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For Immediate Release

LIFTING OF BAN ON SALE AND REPLACEMENT OF SIM CARDS

On 16th April, UCC wrote to operators informing them to resume Swapping and replacing Sim Cards using the Electronic Biometric Card Readers provided by the National Identification Registration Authority (NIRA).

Today, the Commission has provided connectivity to the Application Programming Interface (API) at NIRA and Operators can now match and conduct real-time online verification of customer's information with the National Identification database.

Accordingly, Telecommunication Operators who have deployed online Electronic Biometric Card Readers can now resume issuance of SIM Cards to both new and existing customers using the real-time online verification system.

With regards to new SIM Card sales, SIM upgrades, SIM swaps, and SIM replacements, operators were required to STRICTLY adhere to the followings conditions;

1. A customer seeking to acquire, upgrade or replace a SIM Card must physically appear and present his or her original National Identification Card to an operator's designated customer care agent at a designated customer care center or registration point.
2. The Operator must verify the authenticity of the National Identification Card using an Electronic Biometric Card Reader, match the applicant's live biometrics with the biometrics on the card, and obtain real-time verification with the NIRA database through the API.

For avoidance of doubt, where, for whatever reason, the operator is unable to conduct online real-time verification of the customer's information with NIRA's national ID database, the operator should not proceed with the issuance, upgrade or replacement of the SIM Card.

3. The Operator must obtain a fresh Photograph of the applicant.
4. The Operator must register the applicant for the SIM Card, and ensure that the applicant expressly gives authority to the Telecom Operator to access and match his or her details with the National identification database maintained by NIRA.

5. The Operator must retain a record of all registration details of the applicant.

With regards to lost SIM Cards, the applicant must present a valid letter from the Uganda Police Force confirming loss of the customer's SIM Card.

For non-Ugandans, Telecom Operators must STRICTLY observe the following conditions;

1. The applicant for a SIM Card, whether new or replacement, must physically appear and present his or her original Passport to the operators designated customer service center.
2. Non Ugandans shall only be allowed to purchase SIM Cards upon the production of an Original valid passport, with a valid visa or resident permit.
3. The non-Ugandan applicant should present a recent passport photograph, which shall be attached to the SIM Card registration form.
4. The SIM Card issued should only be active for the period of the validity of the customer's Visa or resident permit. The Operator must deactivate the SIM Card upon expiry of the customer's Visa or resident permit.

All Ugandan nationals without valid National Identification cards are advised to contact NIRA for guidance on the registration process and obtain National Identification Cards before they may be allowed to acquire, upgrade or replace SIM Cards.

Operators shall be individually held liable for any SIM Card registered, upgraded or replaced contrary to these guidelines.

For more information, please contact:

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