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Returning to Nigeria

Country Information

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**The Nigerian unit of currency is the Naira, abbreviated NGN, or N before numerals.
In March 2012, NGN 1000 = CHF 5.70**

1. Health Care

The Health System

The principal arm of Government in health care delivery is the Federal Ministry of Health. The Ministry is charged with coordinating all health activities throughout the Federation.

Medical and health services are also the responsibility of the state governments, which maintain hospitals in the large cities and towns. Most of the state capitals have public and private hospitals, as well as specialised hospitals. Each city also has a university teaching hospital financed by the Federal Ministry of Health.

Public (State-owned) Hospitals: These consist of general hospitals, as well as university teaching and specialist hospitals. Charges are moderate but some of them lack equipment and adequate amenities. There are often delays and the large number of patients means that they may not be attended to promptly. Consultation and registration fees in government-owned hospitals are N500 (CHF 2.85). Laboratory tests cost between N700-N1,200 (CHF 4-6.84).

Private Hospitals: These are standard-sized hospitals. While some have adequate hospital equipment, others do not and have to refer patients to bigger hospitals for laboratory tests and X-rays. They are generally more expensive but are accessible to anyone who can afford their services. Consultation fees in private hospitals range from N10,000-N50,000 (CHF 57-285). Laboratory tests cost between N10,000-N100,000 (CHF 57-570) per test depending on type of medical laboratory test required.

The main health problem in Nigeria is malaria.¹ Malaria is the leading cause of morbidity and mortality, with transmission throughout the entire country.² It is preventable and treatable but malaria kills nearly one million people every year. In addition to the hundreds of thousand of Nigerians that die each year, malaria also makes millions of Nigerians sick. This single disease accounts for about 60% of outpatient visits, 30% of hospitalisations, 25% of deaths in children under one year old, and 11% of maternal deaths. It lays a heavy burden on Nigeria's families, communities, health system, and workforce.

Living in villages that are 25 kilometers from the nearest town and without a health clinic, there is the danger that no treatment will be available or that people will resort to herbal remedies. Though the rains are the lifeblood of local farming, they also bring with them the high season for malaria.

Other prevalent health problems are hypertension, diabetes, HIV, tuberculosis, cerebrum spinal meningitis, sickle cell disease, and typhoid. HIV and tuberculosis are treated free in Nigeria at almost all public hospitals (subject to the availability of drugs).

¹ <http://www.thementorinitiative.org/pdfs/Nigeria.pdf> consulted on Oct 26, 2009.

² <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/AFRICAEXT/NIGERIAEXTN>

Registering With a Health Insurance Company

It has not been easy for Nigeria to set up its National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS). The scheme was conceived in 1962 by the Halevi Committee, set up by Dr Majekodunmi when he was Health Minister under the Tafawa Balewa Government. It took a tortuous forty years before the programme was implemented on the 22 March 2002. The Scheme had been launched on 15 October 1997, whilst the enabling law establishing the Scheme, the National Health Insurance Scheme, Decree No 35 of 1999, was signed in May 1999. The Scheme is meant to guarantee easy access to health care and is envisioned as a panacea for Nigerian health care delivery problems. It is supposed to be a partnership between the government and the people in ensuring a healthy nation.

Under the present government, the Scheme started officially in July 2005 in the public sector. The private sector has now joined the Scheme.

Participation in the programme involves a contributor registering with NHIS approved Health Maintenance Organisations (HMOs). These are limited liability companies which may be formed as private or public bodies and are registered by the Scheme to facilitate the provision of health care benefits to the contributors. Thereafter, contributors register with a primary health care provider of their choice (private or public) from an NHIS approved list of providers supplied by their HMO. Personal details and a passport picture of you and your spouse and children will be required. Upon registration, a contributor will be issued with an identity card (ID) which has a personal identification number. Treatment is provided upon presentation of the ID card by the contributor. Contributors are free to change their primary care provider if they are not satisfied with its services after six months. The HMO is responsible for paying health care providers for their services³.

Rates of Contribution to the Scheme

Under the NHIS scheme, individuals are required to accept a 15% deduction from their basic salary, which will be set aside to cover their health needs. Individuals without jobs are not able to register with the scheme. The employer is expected to contribute 10% and the employee 5% of the total contribution. NHIS pays N550 (CHF 3.14) per person to Health Management Organisations in the scheme. This is usually paid to HMOs three months in advance and they, in turn, pay health service providers one month in advance. An estimated 700,000 people, mostly from the public sector are now in the scheme. Already, the NHIS has registered 20 HMOs.

NHIS is pushing for an amendment to the NHIS Act to bring self-employed individuals and those in the rural areas into the scheme. People outside formal employment would appear to gain most from participation. Under the Urban Self-Employed Social Health Insurance Programme those who choose to participate would belong to a socially cohesive group of more than 500 members, which must be occupation based. For example, taxi drivers, traders, welders etc., would need to band together in units to qualify. They would make a monthly payment of N120-N150 (CHF 0.68-0.85) for protection against the most common of ailments like malaria, typhoid fever, and diarrhoea. They would only need to present an NHIS participant's card at an approved health care service centre to receive treatment. There would be no need for a deposit. Participants requiring

³ [Http://nigeriafirst.org](http://nigeriafirst.org), consulted on 19 March 2009.

specialist or longer treatment would need to pay for the balance of their cost of treatment from what they are entitled from a common pool.⁴

NHIS proposes to ask that a common pool of funds be set up so that all collections currently being organised by individual HMOs would be pooled. The advantage of this would be to ensure that even if a specific HMO defaulted, those covered by the scheme would not be affected.

Medical Treatment

Generally, a deposit must be made before treatment is carried out and payment is due as soon as treatment is complete. Some organisations (both public and private) have contracts with health care providers to cater for the provision of services for their workforce.

If a returnee has a medical history, it is advisable to obtain a referral letter from the hospital where he or she was undergoing treatment. Otherwise, a returnee only needs to pay a registration fee to the hospital and be able to cover his or her own medical costs.

Medicines

Drugs are available but may be expensive. A compilation of medicines available in Nigeria is published in a book, *EMDEX: British National Formulary*⁵. There are many pharmacies throughout Nigeria. The National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) has worked hard to ensure that these pharmacies are regulated and sell genuine medicines to the Nigerian public. But, data obtained from a study in 36 countries from all World Health Organisation (WHO) geographical regions, and covering World Bank income groups, has revealed an alarming lack of essential medicines in the public sector⁶. The study, which included Nigeria, shows that this is driving patients to pay higher prices in the private sector, or go without any. Results show an average public sector availability of medicines of only 38% across surveys. This forces patients to buy medicines from the private sector where treatments are more expensive and often unaffordable. The results confirm that governments must do more to improve access to essential medicines as part of their efforts to make national health systems more efficient and equitable.

Psycho-Social Support

The Federal Ministry for Youth and Social Development has a Social Welfare department, which is responsible for the following:

- family and child welfare services;
- adoption and foster care of children;

⁴ www.nigeriafirst.org/printer_225

⁵ www.bnf.org

⁶ http://www.groundreport.com/Health_and_Science/WHO-Alerts-On-Scarcity-High-Cost-Of-Drugs-In-Nigeria, consulted on March 19, 2009.

- institutional care of juvenile delinquents;
- rehabilitation and vocational training of destitute and handicapped people;
- institutional care of the old people.

There is also a Federal Ministry of Women's Affairs, which supports the interests of women and children.

These ministries also have their equivalents at the state level and, with their state counterparts, are responsible for setting up homes to cater for vulnerable children, the underprivileged, and the elderly. Such institutions include motherless babies' homes, orphanages, old people's homes, rehabilitation and training centres for destitute people, vocational training centres for the disabled, and remand homes for juvenile offenders.

Other social welfare providers in Nigeria include charity organisations, churches, NGOs and development agencies working in Nigeria.

2. Housing

The Housing Situation

- Government owned housing. These are residential houses owned by the Federal or State Government or rented by them for their employees. They are usually allocated to civil servants and government employees of certain grades and categories. Rent for such houses is deducted monthly from salaries.
- Privately owned housing for the public. These are buildings owned by individuals and rented out to members of the public. Usually the landlord requests a minimum of two years rent as advance payment.
- Houses owned by companies, private organisations, banks etc. These are allocated to the staff of these organisations

How Can I Find an Apartment or House?

There are registered estate agents throughout Nigeria⁷. Clients approach them with details of the type of accommodation and location they are looking for, as well as their budget. Clients complete a form, which includes details of current residence, personal background, and current employment. Rent is payable upfront for a minimum of one year.

Examples of rents for two/three bedroom apartment

Type of accommodation	Location	Cost per annum (Naira)	CHF
	Lagos		
2-3 bedroom apartments	Dolphin Estate	400,000 -1,200,000	2,280 6,840
	Surulere	250,000 -950,000	1,425 5,415
	Ipaja	120,000 -200,000	684 1,140
	Ajah	350,000-1,500,000	1,995 8,550
	Abuja(Federal Capital Territory - FCT)	500,000 - 1,200,000	2,850 6,840
	Port Harcourt(Rivers state)	350,000 750,000	1,995 4,275
	Benin (Edo state)	100,000 -250,000	570 1,425
	Kano (Kano state)	100,000-150,000	570 855
	Makurdi (Benue state)	50,000-60,000	285-342
	Enugu (Enugu State)	100,000 -250,000	570 1,425
	Awka (Anambra State)	100,000 -250,000	570 1,425

⁷ <http://www.ip4properties.com> ,consulted on March 19, 2009.

Flats	Lagos		
3- bed	Ikeja, Government Reserved Area(GRA)	750,000	4,275
3 bed	Surulere and Yaba	250,000 -950,000	1,425 5,415
3 bed	Festac	450,000 - 500,000	2,565 2,850
2 bed		350,000 - 400,000	1,995 2,280
3 bed	Isolo	300,000 - 350,000	1,710 1,995
3 bed	Ijanikin(outskirts)	150,000 -300,000	855 1,710
3 bed	Apapa (GRA)	2,000,000 - 2,500,000	11,400 14,250
Flats	Victoria Island	3,500,000 - 4,500,000	19,950 25,650
	Benin City		
3- bed bungalow	GRA(low density)	250,000 - 300, 000	1,425 1,710
3 bed Bungalow	Medium density areas	280,000 - 350,000	1,596 1,995
Flats	High density (town centres)	250,000 - 300,000	1,425 1,710
	Outskirts	120,000-180,000	684 1,026
	Kano		
2 bed flat	Medium density area	130,000 - 150,000	741 855
3 bed flat	Hotoro,Gyadi,Gyadi, zoo Road, Gwammaja	180,000 - 200,000	1,026 1,140
3 bed flat		150,000 -180,000	855 1,026
2 bed flat		140,000-150,000	798 855
	Port Harcourt		
3 bed flat	Medium density area	300,000-350,000	1,710 1,995

3– bed	GRA(Low density)	450,000-500,000	2,565 2,850
Bungalow (3 bed)		700,000-900,000	3,990-5,130
	Abuja		
Flats	Maitama, Asokoro, Wuse11 (Low density)		
3 bed		2.7 - 3.5 million	15,390- 21,090
2 bed		1.8 – 2.5 million	10,260- 14,250
3 bed	Wuse, Zones 1-6, Garki Area 1-11, Utako (Medium density)	1.9-2.5 million	10,830-14- 250
2 bed	High density: suburbs: Kubwa, Karu,Lugbe etc	600,000-800,000	3,420-4560
3 bed bungalow		1m-1.5 million	5,700-8,550
2 bed bungalow		800,000-1.3 million	4,560-7,410

Buying Property

Private homes are bought through estate agents that identify properties for sale⁸. There are no basic requirements for purchasing houses except the availability of funds. Some financial institutions will provide loans to individuals or companies for purchase of properties, which needed to be underwritten with collateral.

Social Grants for Housing

No social grants are available in Nigeria.

Housing Provisions for Vulnerable Cases

There are shelters and safe houses for victims of trafficking in at least seven states in Nigeria: Lagos; Abuja; Benin City; Enugu; Sokoto; Kano; Akwa Ibom. They are managed by a government agency, the National Agency for the Prohibition of Traffic in Persons (NAPTIP). Two of the shelters, in Lagos and Benin City, were set up by IOM Nigeria and then transferred to the government counterpart.

There are also shelters for battered women, for street children, and homes for abandoned babies, which are run by NGOs and State governments.

⁸ <http://www.ip4properties.com> , consulted on 21 March 2009.

3. Education

The Education System

The Nigerian government has the main responsibility for education but, at present, the private sector is more active in establishing schools in Nigeria. This has led to an increase in private schools for primary and secondary education. Private schools are usually more expensive than the state schools but there is some variation amongst them.⁹ More one-on-one teaching takes place in a lot of private schools.

Universal Basic Education (UBE) was formally launched by the former President, Olusegun Obasanjo, on 30th September 1999 to provide free universal and compulsory education for every Nigeria child of school age, from primary to the Junior Secondary School (JSS) level. This programme is followed in the state schools.

Access to Primary School, High School and University

Primary/Elementary schools. Children receive six years of full tuition (years 1 to 6) at primary school level from the age of 4. Primary schools mostly deliver a western style education although, in some parts of the country, full time Koran schools impart knowledge gained from Islam. Primary school education is free in all state schools in Nigeria.

Secondary School/High School Secondary level education in Nigeria lasts six years, split into three years of junior secondary schooling and three of senior secondary education. Passing the Common Entrance Examination is a requirement for entry into secondary schools. Students do not pay tuition fees in public (state) schools. However, they pay for uniforms (N1,500-N2,500; CHF 8.55-14.25), PTA Levy (N300 or CHF 1.71), and books (N3,000-N5,000 or CHF 17.1-28.5). Public schools are generally less expensive but many are of a low standard. Federal colleges (including Queens College and Kings College) have tried to maintain a good standard in the face of many difficulties.

Private schools are expensive but offer a good quality of education. Private secondary schools such as Lekki British International High School¹⁰ accept fees only in US dollars. The total annual fee (tuition and full boarding) for the Junior High School is \$18,000. The total annual fee (tuition and boarding) for the Senior High School is \$19,500. There is a development fee of \$750 at both levels. The application fee of N10,000 (CHF 57) is non-refundable. Tuition and boarding fees are payable in three instalments.

University Pupils need to pass the Joint Admission & Matriculation Board (JAMB) Examination in addition to obtaining a minimum of five credits at High School, or through the exams of the West African Examination Council (WAEC), or the National Examinations Council (NECO)¹¹. Universities have started to set their own admission exams for candidates because the results are sometimes manipulated in these external exams. There are private, federal

⁹ The Education System in Nigeria by Ronke Nwadike, February 2007.

¹⁰ www.lekkibritishhigh.com consulted on November 2 2009

¹¹ www.necportal.com

and state universities: Fees for private universities range from N320,000–N455,000 (CHF 1,824–2,593.5) depending on the course of study. For federal and state universities, fees range from N100,000–N150,000 (CHF 570–855) per session. Accommodation in federal universities officially costs N2,590–N3,000 (CHF 14.76–17.1) per session for bed space.

Applicants need to pass the POLYJAMB Examination to enter polytechnics and colleges of education

Recognition of Foreign Diplomas

Foreign diplomas are recognised and accepted in Nigeria. Verification is carried out by individual schools to ascertain their authenticity.

Vocational Training Courses

Nigerian poverty eradication schemes, such as NAPEP, and federal and state initiatives generally do have programmes offering access to training and education. Vocational training is available in the following areas (not an exhaustive list):

- computer training;
- hair dressing;
- catering / hotel management;
- fashion design;
- secretarial administration;
- hat making;
- adult literacy class;
- pottery & Ceramic training;
- cosmetology;
- auto-mechanic;
- carpentry;
- refrigerator repair and servicing;
- basket weaving;
- arts and crafts work;
- soap making.

Education for Vulnerable Cases

There are special schools for some categories of vulnerable people such as the Pacelli School for the Blind, Lagos, Atanda Olu School for the Handicapped; and SOS Social Centre.

4. The Economic Situation and Employment

The Economic Situation

The eradication of extreme poverty and hunger is the first goal of the government within the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). From 1980 to 1996, the proportion of poor people in the population rose from 28.1% in 1980 to 65.6% in 1996. That is to say, there were 17.7 million poor people in 1980 and 67.1 million poor people in 1996. By 2015, it is estimated that between 30.1 million and 40.4 million people will still be living in poverty.¹²

Employment Opportunities

Lagos, Abuja, and Port Harcourt are the major cities in Nigeria and the cost of living (rent, food, and transport) is generally higher than in other states. It is extremely difficult to find jobs in these places.

Adverts in the newspapers for vacancies attract a huge response but decisions are based on the recommendations of qualified personnel in organisations. Employment opportunities are also circulated on the websites of companies and organisations.

Banks have a high turnover of employees, especially in their marketing and business development departments. Individuals are more likely to be posted outside the major cities. Salaries in banks range from N100,000 (CHF 570) to N1,500,000 (CHF 8,550) or more per month depending on the level of the official.

There has recently been an upsurge in employment with the telecommunications industry because more private telephone operators are being licensed to operate in Nigeria. Again, vacancies are internal and are spread by word of mouth. Adverts in national newspapers are reserved for very technical and professional positions. Salaries range from N150,000 (CHF 855) to N700,000 (CHF 3,990) or more.

The most common vacancies advertised in the newspapers are for marketing and sales personnel in manufacturing companies, financial institutions and advertising agencies, etc. These organisations need personnel capable of promoting their businesses and selling their products. They have a high turnover of staff because they change personnel if staff do not perform to standard. Salary ranges from N15,000 (CHF 85.5) to N150,000 (CHF 855) per month, depending on qualifications, years of experience and type of company.

What Are the Requirements for Accessing the Labour Market?

Required documents:

- curriculum vitae;

¹² www.appg-popdevrh.org.uk/Publications/Population

- three references from a former employer, or former educational institution, or an individual of note;
- foreigners need a valid resident's permit.

Unemployment Assistance

The National Directorate of Employment (NDE) came into existence on 26 March 1986, following the recognition of a compelling need for the establishment of a permanent institutional mechanism to tackle the problems of unemployment in Nigeria. The Directorate's enabling Act,¹³ set up NDE as an employment agency charged with responsibility for designing and implementing programmes to combat mass unemployment. The NDE has a remit to articulate policies aimed at developing programmes with labour intensive potential. It also maintains a data bank of employment and vacancies in Nigeria, with a view to acting as a clearing house linking job seekers with vacancies.

NDE has developed four major programmes: Vocational Skills Development (VSD); Small Scale Enterprises (SSE); Rural Employment Promotion (REP); and Special Public Works (SPW). The objectives of these job creation programmes are achieved through the delivery of the following training strategies: vocational skills acquisition; entrepreneurship and business training; rural employment promotion, labour-based works, and employment counselling; and the resettlement of trained beneficiaries to set up their own businesses.¹⁴

The Pension System

Nigeria had maintained a Pay As You Go defined benefit pension scheme. This was burdened with many problems and increasingly became unsustainable. Many Nigerian pensioners were unable to collect their pension when it fell due. This was because there was no computerized database for documentation. The processing was carried out manually by staff which made it difficult to trace people's files. In 2004 the Pension Reform Act was passed and the National Pension Commission (PENCOM) was set up.

The new scheme is mandatory for all workers in the public service of the Federation and in the Federal Capital territory. Companies in the private sector, where the total number of employees is five or more, joined the contributory scheme at its commencement.

Under the scheme both employees and employers contribute to an individual pension fund. Contributions to the new pension scheme are tax free.

¹³ CAP 250 Laws of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 (formally Decree No 29 of 1989)

• ¹⁴ www.servenigeria.com/misc/contacts/labour.

Rate of contributions to the scheme:

Sector	%
Public sector	
Employees	7.5
Employers	7.5
Military	
Employees	2.5
Employers	12.5
Private sector	
Employees	7.5
Employers	7.5

The employee registers with a Pension Fund Administrator (PFA) of his choice by opening an account in his name, which is known as a Retirement Savings Account (RSA). The individual can chose a PFA from the list of licenced PFAs published by PENCOM. This individual account belongs to the employee and will remain with him through life. He may change employers or PFAs but the account remains the same.

Documentation Required

The personal documentation that is required is similar to that used in opening bank accounts. You will be given an Account Opening Form by the PFA and required to fill in personal information, such as name, date of birth, sex, marital status, state of origin, local government area, address, employment information. You should also submit at least one passport photograph.

Foreign Pensions

Foreign pensions are not recognised.

Are There Employment Projects for Returnees?

In February 2009, the Ministry of Labour and Productivity announced plans for a national summit on employment, particularly targeting Nigerians overseas. This has yet to come to fruition.

5. Banking system and Business Set-up opportunities

The Banking System

The Nigerian banking system has undergone remarkable changes over the years in terms of the number of institutions it has and their ownership structure, as well as the depth and breadth of operations. These changes have been influenced largely by challenges posed by deregulation of the financial sector, globalisation of operations, technological innovations and the adoption of supervisory and prudential requirements that conform to international standards.

The Structure of The Nigerian Financial System

Regulatory Authorities

The Nigerian financial system comprises bank and non-bank financial institutions which are regulated by the Federal Ministry of Finance (FMF), the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), the Nigeria Deposit Insurance Corporation (NDIC), the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), the National Insurance Commission (NIC), the Federal Mortgage Bank of Nigeria (FMBN), and the National Board for Community Banks (NBCB).

The Federal Ministry of Finance (FMF)

The Federal Ministry of Finance advises the Federal Government on its fiscal operation and co-operates with CBN on monetary matters. Recent amendment to the laws of the Central Bank of Nigeria compels it to report through the Federal Ministry of Finance to the Presidency.

The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN)

The CBN is the apex regulatory authority of the financial system. It was established by the Central Bank of Nigeria Act of 1958 and commenced operations on 1st July 1959. Among its primary functions, the Bank promotes monetary stability and a sound financial system, and acts as banker and financial adviser to the Federal Government, as well as banker of last resort to the banks. The Bank also encourages the growth and development of financial institutions.

Commercial Banks

Commercial banks perform three major functions, namely the acceptance of deposits, granting of loans, and the operation of the payment and settlement mechanism. Since the Government commenced active deregulation of the economy in September 1986, the commercial banking sector has continued to witness rapid growth, especially in terms of the number of institutions and product innovations in the market. The number of commercial banks and their branches rose, respectively, from 30 and 2,397 in 1986 to 64 and 2,402 in 1996. This was despite the closure of many branches during structural rationalisation. The minimum capitalisation of both commercial and merchant banks has been increased to a uniform level of N500 million (CHF 2,850,000) (from N50 million -CHF 285,000- and N40 million -CHF 228,000- respectively). The commercial banks continue to dominate the banking sector, accounting for 82.6% of the banking system total assets and deposit liabilities in 1996. The total assets of the commercial banks increased to N536,057.9

million (CHF 3,055.53 million) while deposit liabilities rose to N225,298.7 million (CHF 1,284.2025 million) in 1996.

Money Transferred from Abroad?

Cash can be received from any country via the financial institutions and banks. Funds are transferred from banks or authorised financial institutions abroad to banks in Nigeria via money transfer services such as Western Union Money Transfer, and Money Gram.

Business for Vulnerable Cases

There are no specific opportunities to set up businesses for vulnerable cases. Every opportunity that exists is open to all comers.

6. Customs

Customs Regulations

The following personal items are exempt from import duty:¹⁵

- a) Personal and household effects, the property of and accompanying a passenger, to the extent permitted by the Board and subject to any condition imposed by it;
- b) Unused personal effects, the property of a passenger, and gifts not exceeding a value of N50,000.00 (CHF 285), excluding jewellery, photographic equipment, electronic and other luxury goods;
- c) The property accompanying a temporary visitor to Nigeria, to the extent permitted by the Board and subject to any conditions imposed by it;
- d) Personal and household effects, the property of a passenger, landed at any Customs Port, Customs Airport and Customs Station within two months of the arrival of the passenger or within such further period as the Board may allow, to the extent permitted by the Board and subject to any conditions imposed by it; and
- e) Personal and household effects of a citizen of Nigeria who has been resident in a place outside the limits of the jurisdiction of Nigeria for not less than nine months.

¹⁵ <http://www.customs.gov.ng> , consulted on March 26, 2009.

7. Transport



Base 802143 (R00931) 5-93

Source: CIA World Factbook

The Transport and Road System

- railways: 3,557 km;
- highways: 194,394 km, of which 60,068 km (including 1,194 km of expressways) is paved and 134,326 km is unpaved (1998 est.);

- waterways: 8,600 km (Niger and Benue Rivers and smaller rivers and creeks);
- ports and harbours: Calabar, Lagos, Onne, Port Harcourt, Sapele, Warri;
- airports: 36;
- heliport: 1

The government has begun to repair the country's poorly maintained road network. Because Nigeria's railroads are in a parlous condition, the government is trying to rectify the situation by privatising the Nigerian Railroad Corporation. It is also pursuing a strategy of partial port privatisation by granting concessions to private port operators so that they can improve the quality of port facilities and operations. Railways in Nigeria are operated by the Nigerian Railway Corporation.

Railways

In 2003, Nigeria's poorly maintained rail system had 3,557 kilometres of track, 3,505 kilometres of which were narrow gauge, with the remainder standard gauge. The country has two major railway lines. One connects Lagos on the Bight of Benin with Nguru in the northern state of Yobe. The other connects Port Harcourt in the Niger Delta with Maiduguri in the north-eastern state of Borno. In March 2006, Nigeria and Niger were expected to move forward with plans to establish a rail link between the two countries. Nigeria is also seeking a rail link with Cameroon but discussions are more contentious in the aftermath of the International Court of Justice's 2002 verdict in favor of Cameroon on the issue of control of the Bakasi Peninsula. In order to remedy the poor condition, inefficiency, and losses of the nation's railroads, the government is seeking to privatise the Nigerian Railroad Corporation. Under the privatisation plan, three separate concessions of 25–30 years would be granted to private sector companies to run railroads in the western, central, and eastern regions¹⁶.

Highways

Nigeria has roughly 113,000 kilometres of surfaced roads, but they are poorly maintained and are even cited as a cause of the country's high rate of traffic fatalities. However, in 2004, Nigeria's Federal Roads Maintenance Agency (FERMA) began to patch up the 32,000 kilometre federal roads network. The rainy season and poor equipment pose challenges for road maintenance but in 2005 FERMA began a more substantial rehabilitation.

Note: Many of the roads reported as paved may be gravelled. Because of poor maintenance and years of heavy freight traffic (in part the result of the failure of the railroad system), much of the road system is barely usable.

Workers who do not own cars resort to going to work in buses. During rush hours, the bus stops are crowded and there is usually a rush to get into the buses.

Waterways

Nigeria has 8,600 kilometres of inland waterways. The most important are the Niger River and its tributary, the Benue River.

¹⁶ www.nrc-ng.org consulted on March 22, 2009.

Airports

Nigeria's principal airports are Murtala Muhammad Airport in Lagos and Mallam Aminu International in the northern state of Kano. Three other international airports are located in Abuja, Kaduna, and Port Harcourt. Overall, Nigeria's airports, whether international or regional, suffer from a poor reputation for operational efficiency and safety. Private domestic air carriers began to win business at the expense of Nigeria Airways, the former government-owned national airline which was declared bankrupt in 2004. The national flag carrier of Nigeria is now Virgin Nigeria Airways, a joint venture between Nigerian private investors and the UK-based Virgin Atlantic Airways, with the backing of the Nigerian government

Transport between Major Cities

- Land transport: cars and buses cost approximately N1,000 (CHF 5.7) – N4,000 (CHF 22.8).
- Air transport: tickets cost N15,000 (CHF 85.5) – N25,000 (CHF 142.5) (depending on city).
- Railway: there are trains between some cities.

Vulnerable Cases

There are no special means of transport available for vulnerable cases.



IOM International Organization for Migration
OIM Organisation Internationale pour les Migrations
OIM Organización Internacional para las Migraciones

8. Telecommunications and Postal Services

The Telecommunication System

The Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) is the national regulatory authority for the telecommunications industry in Nigeria¹⁷. The broad business purpose of NCC, as set out in Decree 75 of 1992, is to facilitate private sector participation in telecommunications service delivery and to co-ordinate and regulate the activities of the operators to ensure consistency in availability of service delivery and fair pricing.

Post

In contemporary Nigeria, the postal service is still the most affordable means of communication for most of the population. Interestingly, the Post has in some ways become stronger as it has turned to new technology to increase the range of its services. The Nigerian Postal Service (NIPOST) has come a long way, especially as a service provider in the Postal Industry. It is a member of the Global Postal Family (Universal Postal Union), and the Pan African Postal Union (PAPU) with about 4,000 postal establishments¹⁸.

Phone

Landline phones are operated by Nigerian Telecommunications limited (NITEL), as well as private telecom operators, like Starcomms, Multilinks, MTS & ZOOM mobile (Formerly RELTEL).

Internet

The telecommunications regulator, Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) has licenced 38 Internet Service Providers to sell internet services but only 12 ISPs are currently active. Some of the service providers are: LINKSERVE, NOVA, CYBERSPACE LTD, ZOOM, STARCOMMS LTD, MULTILINKS, MICROCOM SYSTEMS LTD, HYPERIA, COBRANET, amongst others. Internet access is widely available in various parts of the country.

Mobile Phone

With the introduction of GSM in Nigeria, mobile phones are a common means of communication in Nigeria. Mobile phone networks in Nigeria include:

- Glo Mobile by Globalcom Nigeria Limited;
- ZAIN formerly known as CELTEL;

¹⁷ <http://www.ncc.gov.ng> , consulted on March 20, 2009.

¹⁸ <http://www.nipost.gov.org>, consulted on March 20, 2009.

- MTN Nigeria by MTN Communications Limited;
- VISAFONE by Visafone Communications Limited;
- ETISALAT by ETISALAT Communications Limited.

List of abbreviations

NHIS	National Health Insurance Scheme
HMO	Health Maintenance Organization
NAFDAC	National Agency for Food & Drug Administration and Control
WHO	World Health Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
FCT	Federal Capital Territory
GRA	Government Reserved Area
NAPTIP	National Agency for the Prohibition of Traffic in Persons
UBE	Universal Basic Education
JAMB	Joint Admissions Matriculations Board
NECO	National Examinations Council
WAEC	West African Examinations Council
NAPEP	National Poverty Eradication Programme
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
NDE	National Directorate for Employment

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For more information on return and reintegration possibilities in Nigeria, please visit www.ch.iom.int