Biometrics Verification Number (BVN)

All YOU NEED TO KNOW

With the increasing incidents of compromise on conventional security systems (password and PIN), there is a high demand for greater security for access to sensitive or personal information in the Banking System. In recent times, biometric technologies have been used to analyze human characteristics as an enhanced form of authentication for real-time security processes.

Biometrics refers to identifying an individual based on physiological or behavioral attributes – fingerprint, signature etc.

The Central Bank of Nigeria through the Banker’ Committee and in collaboration with all banks in Nigeria on February 14, 2014 launched a centralized biometric identification system for the banking industry tagged Bank Verification Number (BVN). For more information, visit http://bvn.com.ng

What you need to know about BVN

- A unique ID number shall be issued to every Bank customer at enrolment and linked to every account that the customer has in ALL Nigerian Banks.
- Individuals shall be required to submit an acceptable means of identification as prescribed for enrolment.
- Customers of banks shall be required to enroll within a fixed period after which they shall no longer be able to operate their Bank accounts.
- Capturing of all ten (10) fingers and facial image will be adopted.
- For authentication purposes, individuals performing banking transactions (e.g. applying for loans) shall be required to identify themselves using their biometric features which will be matched against information in the central database.
- Update of customer information shall be done at their Bank Branches physically.
- Banks shall be prompted during account opening and credit check if a customer has been blacklisted by ANY Nigerian Bank.
- The BVN and unique features of an individual shall be used in conjunction with a PIN on a point of transaction.

The Benefits

- BVN gives a unique identity that can be verified across the Nigerian Banking Industry (not peculiar to one Bank)
- Customers Bank Accounts are protected from unauthorized access
- It will address issues of identity theft, thus reduce exposure to fraud
- The BVN will enhance the Banking Industry chances of being able to fish out blacklisted customers
- Reduce queue in Banking Halls
- Standardized efficiency of Banking operations
- The Customers unique BVN is accepted as a means of identification across ALL Nigerian Banks

How to enroll for BVN

- Walk into any Wema Bank branch
- Fill and submit the BVN Enrolment form.
- An acknowledgment slip with the transaction ID is issued to you
- Within 24hours the system confirms your application, your BVN is generated, and you receive an SMS for pickup.
- Visit http://bvn.com.ng for more information

Frequently Asked Questions about BVN

Q1: What is a BVN?
BVN means Bank Verification Number

Q2: What is the Goal of the Bank Verification Number?
The goal of the Bank Verification Number (BVN) is to uniquely verify the identity of each Bank's customer for 'know your customer' (KYC) purposes

Q3: What is Enrolment?
Enrolment is the process of capturing a customer's details which includes fingerprint and facial image after which a BVN is generated.

Q4: How does a Customer get a BVN?
A customer enrols at any branch of a bank where he/she has an account or intends to open an account.

Q5: Must every customer have a BVN, is it Compulsory?
Yes it is.

Q6: How long does it take to get a BVN?
It takes up to 24hrs after Enrolment to get a BVN.

Q7: What is the Benefit of enrolling for a BVN?
The BVN helps to reduce fraud, increase the efficiency of banking operations and also enable customer access to future credit facilities.

Q8: How is the BVN communicated to the customer?
Once the BVN is generated, the bank would inform you of your BVN. All customers would receive SMS alerts.

Q9: If a customer forgets his/her BVN what should the customer do?
The customer should contact his/her bank where the enrolment was carried out, to retrieve the number.
Q10: How/Where can you update customer information? E.g. In case of change of address?
The customer goes to his/her bank and follows the bank’s processes for updating customer information. A customer can update his/her information only at the bank where he/she has an account.

Q11: Does the BVN change when customers update their record?
No, the BVN doesn’t change.

Q12: When does my BVN expire and how do I renew?
The BVN expires after 10 years. After 10 years of the issuance of the BVN, the customer goes back to his/her bank to re-enroll.

Q13: Does my BVN number remain the same for Life?
Yes it does.

Q14: Can a customer Enrol in one bank and get the BVN from another bank?
No. The customer can only pick up his/her BVN at any branch of the same Bank he/she enrolled.

Q15: If a person steals another customer’s BVN and comes to the bank what happens?
The person’s live fingerprint will not match what is stored on the customer’s record.

Q16: After the BVN has been generated, what next?
A customer’s identity can now be verified against their BVN.

Q17: Does a customer have to be physically present to Enrol?
Yes, because the customer’s physical features e.g. fingerprints have to be captured.

Q18: What is the Enrolment procedure for corporate accounts?
Individuals who are signatories to corporate accounts will enroll and their BVNs would be linked to the corporate account by the Banks.

Q19: Can minors be enrolled?
No, only bank-able adults can be enrolled.

Q20: What is Verification?
Verification refers to the process of confirming a customer’s identity.

Q21: What is Offline Verification?
Offline verification will authenticate the customer by comparing the fingerprint or the facial image with the data stored on the BVN card.

Q22: What happens if a customer is an amputee?
The facial features of the customer will be captured as fingerprints will not be required for Amputees.

Q23: Will biometric function be implemented on POS and ATM terminals, and if yes, how will it work?
It will be implemented at a later stage. More details to come.

Q24: How would Bank customers Living outside Nigeria enroll?
Bank customers living outside Nigeria would have to come back to the country to enroll.

Q25: Who does a customer contact with regards to any biometrics complaint?
The customer should contact his/her bank.

Q26: Would a customer have to go to all Banks where he/she has an account to Enrol?
No, once a customer is enrolled at one bank and a BVN is generated, the customer only has to take the BVN to other banks to link such accounts.

Q27: Are customers’ information secure?
Yes they are, the details are encrypted and stored in a secure database.

Q28: Is it possible to start an enrolment and finish later? Can it be saved like a draft?
No, because the enrolment is done real time, it is necessary that it is completed in one session.

Q29: What happens if a customer comes to enrol with bandaged/injured fingers?
Customers with injuries or bandaged fingers are advised to return for enrolment once fingers are healed. However if you require special exemption please contact your Bank.

Q30: Can a customer choose which of his/her accounts will be linked to the BVN?
No, a customer cannot, all accounts would be linked.

Q31: During Facial capture can a customer leave his/her glasses on?
No a customer cannot leave his/her glasses on during facial capture.

Q32: What is the basic identification needed for enrolment?
It depends on the level of account the customer wants to open. Please contact your bank.

Q33: For joint accounts how does the linking work?
All signatories of the accounts shall be linked.

Q34: If a customer doesn’t have a means of identification can the customer’s data still be captured?
Yes, please refer to question 32

Q35: After a customer has enrolled and collected his/her BVN, Would the customer still be required to provide another means of identification at the point of transaction?
No. A formal identification is not needed because verification is done at the point of transaction.

Q36: Since I am a Bank customer and the Bank already has my information, do I have to fill an enrolment form?
Yes, everybody fills a form irrespective of an existing account holder.

Q37: Is there a deadline for every bank customer to be enrolled?
Yes, CBN has June 30th, 2015 as the deadline.