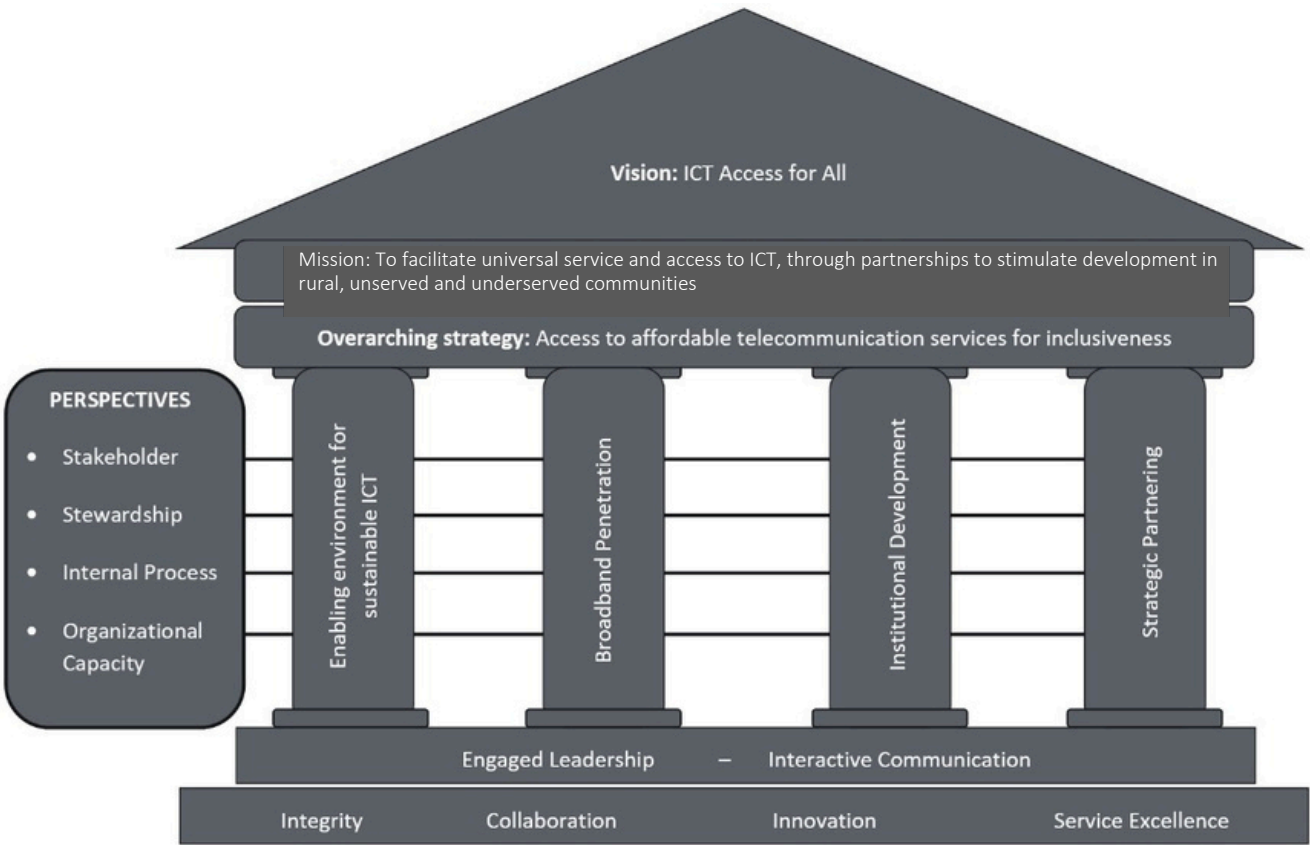
Figure 1: USPF Performance Perspective and Strategy House

2.1.5.   USPF Strategy Map
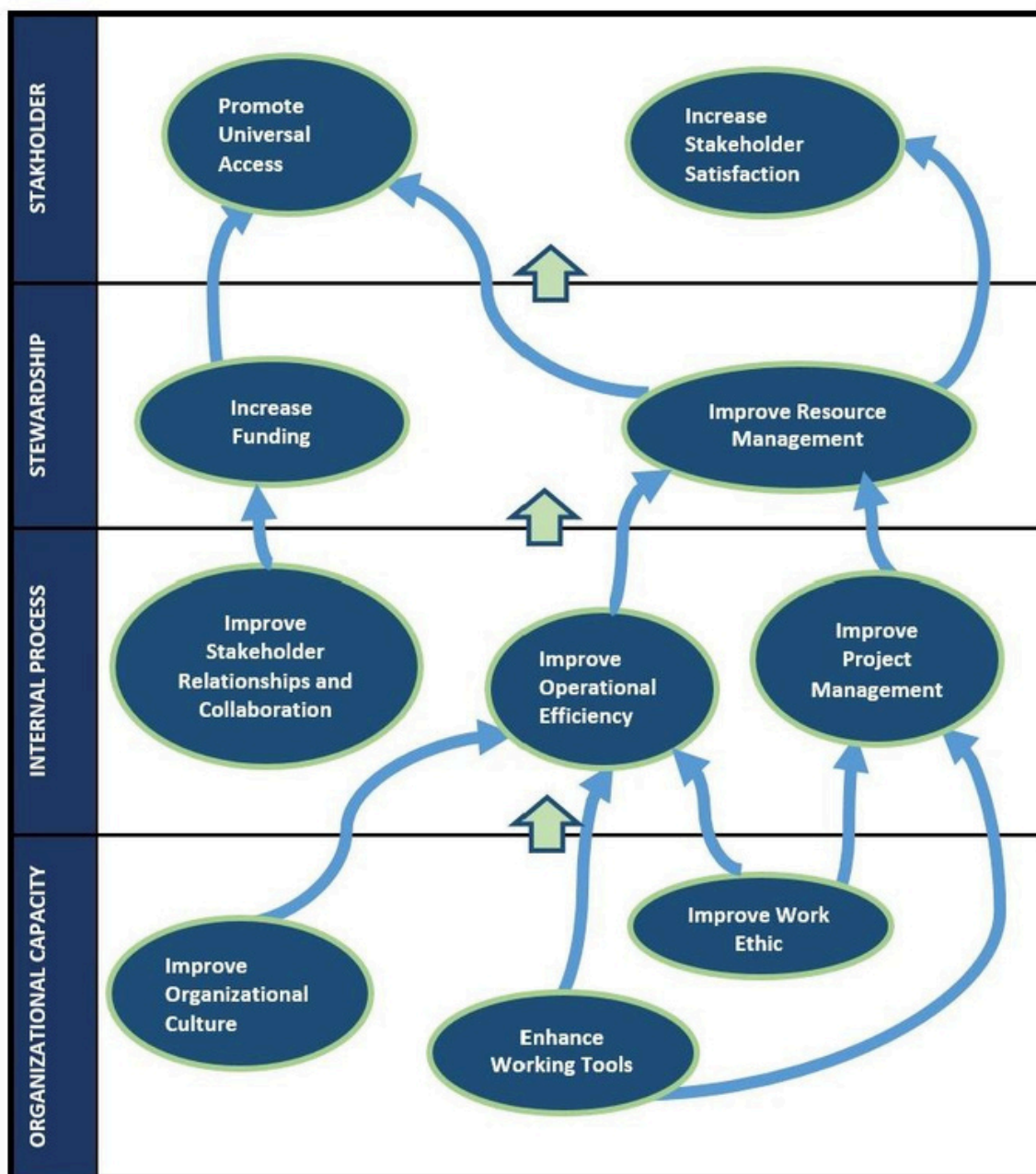
Figure 2: USPF Strategy Map

3. USPF Programmes and Projects

3.1. Overview of USPF Programmes

This section provides an overview of the programmes selected to achieve the USPF's strategic goals over the period 2023 – 2027.

3.1.1. Goal 1: Facilitate an Enabling Environment for Sustainable ICT

3.1.1.1. Programme 1: Research Studies and Surveys

This programme will involve carrying out relevant studies/surveys to determine the demand indices for different categories of ICT services within the country. The focus will be on the demand approach rather than the supply angle previously adopted by USPF. It will entail interactions with beneficiary communities to determine what is or will be beneficial and sustainable in achieving the objectives of USPS intervention. It will also provide a reference point for designing future projects of USPF. The studies/surveys will not only assess the current situation but will attempt to predict future needs of the beneficiary communities or institutions to ensure that the USPF's resources are expended only on projects that are useful, impactful and sustainable.

The expected outcome of this study shall be a symmetry of the demand and supply of USPF's intervention based on identified ICT needs and the type/class of interventions required to address these needs.

3.1.1.2. Programme 2: Subsidy and Incentive

This programme will create incentives by developing a sustainable subsidy regime that will facilitate the provision of the required ICT service in unserved and underserved communities and institutions. Subsidies shall be determined based on factors such as demand levels, population density, topography, and current infrastructure indices, the revenue potential and average cost to provide each service. This assessment shall be carried out at the LGA/community level depending on what is appropriate for each type of service to be provided.

3.1.1.3. Programme 3: Consultation and Collaboration

The USPF will continue to engage relevant stakeholders in project conception, planning and implementation. The consultations with key stakeholder groups will provide a platform for identifying barriers, bottlenecks and disincentives to service expansion to unserved/underserved areas. It will also provide the necessary input for the design of non-monetary incentives that will stimulate expansion into those areas. This program shall also provide an opportunity to develop key strategic alliances and foster collaborations with key stakeholder groups in implementing and operating ICT development projects.

A key objective of the Programme will be to increase the involvement and participation of ICT Industry Operators, key government agencies and

communities in the delivery of USP Projects. This Programme shall be carried out on an on-going basis for the duration of the SMP 2023– 2027.

3.1.1.4.   Programme 4: Corporate Visibility

The aim of this programme is to create awareness and enlightenment campaigns to ensure total branding, sustainability and efficient/effective communication of all USP Secretariat projects. The process of achieving this objective involves the following:

- Manage Stakeholder Engagement Events: (Town Hall Meetings, Project Commissioning).
- Publicity/Media: Management of press conferences, press releases, advertisement on print/electronic media.
- Public Relations: liaise with internal & external stakeholders.
- Public Enlightenment: Road shows, social media, jingles etc.

3.1.2.   Goal 2: Promote Universal Access and Universal Service that Facilitate ICT for Development

3.1.2.1.   Programme 1: National Backbone Connectivity

This programme will involve the rollout of network infrastructure to close identified gaps. This will also help to achieve the deployment of hybrid technology such as Aerial/Fixed underground fibre network rings/ broadband over power lines to deliver broadband service to identified target areas. Specifically, this programme will provide incentives to industry operators to extend services through Aerial leveraging on Discos and railway lines support structures) and fixed underground fibre networks from major cities/towns where they currently exist to surrounding communities which have been classified as unserved in terms of internet infrastructure and adjudged to be economically viable with the aid of smart subsidies.

This programme shall run from 2023 through to 2027 and expected targets shall be to deploy 6,000Km optic fibre cable by 2027. The expected outcome will be based on transmission capacity backhaul and access links) for the delivery of services to target areas.

3.1.2.1.1.   Project 1: Backbone Transmission Infrastructure (BTRAIN)

The Backbone Transmission Infrastructure (BTRAIN) Project is designed to facilitate the connection of unserved and underserved areas to the National Transmission Backbone Infrastructure via the deployment of fibre optic cable infrastructure underground/aerial/wireless fibre connectivity). The USPF will implement this project through Public-Private-Partnership (PPP) with licensed Implementers by offering subsidies determined through efficient, effective and sustainable-competitive solutions.

The objective is to extend broadband infrastructure and point of access to underserved/unserved areas via the following means:

I. Underground fibre optic cable: Underground cable installation can be buried directly underground or placed into a buried duct. Fibre optic cables can also be pulled through underground ducts. Underground duct installation also provides opportunity for future expansion without the need to dig.

II. Aerial fibre optic cable: is usually used for external installation on poles. Aerial cable laying method is easier to deploy as it can utilize the existing overhead pole line to install optic fibre cables which minimizes cost and reduces the period of deployment. Some examples are the use of Electricity Distribution companies (Discos) and Railway lines support structures to deploy optic fibre cable route.

III. Broadband over Power Lines (BPL) method of power line communication PLC) that would allow relatively high-speed digital data transmission over the public electric power distribution wiring.

3.1.2.1.2. Project 2: University Inter Campus Connectivity Optic Fibre Cable (UnICC OFC)

The UnICC is a collaborative project between the USPF and National

Universities Commission. The project and its main objective in line with Nigerian Research and Education Network (NgREN) is to deliver broadband infrastructure and access to facilitate research and learning using state of the art technology.

The UnICC Project was therefore, designed to seamlessly inter-connect main campuses of selected universities with their corresponding medical colleges and teaching hospitals through the deployment of fibre optic cable and its associated equipment. There are two approaches to the implementation of the project:

I. Wireless Satellite Broadband and Optic Fibre interconnectivity between Universities and their corresponding Colleges of Medicine/Teaching Hospitals.

II. Wireless Satellite Broadband and Optic Fibre interconnectivity between main campus of Universities and Annex Campus systems installed at the institutions.

3.1.2.2. Programme 2: Accelerated Mobile Phone Expansion

The objective of this programme shall be to subsidise the deployment of Base Transceiver Stations (BTS) and other passive infrastructure in underserved and unserved communities in Nigeria in order to achieve wider coverage of LGAs in Nigeria and reduce the proportion of unserved and underserved communities across the country. This infrastructure will be expected to support the extension of telecom services to unserved and underserved areas. The programme will run

through 2023 – 2027 and result in an increase in coverage of Nigeria's inhabited landmass with basic telephony services through a review of identified access gaps.

3.1.2.3.   Programme 3. Connectivity for Development Programme

The world has adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to accelerate global developments in a sustainable manner. Infrastructure, Investments, Innovation and Inclusivity are the four pillars ("4 I's") that the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) plan to implement to help accelerate the achievement of the United Nations' SDGs11. This programme will serve as the platform for the USP Fund to support the attainment of the SDGs in Nigeria. The aim of this programme is to encourage and facilitate the building of an e-society in Nigeria and promote digital lifestyle among the citizenry. The programme will facilitate connectivity for key e-services to institutions such as schools, hospitals, centres for the challenged groups, amongst others. It will also encourage the use of ICT for government and governance.

3.1.2.3.1. Project 1: Digital Nigeria Centre   (DNC)

USPF designed the Digital Nigeria Centre (DNC) project to provide a platform for accessing online/offline educational resources and the adoption of ICT as a learning platform in public secondary schools in order to create digital skills. The DNC is an avenue to help in the training of beneficiaries to acquire ICT skills and bridge the digital divide. The DNC will have the following objectives:

- Promoting seamless access to online/offline remote educational resources.
- Adoption of Smart education thereby increasing ICT literacy among teachers and students.
- Provide students with ICT skills acquisition and encourage innovation.
- Training and mentoring start-ups to develop technology solutions.
- Encourage independent and active learning by students
- Ensure ICT sustainability in the host community.

3.1.2.3.1. Project 2: Upgrade of School Knowledge Centre (SKC)

The SKC upgrade Project of the USPF aims to address the deteriorated or run-down interventions carried out in public secondary schools in both rural and urban areas. This project will focus on revitalizing the existing classrooms, infrastructure, and facilities to accommodate the specific ICT equipment that will be deployed. The implementer is responsible for installing and setting up the ICT equipment, ensuring there is a reliable internet connection, and installing e-learning software in the schools.

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[11] http://news.itu.int/press-progress-gender-equality-tech/

- Enhance the functionality and user experience of ICT centers across the
- country.
Improve the quality and capacity of ICT training and services offered at the
- centers.
Increase the sustainability and efficiency of ICT centers operations.

3.1.2.3.2. Project 3: Tertiary Institution Digital Center (TIDC)

Tertiary Institutions Digital Centre (TIDC) is one of the initiatives of the Universal Service Provision Fund aimed at facilitating bandwidth connectivity and installation of ICT devices and peripherals in selected tertiary institutions. The TIDC project will also serve as ICT centre in each selected tertiary institution. The ICT centre will be an avenue for students to acquire and improve their ICT skills e.g. application development and web design etc. This will also give attention to technology start-ups that could be further trained and mentored to develop technology solutions that will be commercially viable to attract financial growth and create job opportunities for the up-coming generation.

3.1.2.3.3. Project 4: e-Agriculture

This project is expected to be executed in consultation/collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (FMARD), River Basin Authorities, development partners and other stakeholders to explore the use of ICT for improvement of agriculture. The aim of this project is to enable farmers within the unserved and underserved areas achieve the following:

- Acquire agricultural knowledge and skills.
Promote sale & purchase of farm produce, fertilizers and tools.
- Leverage ICT applications/solutions to enhance sustainable
- agricultural innovations.

3.1.2.3.4. Project 5: e-Health

The project is aimed at using Information Communication Technologies (ICT) to improve access to healthcare, raise the quality and reduce cost of health care provision thereby endowing patients in rural communities. It is expected to be executed in alliance with the National Primary Health Development Agency (NPHDA), Primary Health/Public Health Centres in rural, unserved and underserved communities. The project will be designed to provide access to real-time consultancy services between primary health centres/facilities with General Hospitals, Federal Medical Centres and other existing secondary Public Health Centres.

The target is to provide internet access between selected primary health centres and the secondary health centres across the country by 2027. This will be achieved by connecting remote, rural and underserved communities with referral centres, expert care and support training health care providers

using ICT. It will also facilitate communications between primary health workers, specialists and patients for improved health care access in rural communities.

3.1.2.3.5.   Project 6: e-Accessibility

This project is expected to be executed in consultation with the relevant stakeholders. The objective of the project is to provide ICT needs of persons living with disabilities in Nigeria and access to required ICT services through institutions/organisations set up to cater for this group. In this regard, USPF shall make provisions within its budget to support all-inclusive ICT access to people living with disabilities.

3.1.2.3.6.   Project 7: Bandwidth Aggregation

The main objective of the project is to provide, deploy and manage internet bandwidth for selected USPF projects. The project will enable the USPF have a common platform for all projects that requires bandwidth connectivity.

3.1.2.3.7.   Project 8: Satellite Connectivity

This project is to compliment the Bandwidth Aggregation Project.

3.1.2.3.8.   Project 8: E-Connect Center The implementation of the E-connect Centre

(hub) project shall serve as a
central hub for all the USPF access projects under its 2024 budget year.

The centre requires adequate space to build, and other facilities to

accommodate the building and infrastructure to be deployed. The implementer is expected to construct the E-Connect Centre building, deploy, and configure the ICT equipment, provide bandwidth connectivity and necessary e-services application software to the link various centres under consideration. The objective of the project is as follows:

1. The E-Connect Centre (Hub) will serve as an ICT centralized hub to

coordinate the activities of all e-related projects of the USPF in the country.
2. To track and link resources in various sectors on existing USPF access projects (E-government services, E-learning services, E-accessibility, e-health, e-library, e-business services, etc.)   to those who lack such resources in the rural, unserved and underserved areas/groups.
3. To improve the efficiency and effectiveness and reduce the cost-of-service delivery of all USPF projects using the connect Centre.
4. To improve the quality of citizen and business interactions with the government.

3.1.2.4.   **Programme 4: Access Network and Facilities**

The thrust of this programme shall be to subsidise the costs of providing Internet services to an identified target population on a shared or individual basis. The projects under this programme shall target youths in secondary and tertiary institutions across Nigeria and provide a means for entire communities to access ICT facilities. This programme shall take advantage of the optic fibre infrastructure deployed under Programme 1 to provide target groups with ICT facilities.

Target areas shall be prioritised based on the availability of network infrastructure required to provide internet access and/ or the proximity of existing network infrastructure to target areas. USPF shall aim to connect about 100 communities and 100 public institutions and collaborate with other stakeholders i.e. NUC, World Bank Step B) to connect all tertiary institutions in the country by 2022. Other local institutions within target communities will also be connected. These include government buildings and offices, local health facilities, and other locations of public interest.

3.1.2.4.1.   **Project 1: University Inter Campus Connectivity End User UnICC End User)**

The UnICC End User is the secondary project to the UnICC OFC project designed to seamlessly connect the networks of the main campuses of selected universities to the networks of their corresponding medical colleges and teaching hospitals by utilizing the UnICC OFC project of deployed infrastructure fibre optic cable and its associated equipment and provisioning of UnICC End-User Equipment. The provision of equipment enhances the usefulness of the project and encourages the universities to maintain the infrastructure thus guaranteeing the sustainability of the two projects (OFC & End-User Electronics). The UnICC project facilitates research, collaboration and enhancement of education and digital lifestyle in the Universities and tertiary institutions. Electronic last mile user-devices including video conferencing system, CCTV system, smart classroom, data centers and IP telephone systems will be installed at the institutions.

3.1.2.4.2.   **Project 2: Rural Broadband Initiative RUBI)**

Through the RUBI project, the USPF provides subsidies to operators for the deployment of network to support the establishment of core delivery mechanisms for broadband services in the rural/semi-urban areas of Nigeria. Currently, the pilot wireless mobile broadband hotspots are being constructed across the country. This project provides both wired and wireless internet at high speed in the rural areas at wholesale, and at the same time serves as a catalyst for the uptake of other broadband-dependent projects in those locations such as e-library, e-health, e-government etc.

3.1.2.5. Programme 5: Local Applications/Content Deployment

The USPF will support, in line with its mandate local entrepreneurs to develop local applications and content for the internet. The aim is to improve adoption of ICT in everyday activities and bridge the digital divide. The local applications and/or content would be socially and culturally relevant to the communities. In addition, projects that will support local content hosting platforms will also be implemented.

3.1.2.5.1. Project 1: Local Content Deployment

The USPF shall facilitate the deployment of local content and

applications/solutions which promote the use of ICTs in rural, unserved and underserved areas of the country. USPF's strategy shall be to partner with relevant stakeholders for the deployment of application/solutions in Nigerian Education curriculum, which provide relevant information/solutions to Secondary Schools under the SKC programme in line with the Ministry of Education.

3.1.2.5.2. Project 2: ePortal and Local Content Deployment and Hosting

The aim of ePortal is to encourage the deployment of local content and portals that can be hosted either locally or on the internet. This could be a YouTube channel, dedicated educational channel or portal but the content and values of the content as well as methods of access shall be determined by the USPF. Additionally, the installation of local servers that will need to connect continuously to the internet but accessed locally via LAN or Wifi to host or mirror most of the major- educational websites.

3.1.2.6. Goal 3: Institutional Development

3.1.2.6.1. Programme 1: People: Human Capital Development

This programme will consist of a number of projects focused on developing the human capital of the USP Board and Secretariat with respect to the skills and competencies required to effectively deliver on the USPF's mandate.

3.1.2.6.2. Programme 2: Process: Corporate Performance Management

This programme shall involve implementing a robust performance management system that would include continuous review and standardisation of internal processes monitoring and evaluation framework which will define the metrics/indicators which would be used to determine the efficiency of the UAS programmes, as well as assignments designed to improve the sustainability of the USPF projects. Under this programme, the Secretariat shall also develop Operating Plans on an annual basis to provide a detailed guide for its day-to-day activities as well as produce an Annual report of its activities.

3.1.2.7. Goal 4: Strategic Partnering and Collaboration

3.1.2.8.   Programme 1: Consultation and Collaboration

3.1.2.8.1.   Project 1: Focused Industry Session

The objective of the project is to provide a forum for the discussion of on-going issues/challenges faced by operators in extending ICT to the rural, unserved and underserved areas and possible steps for resolving such issues. The forum shall also provide a platform for collaboration with industry operators

3.1.2.8.2. Project 2: Consultation with other Government Agencies

This project focuses on leveraging on collaboration/memorandum of understanding with relevant government agencies to facilitate support for the implementation of USPF projects

3.1.2.8.3. Project 3: Engagement with other stakeholders

This includes universities, colleges of education, secondary schools, primary schools and government agencies. This project is aimed at improving /increasing the usage of USP intervention programmes and Projects.

3.1.2.8.4.   Project 4: Utilisation and Sustainability Project

This project is designed to build the capacity of local entrepreneurs, community-based organisation, beneficiaries and other user stakeholders.

3.1.2.9.   Programme 2: Strategic partnership

3.1.2.9.1.   Project 1: Technical support and capacity building

The project will help to source funds and expertise to support USPF with Edu-tech, Health-tech, and Agri-tech interventions

3.1.3. Socio-Economic Impact of the USPF'S Programmes and Projects

The socioeconomic impact expected to result from the USPF's programmes include the following:

i.   Increased ICT uptake and usage in communities;
ii. Increased Access to information and online services;
iii. Improved commercial and socioeconomic activities in rural and semi urban areas;
iv. Emergence of new businesses and employment opportunities;

v.   Provide platform for financial inclusion and a wide range of other online value-added services;

vi.   Reduced cost of doing business in rural areas.

3.1.4. USPF Project Outline

Table 2 provides an outline of the sample projects that the USPF may execute under its defined Programmes for the period 2023 – 2027. The outline articulates the expected outcomes of each project, the metrics used to measure success as well as indicative targets for each project. The outline is not all-inclusive and the plan could be revised periodically through the operational planning process to reflect current realities and new developments.

Table-2: USPF Project Plan

S/N	USPF Programme	Sample Projects 12	Dependencies	Expected Outcomes	KPIs	Targets13	Project Owner
GOAL14 1: FACILITATE AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR SUSTAINABLE ICT							
1.1	**Research Studies and Surveys**	**Update of USPF Access Gap in six Geopolitical zone** This project shall involve carrying an update study of the demand and need analysis of ICT facilities in rural communities across the 6 geo-political zones. It will also determine the level of infrastructure with the selected communities that will accelerate the provision of ICT services	Previous study report	Report on current level of ICT penetration	Report of demand and need analysis of selected rural communities. Update of regional clusters	Regional clusters updated by December 2027 Research study concluded by September 2024	Head, Strategy and Corporate Performance Monitoring
		Innovative ICT Solutions & Entrepreneurship development.	Participation and willingness of innovators/participant	Development of ICT solutions	One (1) competition organised and concluded each year Show case of winners No of applications developed	Ten (10) Entrepreneurs supported to develop the applications/services that are ready for the market Three (3) new ICT solutions developed	Head, Strategy and Corporate Performance Monitoring

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[12] Additional projects will be defined in future

[13] Targets are indicative only and will be further refined in each Annual Operating Plan to reflect the budget imperatives

[14] Goal Owner is the Secretary, Universal Service Provision Fund

S/N	USPF Programme	Sample Projects [12]	Dependencies	Expected Outcomes	KPIs	Targets[13]	Project Owner
						and ready to use on annual basis	
1.2	**Subsidy and Incentive**	**USP Subsidy Determination** This project is designed to improve the estimation and management of the total maximum allowable subsidy required for bridging the identified gap with respect to voice and data services for each of the identified Access Gap Clusters	Previous estimates Updated ICT Access Gap	Report on the total estimates to address the unserved and underserved communities	Estimate to provide voice, data and broadband services	Annual subsidy and incentives estimates Presented subsidy/ incentives by 31st July each year	Head, Funding and Subsidy
1.3	**Corporate Visibility**	***Stakeholder Forum Town Hall Meetings*** This project is to enlighten Nigerians on the activities of the USPF on a geopolitical basis	Website, flyers and social media handles	Public awareness of USPF's purpose, focus and initiatives Identification of varied community requirements Improved community buy-in and participation in USPF projects	Number of sessions held	One (1) Stakeholder forum Town Hall Meeting in the northern and southern region every year	Head Corporate Service

S/N	USPF Programme	Sample Projects 12	Dependencies	Expected Outcomes	KPIs	Targets[13]	Project Owner
GOAL 2: PROMOTE UNIVERSAL ACCESS AND UNIVERSAL SERVICE THAT FACILITATES ICT FOR DEVELOPMENT							
2.1	**National Backbone Connectivity**	**Backbone Transmission Infrastructure project** The Backbone Transmission Infrastructure (BTRAIN) Project is aimed at accelerating the build-out of optic fibre cable backbone transmission infrastructure in rural and semi urban areas	Records of previous projects	Creation of fibre network in target areas	Number of kilometres deployed	6000 km fibre backbone transmission infrastructure in the identified target areas Complete installation of OFC and supporting equipment	Head, Infrastructure Projects
		University Inter Campus Connectivity (UnICC) OFC Project This project connects main campuses of universities to annex campuses via optic fibre cable	Acquisition of RoW State/ Federal)	Broadband connection of university main campuses to annex campuses	Test Acceptance for OFC connectivity at universities and their annex campuses	600Km of Optic Fibre Cable OFC) between selected university campuses and corresponding annex campuses	Head, Infrastructure Projects
2.2	**Accelerated Mobile Phone Expansion**	**Base Transceiver Station project** This project shall subsidise the costs of	Research on Infrastructure gaps	Increase in voice and data coverage	Number of BTS deployed Number of target areas covered by deployed BTS	Three Hundred (300) BTS within access gap clusters across the country	Head, Infrastructure Projects

S/N	USPF Programme	Sample Projects [12]	Dependencies	Expected Outcomes	KPIs	Targets[13]	Project Owner
		deploying Base Transceiver stations in underserved and unserved communities in Nigeria which the market will not ordinarily reach	ICT Penetration Analysis Universal Access Gap and Subsidy Estimate Study		Percentage of users covered by deployed BTS	Activation of all transmission links and network integration 100% voice coverage of the population	
2.3	**Local Access Network & Facilities**	The UnICC End-user Electronics project is aimed at providing end user electronics that will enable the utilization of the optic fibre cable deployed under UnICC OFC)	Completion of OFC links at universities from UnICC OFC, and of delivery of end-user devices at the universities	End-User devices in universities Video Conferencing system, Smart CCTV system, Classroom Data centres IP Telephone system	Testing and commissioning of last mile devices for universities	Provision of last mile devices at 5 institutions	Head, Infrastructure Projects
		Campus Connectivity Networks (CCN) Project This is designed to provide high speed internet access to Tertiary Institutions through the deployment of adequate ICT Network Infrastructure using Microwave/VSAT Technology with a dedicated bandwidth capacity of 20mbps that will enhance teaching, research	Report on Civil Works previous projects Nominated Tertiary Institutions	Network Infrastructure Back-Up Power	Bandwidth speed test to ascertain activation of 20Mbps service Provision of Twelve (12) months Bandwidth to beneficiaries	Seventy (70) higher institutions covered	Head, Infrastructure Projects

S/N	USPF Programme	Sample Projects [12]	Dependencies	Expected Outcomes	KPIs	Targets[13]	Project Owner
		and learning via a Campus Wide Area Network and Hotspot Wi-Fi Access across an Institution					
		Rural Broadband Initiative (RuBI) Project This project will provide wireless internet at high speed in the rural areas at wholesale and also serve as a catalyst for the uptake of other technologies centred around the internet in those locations and institutions in the benefitting communities	Report on previous projects Access gap report	Increased access to the internet for the beneficiary communities Increased sustainability of the Public Institutions within the areas	Number of RuBI locations completed	Thirty Six (36) RuBI sites Two (2) Public Access Venues connected to each site	Head, Infrastructure Projects

S/N	USPF Programme	Sample Projects [12]	Dependencies	Expected Outcomes	KPIs	Targets[13]	Project Owner
2.4	**Connectivity for development (C4D)**	**Digital Nigeria Centre (DNC)** This project shall provide subsidies to facilitate the establishment of DNC that will provide shared access to internet services/local contents in target schools identified by the USPF.	Records of previous projects ICT Penetration Analysis	Increase in the number of internet users Improved access to internet services Improved awareness of and interest in ICTs in rural communities Empower schools in rural communities to be ICT ready	Number of DNC established Number of DNC operational Number of teachers trained in the use of ICT tools	Three Hundred and Seventy (370) schools 60% of the student population in the school using the facility 75% of DNC school taking ownership	Head, IT Projects
	Connectivity for Development (C4D)	**Upgrade of School Knowledge Centre (SKC)** The SKC upgrade Project of the USPF aims to address the deteriorated or run-down interventions carried out in public secondary schools in both rural and urban areas. This project will focus on revitalizing the existing classrooms, infrastructure, and facilities to accommodate the specific ICT	Existing SKCs	Increase in the number of internet users Improved access services to internet Improved awareness of and interest in ICTs in rural communities Empower schools in rural communities to be ICT ready	Number of restored SKCs.	One Hundred (100) out of a total number of Eight Hundred and Thirteen (813) SKCs restored by 2027	Head, IT Project

S/N	USPF Programme	Sample Projects [12]	Dependencies	Expected Outcomes	KPIs	Targets[13]	Project Owner
		equipment that will be deployed.					
		ICT for Persons Living with Disabilities E-Accessibility) The objective of the project is to promote the digital inclusion of persons living with disabilities through the provision of ICTs and Assistive Technologies to institutions and schools catering for their needs.	Report on previous projects Acceptance by institutions catering for PLWDs	E-inclusion of challenged people or people living with disabilities	Number of organisations/institutions e.g. schools, centres etc. catering for the challenged groups reached	Sixty (60) organisations to be covered	Head, IT Projects
	Connectivity for development (C4D)	**Tertiary Institutions Digital Centre (TIDC)** This project will provide ICT hardware, internet access and relevant content and/or application for selected Public Tertiary institutions. The TIDC will serve as ICT centre in each	Report on previous projects ICT Penetration Analysis Fibre Network Rollout	Entrench the use of ICT as a tool for teaching and learning Empower Tertiary institutions to be competitive in ICT readiness	Number of Tertiary Institutions provided ICT tools and connectivity	Thirty (30) Tertiary institutions to be covered	Head, IT Projects

S/N	USPF Programme	Sample Projects [12]	Dependencies	Expected Outcomes	KPIs	Targets[13]	Project Owner
		of the selected institution					
		eHealth Project This is aimed at using ICT to improve access to health care by providing real time consultancy through internet access and other ICT tools between primary health centres in rural communities with General Hospitals/FMC within the locality	Report on previous projects Availability of broadband Transmission Systems Cooperation of the relevant stakeholders/ states	Improvement in in health care delivery in rural communities Reduction in mortality rates	Number of health institutions covered	Twenty Four (24) secondary health care/Hospitals to be covered	Head, IT Projects
		E-Agriculture This project aims at using ICT tools and solutions to improve agricultural practices seedlings, fertilizer access & usage, via dedicated e-platforms accessible to identified clusters	Availability of network/connectivity	Improved agriculture yields Improve knowledge/ skills of farmers	Number of farmers accessing information via ICT platforms for agriculture improvement	1 dedicated e-platform	Head, IT Projects

S/N	USPF Programme	Sample Projects [12]	Dependencies	Expected Outcomes	KPIs	Targets[13]	Project Owner
		Bandwidth Aggregation (BA) This project provides internet bandwidth for relevant USPF projects across the country.	All targeted projects are functional	Sustainable mechanism for provision of internet bandwidth	Completion of bandwidth deployment to identified USPF projects	One Thousand, Three Hundred and Fifteen (1315) USPF projects	Head, Infrastructure Projects
		Satellite Connectivity This project is to compliment the Bandwidth Aggregation Project.	Report on previous project on connectivity	A more effective and efficient service delivery.	Completion of bandwidth deployment to identified USPF projects	Proposed pilot locations across the six (6) geopolitical zones for the year 2024	Head Infrastructure Projects
		Information Resource Centre (E-Library) The project is designed to provide platform for online fully cross searchable portal for displaying library documents and educational database to ensure that users have unlimited access to wealth of knowledge, educational materials on wide range of subjects with international	Report on previous projects Viability of project sites	Access to quality educational material e.g. books, journals Increasing the quality of research projects	All selected institutions equipped with e-library solutions Minimum of three (3) E-library desk officers at each beneficiary institution trained	Twenty Four (24) Public libraries	Head, IT Projects

S/N	USPF Programme	Sample Projects [12]	Dependencies	Expected Outcomes	KPIs	Targets[13]	Project Owner
		standard quality of materials					
		E-Connect Center The E-Connect Centre (Hub) will serve as an ICT centralized hub to coordinate the activities of all e-related projects of the USPF in the country.	Existing USPF Access Projects	Robust and efficient monitoring of all Access Projects.	% of USPF Access Projects connected to the hub.	Establishment of a hub by the year 2026	Head, IT Projects
2.5	**Development and Deployment of Local Content**	**Development and Deployment of Local Content** The project will enable the USPF support the deployment of relevant local content to stimulate adoption of ICT	Report on previous projects Condition of proposed DNC locations Locally relevant Content	More Nigerians and Nigerian curriculum online	No of Local Content and applications deployed	Four Hundred and Eighty (480) DNC schools	Head, IT Projects

S/N	USPF Programme	Sample Projects 12	Dependencies	Expected Outcomes	KPIs	Targets[13]	Project Owner
GOAL 3: INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT							
3.1	**Human Capital Development**	**Capacity Development for USP Board and Secretariat** This project will involve the identification of skills and competency gaps within the USP Board and Secretariat and define interventions for bridging those gaps	Training Need Assessment	Ensure the USPF staff possess the appropriate mix of skills and competencies required to achieve the USPF's Vision Continuous enhancement of the requisite expertise and technical skills required to direct the affairs of the USPF effectively Enable USP Board to understand the dynamic in the ICT industry general and provision of universal service	Number of staff that participate in training that address identified gaps. Number of Board members able to participate in relevant programmes	All Board members and staff trained	HSCPM HLS HCS
3.2	**Performance Management**	**Development of an Annual Operating Plan** The objective of this project shall be to develop a plan which will highlight the specific activities which the USPF will	SMP M and E Report	An Operating Plan for each financial year	Number of Operating Plans developed by 2027	One Operating Plan developed each year	Head, Strategy and Corporate Performance Monitoring

S/N	USPF Programme	Sample Projects [12]	Dependencies	Expected Outcomes	KPIs	Targets[13]	Project Owner
		carry out to achieve its goals each year					
		Performance Management Review This project entails an analysis of quarterly performance reports to track project performance and organisational performance	Annual Operating Plan Quarterly performance report	Clarity regarding work expectations and performance standards Better management of the targets in each Annual Operating Plan	Percentage improvement in organisational performance results measured by percentage achievement of organizational targets	Improvement in organizational performance targets	Head Strategy and Corporate Performance
		Annual Report This project is to document the activities of the Fund each year	Annual Operating Plan Inputs from departments	Published Annual Reports Stakeholders understanding of activities of the Fund	Time of publication	5 Annual Reports published	Head Strategy and Corporate Performance
		Monitoring and Evaluation The project is designed to obtain feedback on completed projects as well as ensure sustainability of all programmes	Completed projects	Better articulation of beneficiaries based on the report Development of sustainability reports	Number of M & E conducted Percentage of projects covered in each exercise	Monitor/Evaluate 10% of each completed project 2 M & E exercises conducted each year	Head Strategy and Corporate Performance

S/N	USPF Programme	Sample Projects [12]	Dependencies	Expected Outcomes	KPIs	Targets[13]	Project Owner
		Mid-Term Review of the Strategic Management Plan The objective of this project shall be to review and update the Strategic Management Plan during mid-term to ensure the USPF's strategic goals and programmes are in line with current realities	SMP M &E Report	Updated Strategic Management Plan	1 review conducted between 2023 – 2027 Number of programmes and project introduced after review	Updated SMP	Head Strategy and Corporate Performance
3.3	**Operational Support Management**	**Board & Management Retreat** The project is to update Board members on trends and best practices in the industry while ensuring that synergy is created to enable the Board provide policy directions to the USP Secretariat. **Staff Retreat**	Constitution of Board Management approval	Improved relationship between Board and Management Improved relationship between Management and staff	Participation of all Board members Participation of all staff	Enhance Board & Management synergy 1 Retreat held annually	Head Strategy and Corporate Performance

S/N	USPF Programme	Sample Projects [12]	Dependencies	Expected Outcomes	KPIs	Targets[13]	Project Owner
		Development and standardisation of operational policies and procedures manuals and/or documentation of relevant operational manuals; The project will also involve the implementation of these processes	Management approval	Published Policies and Procedures Manual for each key process Uniformity, completeness and consistency in the performance of key tasks and processes	Number of Staff trained Policy Document development Improved service delivery measured by - % error rates in carrying out activities /tasks - Turnaround time in carrying out activities/ tasks	All Staff trained Policy Document by 2025 Specific targets will be defined for each process based on the review and/or update	Head Strategy and Corporate Performance
GOAL 4: STRATEGIC COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIPS							
4.1	Consultation and Collaboration	**Consultations with other relevant Government Agencies** These consultations are aimed at promoting coordination/ linkage of USPF's projects with other ministries/agencies/ departments and national/ regional development	Management approval	Unhindered deployment/implementation of ICT projects in designated areas across the country with consensus and support of other relevant stakeholders.	Number of Inter-agency collaborations	Successful collaborations/Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) with relevant government agencies every year	Head, Strategy and Corporate Performance Monitoring

S/N	USPF Programme	Sample Projects [12]	Dependencies	Expected Outcomes	KPIs	Targets[13]	Project Owner
		initiatives which use ICT as a tool for delivery					
		Engagement with other stakeholders This includes universities, colleges of education, secondary schools, and government agencies	Beneficiaries of USPF intervention programmes/projects	Improved/increased usage of USP intervention programmes and Projects	Number of engagements	Improved utilization of USPF intervention programmes and projects by the beneficiaries	Head, Strategy and Corporate Performance Monitoring
		Focused Industry Session The project shall provide a forum for the discussion of on-going issues/challenges faced by operators in extending ICT to the rural, unserved and underserved areas and possible steps for resolving such issues. The forum shall also provide a platform for collaboration with industry operators	Participation of operators and other relevant stakeholders	Improved/increased involvement of operators in the planning and USP implementation of Programmes and Projects	Number of sessions held	Five (5) sessions to be held	Head, Strategy and Corporate Performance Monitoring

S/N	USPF Programme	Sample Projects [12]	Dependencies	Expected Outcomes	KPIs	Targets[13]	Project Owner
		ICT Utilisation and Sustainability Project This project is designed to build the capacity of local Entrepreneurs, Community based organisation, beneficiaries and other user stakeholders	Participation of Stakeholders	Empower communities with information and knowledge to own and take advantage of ICT facilities in their locality	Number of capacity building workshops held	Fifteen (15) workshops to be held	Head Strategy and Corporate Performance
4.2	Strategic partnerships	**Technical support and capacity building** Fundingand expertise to supportUSPF with Edu-tech, Health-tech, and Agri-techinterventions.	Commitment of funding agency	The USPF interventions strengthened through strategic partnerships and collaboration with local and international organizations	Number of interventions received from the partnerships	Three (3) Partnerships/MoU signed.	Head Strategy and Corporate Performance

3.2. High-Level Project Timeline

Theschematic below presentsahigh-leveltimelinefor executing the projects defined in the SMP 2023 – 2027.The timeline for each project is defined in consideration of the dependencies and targets outlined for the project.

Table3:SMP2023– 2027 – High Level Project Timeline

S/N	PROJECTS	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
Goal 1						

S/N	PROJECTS	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
1.1.1	Update of USPF Access Gap Study	▬	▬	▬	▬	▬
1.1.2	Innovative ICT Solutions & Entrepreneurship Development	▬	▬	▬	▬	▬
1.2.1	USP Subsidy Determination	▬	▬	▬	▬	▬
1.3.1	Stakeholder Forum		▬		▬	
Goal 2v						
2.1.1	Backbone Transmission Infrastructure		▬	▬	▬	▬
2.1.2	University Inter Campus Connectivity UnICC) OFC)		▬	▬	▬	▬
2.2.1	Base Transceiver Station (BTS) AMPE	▬	▬	▬	▬	▬
2.3.1	Campus Connectivity NetworkCCN)	▬	▬	▬	▬	▬
2.3.2	Rural Broadband Initiative RuBI)		▬	▬		▬
2.4.2	Digital Nigeria Centre DNC)	▬	▬	▬	▬	▬
2.4.3	Tertiary Institution Digital Centre TIDC)	▬	▬	▬	▬	▬
2.4.4	E-Accessibility	▬	▬	▬	▬	▬
2.4.5	eHealth		▬	▬	▬	▬
2.4.6	Bandwidth Aggregation	▬	▬	▬	▬	▬
2.4.7	Information Resource Centre E-Library)		▬	▬	▬	▬
2.4.8	E-Agriculture			▬		
2.5.1	Development and Deployment of Local Content Applications	▬	▬			
Goal 3						
3.1.1	Capacity development for USP Board & Secretariat	▬	▬	▬	▬	▬

S/N	PROJECTS	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
3.2.1	Development of Annual Operating Plan	████	████	████	████	███
3.2.2	Review of Performance Management					
3.2.3	Publication of Annual report	████	████	████	████	████
3.2.4	Monitoring and Evaluation					
3.2.5	Mid Term Review of SMP			██		
3.3.1	Board and Management Retreat	████	████	████	████	███
3.3.2	Review & Standardisation of operational policies and procedure manual			██		
Goal 4						
4.1.1	Focused Industry Session	████	████	████	████	███
4.1.2	Consultations with other relevant Government Agencies	████	████	████	████	████
4.1.3	ICT Utilisation and Sustainability Project	████	████	████	████	███
4.2.1	Technical support and capacity building		██	██	██	██

3.3. Proposed Annual Targets

Table 4 outlines the proportion of the overall targets for the period 2023 – 2027 the USPF will strive to achieve in each year:

Table 4: USPF Projected Annual Plan

S/N	Programme	Project Name	Overall Target	Year 1 – 2023	Year 2-2024	Year 3-2025	Year 4-2026	Year 5 – 2027
1.1	Research Studies and Surveys	Update of the USPF Access Gap Study	Regional clusters updated by December 2027	Updated regional clusters	Updated regional clusters	Updated regional clusters	Updated regional clusters	Updated regional clusters
		Innovative ICT Solution & Entrepreneurship Development	10 young Entrepreneurs to develop the applications/services that are ready for the market	Identify 3 innovative applications/ services for incubation	Identify 3 innovative applications/ services for incubation	Identify 3 innovative applications/ services for incubation	Identify 3 innovative applications/ services for incubation	Identify 3 innovative applications/ services for incubation
1.2	Subsidy & Incentive	USP Subsidy Determination	Estimation and management of the total maximum allowable subsidy required for bridging the identified gap of ICT services for each of the identified locations in the Access Gap Clusters.	Subsidy estimates	Subsidy estimates	Subsidy estimates	Subsidy estimates	Subsidy estimates
1.3	Corporate Visibility	Stakeholder Consultative fora Geo-Political Zones)	1 Stakeholder forum Town Hall Meeting in the northern and southern region every year	N/A	1 consultation held in each of the 6 geopolitical zones 75% public awareness level of the USPF and its Programmes 60% of USPF community projects operated by community members	N/A	1 consultation held in each of the 6 geopolitical zones 75% public awareness level of the USPF and its Programmes 60% of USPF Community projects operated by community members	N/A

S/N	Programme	Project Name	Overall Target	Year 1 – 2023	Year 2-2024	Year 3-2025	Year 4-2026	Year 5 – 2027
2.1	National Backbone Connectivity	Backbone Transmission Infrastructure Project.	6000 km fibre backbone transmission infrastructure in the identified target areas Complete installation of OFC and supporting equipment	N/A	1000 Km Optic Fibre Cable	1000 Km Optic Fibre Cable	2000 Km Optic Fibre Cable	2000 Km Optic Fibre Cable
		University Inter-campus Connectivity Optic Fibre Cable).	Deployment of 600Km of Optic Fibre Cable OFC) between selected university campuses and corresponding annex campuses	N/A	Deployment of 150 Km OFC between University main & annex campuses	Deployment of 150 Km OFC between University main & annex campuses	Deployment of 150 Km OFC between University main & annex campuses	Deployment of 150 Km OFC between University main & annex campuses
2.2	Accelerated Mobile Phone Expansion	Base Transceiver Station project	300 BTS (Base Transceivers Stations) within access gap clusters across the country Activation of transmission links and network integration	100% voice & data coverage in 60 locations	100% voice & data coverage in 60 locations	100% voice & data coverage in 60 locations	100% voice & data coverage in 60 locations	100% voice & data coverage in 60 locations
		Upgrade of Connectivity project: BTS/RBTS (2G and 4G) Upgrade of existing 2G BTS/4G RBTS to enhance and improve connectivity in unserved, underserved and rural communities.	Upgrade of a total of Seventy Eight (78) existing 2G and 4G BTS and RBTS in the country	N/A	N/A	Pilot Phase – upgrade of one (1) each existing 2G and 4G BTS and RBTS in the Six geopolitical zones	Upgrade of Thirty Six (36) existing 2G and 4G BTS and RBTS – Six (6) in each geopolitical zones	Upgrade of Thirty Six (36) existing 2G and 4G BTS and RBTS – Six (6) in each geopolitical zones

S/N	Programme	Project Name	Overall Target	Year 1 – 2023	Year 2-2024	Year 3-2025	Year 4-2026	Year 5 – 2027
2.3	Local Access Network & Facilities	Campus Connectivity Networks CC)	70 higher institutions	14 locations	14 locations	14 locations	14 locations	14 locations
		Rural Broadband Initiative RuBI)	36 RuBI sites across the 6 geopolitical regions 2 Public Access Venues per location		12 RuBI sites	12 RuBI sites		12 RuBI sites
2.4	Connectivity for Development C4D)	Digital Nigeria Centre DNC)	370 schools	74 schools	74 schools	74 schools	74 schools provided with ICT tools and power solutions	74 schools provided with ICT tools and power solutions 40 schools
		Upgrade of School Knowledge Centers (SKC)	100 schools			30 Schools	30 schools	
		Tertiary Institution Digital Centre TIDC)	30 Tertiary institution	6 institutions	6 institutions	6 institutions	6 institutions	6 institutions
		ICT for Persons Living with Disabilities e-Accessibility)	60 organisations catering for persons living with disabilities	12 organisations	12 organisations	12 organisations	12 organisations	12 organisations
		e-Health	24 secondary health care/Hospitals		6 secondary health care/hospitals	6 secondary health care/hospitals	6 secondary health care/hospitals	6 secondary health care/hospitals
		Bandwidth Aggregation	1315 USPF Projects	263 USPF Projects	263 USPF Projects	263 USPF Projects	263 USPF Projects	263 USPF Projects
		Satellite Connectivity	Proposed across the 6 geopolitical zones			6 geopolitical Zones	6 Geopolitical Zones	

S/N	Programme	Project Name	Overall Target	Year 1 – 2023	Year 2-2024	Year 3-2025	Year 4-2026	Year 5 – 2027
		Information Resource centre e-Library)	24 Public libraries		6 Public libraries	6 Public libraries	6 Public libraries	6 Public libraries
		E-Connect Center	1 hub			1 center	Maintenance and support	Maintenance and support
		e-Agriculture	Improvement in agricultural practices seedlings, fertilizer access & usage, via dedicated e-platforms accessible to identified clusters			ICT platforms for e-agricultural		
2.5	Development and Deployment of Local Content Applications	Development and Deployment of Local Content Applications	480 DNC schools	146 DNC schools	146 DNC schools	146 DNC schools	N/A	N/A
3.1	Human Capital Management	Capacity Development for USP Board and Secretariat	All Board members and staff trained	100% identified skills gaps closed	100% identified skills gaps closed	100% identified skills gaps closed	100% identified skills gaps closed	100% identified skills gaps closed
3.2	Performance Management	Development of an Annual Operating Plan	An Operating Plan developed for each financial year	An Operating Plan developed in the Last Quarter of the preceding year	An Operating Plan developed in the Last Quarter of the preceding year	An Operating Plan developed in the Last Quarter of the preceding year	An Operating Plan developed in the Last Quarter of the preceding year	An Operating Plan developed in the Last Quarter of the preceding year
		Performance Management Review	Improvement in organizational performance targets annually	Improvement in organizational performance	Improvement in organizational performance	Improvement in organizational performance	Improvement in organizational performance	Improvement in organizational performance

S/N	Programme	Project Name	Overall Target	Year 1 – 2023	Year 2-2024	Year 3-2025	Year 4-2026	Year 5 – 2027
		Production of Annual Report	Annual Report of preceding year published by Quarter 4	Annual Report of preceding year published by Quarter 4	Annual Report of preceding year published by Quarter 4	Annual Report of preceding year published by Quarter 4	Annual Report of preceding year published by Quarter 4	Annual Report of preceding year published by Quarter 4
		Monitoring & Evaluation	Monitor/Evaluate 10% of each completed project Understand sustainability challenges	Evaluate 10% of each project	Evaluate 10% of each project	Evaluate 10% of each project	Evaluate 10% of each project	Evaluate 10% of each project
		Mid-Term Review of the Strategic Management Plan	1 review and production of updated SMP with redefined targets	N/A	N/A	1 review annually	N/A	N/A
		Board & Management Retreat BMR)	Enhance Board & Management synergy	1 BMR	1 BMR	1 BMR	1 BMR	1 BMR
		Review/update of existing operational policies and procedures manuals and/or documentation of relevant operational manuals	1 review	N/A	Annual review of policies and procedures manual	N/A	N/A	N/A
4.1	Consultation and Collaboration	Focused Industry Session	1 session held annually. 70% response rate to bid invitations for projects targeted at industry operators	1 session held with Industry stake holders 75% response rate to bid invitations	1 session held with Industry stake holders 75% response rate to bid invitations	1 session held with Industry stake holders 75% response rate to bid invitations	1 session held with Industry stake holders 75% response rate to bid invitations	1 session held with Industry stake holders 75% response rate to bid invitations

S/N	Programme	Project Name	Overall Target	Year 1 – 2023	Year 2-2024	Year 3-2025	Year 4-2026	Year 5 – 2027
		Consultation with other Government Agencies	One successful collaboration/memorandum of understanding with relevant government agencies every year to facilitate support/ cooperation for the implementation of USPF projects	Conduct consultation fora with identified government agencies	Conduct consultation fora with identified government agencies	Conduct consultation fora with identified government agencies	Conduct consultation fora with identified government agencies	One successful collaboration with relevant government agencies
		Engagement with other stakeholders	Improved utilization of USPF intervention programmes and projects by the beneficiaries			1 engagement	N/A	1 engagement
		ICT Utilisation and Sustainability Project	15 Workshops	Workshop in 3 zones	Workshop in 3 zones	Workshop in 3 zones	Workshop in 3 zones	Workshop in 3 zones
4.2	Strategic Partnership	Technical support and capacity building	Funding and expertise to support USPF with Edu-tech, Health-tech, and Agri-tech interventions	Concept Development	Capacity Building	Capacity Building	Capacity Building	Capacity Building