

There are currently not less than two million applications (for telephone services) on Nitel waiting list, especially in the urban centers. Having realised this major shortfall problem, the federal government recently enacted a decree (the Nigerian Communications Commission decree 75 of 1992) which has just been published. It "empowers private firms to provide and operate public pay-phones, install telephone lines and operate network links with the use of cable, radio frequencies and satellite within the country. They are also empowered to operate public mobile communication, community telephones and value-added network services as well as repair and maintain telecommunications facilities". Nitel has in the past five years secured foreign loans worth over US \$865 million. These include \$225 million from the World Bank, DM 441.18M from Germany and a \$170 million national telecommunication improvement project loan handled by ITT. Others are the \$100 million loan from the Japanese Overseas Economic Corporation Fund and \$100 million Turkish Loan.



In the area of international services, Nitel has recently installed two non digital earth stations and gateway in the country to compliment the two existing analogue gateways.

Despite the increased demand for telecommunication services, Nigeria lacks the financial and technological resources to enhance its expansion programmes. Opportunities for foreign participation exist in the following areas;

- Digital switching equipment and spare parts
- Digital transmission equipment and spare parts
- Cables
- External line plant
- Optic fibre
- Remote monitoring devices
- Testing equipment and tools
- Technician's maintenance vehicles
- Cellular mobile phones
- Paging systems/devices
- Associated spares for telecommunication installations

In 1992 Nitel introduced cellular phone services. 10,000 lines have so far being installed. Nitel has recently formed a joint venture company with digital communications of Atlanta to operate the cellular phone service. Voice mail and paging services have also been provided for in the network which takes off in march 1993.

OVERVIEW

In 1992, the Saudi Ministry of Posts, Telegraph and Telephones announced the first phase of a planned one million-plus telephone line expansion project valued in total at US \$2-3 billion. This will double the capacity of the Kingdom's existing telephone system. With this announcement, Saudi Arabia became one of the world's largest markets for telecommunications equipment and expertise.

The Kingdom's present telecommunications network incorporates a total of some 1.5 million telephone lines serving a total of 350 cities and villages, 30,000 telex lines, and 20,000 mobile telephones in 30 cities. Overall investment in the sector during the current Five-Year Plan could total as much as US \$6.5 billion.