

Report On The Nigeria E-Government Summit 2023, Powered By Digiserve Networks Services, In Partnership With The Association Of Telecoms Companies Of Nigeria (ATCON), The Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), Internet Exchange Point Of Nigeria (IXPN) And The Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), Held On Thursday September 28, 2023 At The Sheraton Hotel And Towers, Ikeja, Lagos.

1.0. Preamble

The Nigeria eGovernment Summit 2023 was held on Thursday, September 28 at the Sheraton Hotel and Towers, Ikeja from 8am to 5pm. The eGovernment Summit, which had 52 speakers, was organised by DigiServe Newark Services, in partnership with the Association of Telecoms Companies of Nigeria (ATCON), the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), Internet Exchange Point Of Nigeria (IXPN) and the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), with the theme: eGovernment: Pathway to a Prosperous Nation. The eGovernment Summit is an annual programme, designed to bring together, government and technology providers, including the citizens who are the beneficiaries of technology, in order to discuss the importance of leveraging emerging technologies to enhance government services that are delivered to the citizens.

2.0. Objectives of The eGovernment Summit

The objectives of the eGovernment Summit are to:

1. Set agenda for the new Minister of Communications, Innovation and Digital Economy, Dr. Bosun Tijani
2. To enable government leverage technology in governance in order to make governance easily accessible and productive.
3. Offer recommendations on policies that drive government processes and make them beneficial to the citizens.
4. Design strategies for implementing eGovernment processes.
5. Build a mutual beneficial relationship between government and technology service providers that will impact on citizens and the Nigerian economy.
6. To encourage collaboration between government and technology service providers that will foster adoption of the right technologies for governance.
7. To create awareness about technology adoption in governance.

8. To create more channels for revenue generation for government, through the use of technology in tax collection.
9. To grow capacity building and boost local content development through the use of technologies.
10. To expose participants to emerging technologies that will enhance the financial inclusion drive of the federal government.

3.0. Attendees

This year's eGovernment Summit was well attended by industry stakeholders, which include government officials from various parastatals like Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), Lagos State government, Association of Licensed Telecoms Operators of Nigeria (ALTON), the Association of Telecoms Companies of Nigeria (ATCON), the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA), Galaxy Backbone, Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and the private sector organisation like Huawei, MTN Nigeria, VDT Communications, Internet Exchange Point of Nigeria (IXPN), Infobip Nigeria, ATC Nigeria Wireless Infrastructure, Liquid Intelligent Technologies, WIOCC, Open Access Data Centres, Nigeria Internet Registration Association (NiRA), Looptel, Tecpoint, Interconnect Clearinghouse Nigeria Ltd, Internet Solution Nigeria, Tek Experts and the media, among others.

4.0. Welcome Address

In his welcome Address, the Executive Chairman, DigiServe Network Services, and convener of The Nigeria eGovernment Summit, Engr Lanre Ajayi, welcomed the speakers, sponsors and participants to the fifth edition of the summit, and stressed the importance of the theme: eGovernment: Pathway to a Prosperous Nation, which he said, was in tandem with the current mood of the nation where Nigerians have high hopes that the new administration of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu will leverage technology to enhance government service offerings to its citizens in order to better their lots in a prosperous nation that they hoped for. "We carefully chose the theme for this year's summit and we assembled 52 speakers to discuss the theme that will further help government to leverage technology in providing services to the citizens. The summit is not just a talk show, as we expect certain outcomes from the discussions that will be sent as a communiqué to the appropriate government authorities for implementation," Ajayi said.

He listed some of the objectives of the 2023 summit to include setting an agenda for the new Minister of Communications, Innovation and Digital Economy, Dr. Bosun Tijani, and challenged participants to come up with strategies that would help in the successful implementation of eGovernment in Nigeria.

5.0. Goodwill Messages

Some industry stakeholders gave goodwill messages at the commencement of the summit.

5.1. ATCON

The President of ATCON, Mr. Tony Izuagbe Emoekpere, who was represented by the Publicity Secretary of ATCON, Lola Fafore, expressed confidence in the various panel sessions that were lined up to discuss critical issues on eGovernment delivery processes in Nigeria. Emoekpere called on governments at all levels to leverage emerging technologies for effective eGovernment service delivery.

5.2. SEC

The Executive Commissioner, Corporate Services, Security and Exchange Commission (SEC), Mr. Ibrahim Boyi, said the commission acknowledged the significant potentials that emanated from the emergence of technology and governance, adding that e-governance come with certain values such as efficiency, convenience, transparency, data security enhancement, promoting inclusiveness and wider industry participation. According to him, the values help in making faster decision, engage meaningfully with stakeholders, boost citizens' confidence and boost economic growth. He said SEC understood the significance of digital infrastructure and the role it plays in promoting e-governance. He however said Nigeria faces some challenges in driving the eGovernment processes, such as poor quality of infrastructure, digital divide, digital exclusion, resistance to change, security apprehensions, budget constraints, among others, adding that surmounting the challenges, will ensure full delivery of eGovernment services to all Nigerians. He said surmounting the challenges, would amount to collaboration between the public sector and the private sector, including the civil society, to enhance infrastructure and elevate digital literacy in Nigeria. According to him, Nigeria needs the right advocacy for the right policies and the right enlightenment campaigns to educate the public about the benefits of e-governance. He said SEC

had some initiatives and strategies put in place like the e-Dividend mandate to support the growth of e-governance.

5.3. ALTON

Chairman of ALTON, Engr. Gbenga Adebayo, congratulated the convener of the annual eGovernment Summit for his consistency in organizing the summit, which is in its fifth year in 2023.

Adebayo said the progress made by the telecoms industry over the years, has been very significant, given the current contribution of the telecoms sector to the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the Nigerian economy. He however said Nigeria has lost several of its tech experts to foreign economies as Nigerians continue to leave the country in large numbers to foreign countries to attain better living condition. He said migration would never cease because more Nigerians were migrating for different reasons, a development, he said, showed clearly that Nigeria has great tech talents that the foreign countries need.

Adebayo also decried the depletion of smaller telecoms operators as a result of the harsh and unhealthy competition introduced by the bigger telecoms operators, and called on the telecoms regulator to address the situation to avoid further extinction of smaller telecoms operators.

Adebayo also spoke about the issue of multiple taxes imposed by government agencies on telecoms operators, which he said, was gradually killing the telecoms industry.

6.0. Keynote Presentations

This year's eGovernment summit had several keynotes, presented by experts from the public and private sector organisations.

6.1. FIRS Keynote

The Ag. Executive Chairman, Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), Zaccheus Adedeji, who was represented at the eGovernment summit by Dr. Richard Aboki from FIRS, said FIRS would continue to ensure coherent use of digital technology across policy areas and levels of government, designed to change every facets of our lives, by increasing productivity and in eradicating crimes from our society, and also to increase tax revenue for government. According to him, the social programmes of the current administration of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu will be better served if quality and timely feedback are received from the beneficiaries of the programme. It will also assist in on-boarding new beneficiaries. With the total

adoption of eGovernment for digital transformation, there are some hitches that need to be addressed, because eGovernment comes with data privacy and security issues.

He said government would continue to invest in cybersecurity and protect the data privacy of its citizens. He looked at the significance of digitalization, and stressed the need for adequate funding of infrastructure, software and human capacity building. He however said the benefits remained always higher than the cost of investment, after it has attained full maturity.

He therefore called for the development of a strategic digital government objectives and the reinforcement of institutional capacity to manage and monitor eGovernment project implementation, and the need to assess the existing assets to guide the procurement of digital technologies. He also called for the review of the legal and regulatory frameworks to allow digital opportunities to grow.

6.2. NITDA's Keynote

The Director General, National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA), Mr. Kashifu Inuwa Abdullahi, who was represented by the Ag Director, eGovernment Development and Regulations at NITDA, Mr. Bernard Ewah, said NITDA considered the annual Nigeria eGovernment Summit very important because it is industry based that is addressing the issue of technology deployment in governance.

He said the provisions of eGovernment services largely relied on non-state actors like the industry stakeholders that attended the fifth Nigeria eGovernment Summit. Most of the infrastructure needed to provide eGovernment services is no longer in the hands of government alone, which shows that all industry stakeholders and the government should play active role in providing digital services to the citizens, through the deployment of digital technologies. NITDA is a government agency of the Federal Ministry of Communication, Innovation and Digital Economy, but it is not the only agency involved in deploying technology to serve the citizens of Nigeria. So non-state actors like industry stakeholders, should be involved also in providing public service, using digital technologies. Today, a lot of data is being generated by government, corporate organisations and individuals, and our role as a government agency, is to see how we can bring all of these together and create the synergy so that everyone has its role to play in providing digital services to the citizens.

6.3. Open Access Data Centres Keynote

The Managing Director/CEO, Open Access Data Centres, Dr. Ayotunde Coker, in his keynote presentation, addressed the issue of infrastructure that is driving eGovernment in Nigeria, and referenced the Summit's theme: 'eGovernment-Pathway to a Prosperous Nation'.

According to him, eGovernment is a handshake between government and the citizen and it about government using technology to provide services for the citizens. He stressed the need for ubiquitous broadband access and penetration, to drive connectivity growth across Nigeria. He said the broadband uptake of any nation largely depends on access to broadband and the enabling mobile devices. He said Nigeria already had close to 50 per cent broadband penetration with a target of reach 70 per cent penetration by 2025. He said Open Access Data Centres is concerned about connectivity through its mega data centre that is located in Lagos, with branches in other countries of the world. He also talked about the converged open digital infrastructure that brings connectivity and data centres together. He said Open Access Data Centres is building Long National Distance Network across Nigeria, to drive connectivity in the country. According to him, the infrastructure being built by Open Access Data Centres will help both the public and private organisations to offer customer services to the citizens. Government can also leverage on the infrastructure provided by Open Access Data Centres to provide digital services to the citizens. He stressed on the need for a reliable digital infrastructure that will enhance digital service deployment to citizens by government, in order to drive digital transformation in the country.

6.4. Huawei's Keynote

Deputy Managing Director, Huawei Technologies Nigeria Ltd, Mr. Olanrewaju Odekunle, in his keynote presentation, said since Huawei entered the Nigerian market in 1999, it has been actively involved in the development of local infrastructure in Nigeria. According to him, Huawei witnessed Nigeria transforming from 2G to 3G, and from 3G to 4G and of recent, 5G. Today the fourth Industrial revolution, which the world is grappling with, is transforming global digital development and Nigeria, which is the most populous country in Africa and the largest economy in Africa, is part of the digital transformation. In line with the theme of this year's Nigeria eGovernment Summit- 'eGovernment:Pathway to a Prosperous Nation', Huawei is building an intelligent platform that will support digital transformation and e-governance in Nigeria. The world is rapidly moving towards the digital era, bringing the opportunities and challenges to bear. The global digilisation progress, no doubt, is accelerating the

digitilisation of various industries, including social developments. Nigeria as a country must leverage on digital technology to build a better digital society, and be able to find its own digital path and approach it with full commitment.

He said e-Government deployment in Nigeria had been very low, as the country was ranked 140 out of 190 in the 2022 survey carried out by the United Nations.

He said Nigeria would therefore need digital literacy and human development campaigns to drive eGovernment initiative. In 2022, Huawei Technology established the Public Utility Department to make good use of the company's experience in technology, research and development to enhance digital transformation in Nigeria. Technologies such as 5G, Internet of Things (IoT) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) can be integrated to bring revolutionary changes to the country, Odekunle said, adding that Nigeria should develop the National eGovernment Cloud of China as a model for its National eGovernment Strategy. He also advised that all government regulatory agencies be modeled towards public service agencies that will be providing digital and essential social services to the people, just the way it is done in China.

He spoke about Huawei's Metrological Model of predicting natural disaster within minutes and hours, to avoid natural disasters like Hurricane and earthquakes.

7.0. Host Governor's Address

The Lagos State Governor, Mr. Babajide Sanwo-Olu, who was represented by the Lagos State Commissioner for Innovation, Science and Technology, Mr. Tunbosun Alake, expressed his delight to participate at the fifth Nigeria eGovernment Summit 2023.

Today, technology is evolving and we have technologies like Artificial Intelligence (AI), Blockchain, Big Data, Data Analytics, Internet of Things (IoT), Virtual Reality, Augmented Reality, Robotics, among others. These evolving technologies have the potential to change the way we live and work, and the technologies remain important facet of transformation in government. There are critical enabling factors such that if absent, they can pose great challenges that can reduce the effectiveness of deploying technology in governance. The critical factors include talent/intellectual capacity, proper coordination and unified action plan among government agencies. Some of the challenges, most times, affect technology projects. These challenges are not peculiar to Nigeria, as developed countries also face such challenges, Sanwo Olu said.

He added that the eGovernment Summit should be able to come up with solutions that government could use to address specific challenges in governance. The Lagos State government would be glad to get unique solution from the eGovernment

Summit that it can tap into to address some of the critical challenges in governance, the governor said.

8.0. Interactive Session After Keynotes

There was an interactive session that brought together, all the keynote speakers to discuss key points in their presentations and to field questions from the audience. During the interactive session, the keynote presenters stressed the need for local content development that would support technology transfer through knowledge sharing.

Speaking on technology transfer, the Deputy Managing Director, Huawei Technologies Nigeria Ltd, Mr. Olanrewaju Odekunle, said Huawei had in the past years, trained several Nigerian youths on new technologies, including its developmental project, where it trained Nigerian women on Information and Communications Technology (ICT). He said Huawei established massive training centres in Lagos and Abuja purposely for training Nigerians on ICT.

“In terms of technology transfer, we are also working with the federal government to execute its project that is designed to train one million Nigerians on digital skills. Some of the trainees will be sent to China for further training, while some will be employed by Huawei after the training,” Odekunle said.

Group Managing Director, Intertel Nigeria Ltd, Dr. Abdurazaq Ayodeji Shittu, a participating member from the audience who disagreed with the idea of technology transfer from foreign companies to Nigerian youths, said Nigeria must learn to develop its own indigenous technology through local content development, rather than waiting for technology transfer from China or United States of America, insisting that no foreign company would freely release its technology to another country, in the name of technology transfer.

Other participants who spoke at the interactive session, raised concern about local government administration in Nigeria, which they said, was completely cut off from eGovernment strategy and support.

The Lagos State Commissioner for Innovation, Science and Technology, Mr. Tunbosun Alake, who represented Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu of Lagos State, said the need to develop the school system was necessary in order to boost indigenous technology, insisting that no country will want to give out its technology to other countries for free.

According to him, the Lagos State government has over the past three years, formed Research and Development (R&D) initiative in tertiary institutions across University of Lagos (UNILAG), Lagos State University (LASU), Lagos State

University of Science and Technology and Yaba College of Technology, and got its first patent in 2021 in the area of medical device.

“Through the R&D initiative, the students were able to develop the medical device, designed for Covid testing. At the advent of Covid-19 pandemic in 2019, Lagos State had about 200 ventilators nationwide, which was insufficient. So Lagos State assembled a group of medical doctors, medical informatics experts, software developers and some public health workers, to further develop the medical device, which was later patented. This is part of government’s effort to drive technology development through local content development,” Alake said.

He therefore stressed the need for local content development that would enhance technology development in Nigeria.

To achieve the right technology development, Alake said the infrastructure must be available and access to funding also made available. He urged the private and public sectors to rise to the challenges and help in boosting local content development.

9.0 Panel Sessions

The 2023 eGovernment Summit had five panel sessions that discussed industry issues centred around eGovernment: Pathway to a Prosperous Nation. In each of the panel sessions, there were panel chairs and lead paper presenters who presented lead papers that gave the direction for discussion by the panelists. At the end of each panel session, the participants were given the opportunity to make contributions and ask questions relating to the panel discussions.

9.1. First Panel Session

The first panel session, which is about Connectivity, discussed the sub-theme: ‘Positioning Telecoms Infrastructure for eGovernment Deployment’, and was chaired by the Co-Founder/Executive Director, Infratel Africa, Dr. Tola Yusuf, while the lead paper was presented by the Chief Operating Officer, WTES Projects Limited, Mr. Chidi Princewill Ajuzie. The panelists include: Mr. Eric Chen, Strategy Director, Huawei Technologies Nigeria; Ms. Nikki Popoola, WIOCC; Engr. Tukur Lawal, MD/CEO, NIGCOMSAT; Engr. Oladele Yemi, PMP, Group Head, Network Services, VDT Communications; Mr. Juergen Peschel, Chief Executive Officer, 9mobile Nigeria; Mr. Yemi Adedoyin, Head of Service Delivery, Phase3 Telecom; and Mr. Akinlabi Akinbo, Managing Director/CEO, Looptel International Limited.

The lead paper talked about the sub-theme: ‘Positioning Telecoms Infrastructure for eGovernment Deployment’ and highlighted the key benefits of eGovernance. He talked about voice and data penetration level in Nigeria and how telecoms infrastructure is driving voice and data penetration and the effect of infrastructure on eGovernment. He also talked about the services offered by Galaxy Backbone and the need to improve on the services to further drive eGovernance. He spoke in the need for meaningful connectivity, which he said, would further support affordable digital services offerings to the citizens.

He also spoke about the traditional infrastructure model that will support eGovernment and how to move government services online, and made reference to Singapore and Estonia. He decried situations where some government agencies will deliberately oppose to online transactions between government and the citizens and called for a serious commitment on the part of government agencies to allow all government online transactions to work effectively. The panelist raised several issues for discussion like ability of telecoms operators to manage the cost of service offering to the subscribers. They considered investment in CAPEX and partnership between telcos in order to reduce cost of operations and service delivery. The panelists also discussed the need for rural area coverage in terms of service delivery. The panelists stressed the need for more investments and collaboration among operators to enhance connectivity services to the people. The panelists also talk about the role of the industry regulator, and suggested a more friendly regulation that will encourage revenue growth for the operators and the government. Participants want telecoms infrastructure to be declared as National Critical Infrastructure, in order to protect telecoms infrastructure for improved service delivery.

9.2. Second Panel Session

The second panel session, which is about Big Tech Companies and Multinational Organizations, discussed the sub-theme: International Best Practices in eGovernment.

The panel session was chaired by the Group Managing Director/CEO, VDT Communications, Mr. Biodun Omoniyi and the lead paper was presented by the Public Policy Manager, Anglophone West Africa at Meta, Mrs. Sade Dada. The panelists include: Director, Intelligence, Strategic Data Mining and Analysis at the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), Mr. Kola Okunola; Senior Solution Architect, Huawei Technologies Nigeria Ltd, Mr. Aliyu Isah; Country Manager, Tek Experts, Mr. Olugbolahan Olusanya; Managing Director, TecPoint Global Solutions Ltd, Mr. Deepak Mehta; Managing Director/CEO, Liquid Intelligent

Technologies (LIT), Mr. Wole Abu; Country Manager, LM Ericsson Nigeria Ltd, Mr. Peter Olusoji Ogundele; Head, IT Program and Portfolio Management at 9mobile, Mr. Oluwatimilehin Adelowo and Director, Linkages and Partnership Office, Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU), Ile-Ife.

In her lead paper presentation, Mrs. Sade Dada said Nigeria needed basic infrastructure like reliable energy system and ubiquitous internet connectivity to drive eGovernment services across the country.

The panelists were of the view that Nigeria should emulate global leaders in eGovernment process like Estonia, According to them, Nigeria does not need to become one of the top global eGovernment nations of the world in order to effectively drive eGovernment process, but could emulate them.

The panelists said Nigeria would need to replicate the global industrial revolution, and address the issues of power and internet connectivity in order to effectively deliver on best practices in eGovernance.

The panelists advised both the state and federal governments to be more committed in leveraging digital technology to drive eGovernment services.

Senior Solution Architect, Huawei Technologies Nigeria, Mr. Aliyu Isah, said Nigeria would need a centralized data repository system to manage communications for effective eGovernment service delivery.

Country Manager, Tek Experts Olugbolahan Olusanya, spoke on the need for capacity development and training for effective eGovernment delivery process.

“Government must develop the capacity of Nigerians to drive technology development in the country. Nigeria has a large number of unemployed youths, which must be trained. Tek Experts is involved in training Nigerians and has trained over 4,000 Nigerians and hired over 2,000 Nigerians in the last five years,” Olusanya said.

Director, Linkages and Partnership Office, Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU) Ife, Prof Adeniran Oluwaranti, said the school system should be involved in eGovernment processes, adding that the tertiary school curriculum has evolved over the years and that the school is now teaching new programming languages that will help drive digital transformation that will enhance eGovernment delivery processes.

“The school system also interfaces with the industry to understand the needs of the industry. Government however needs to properly fund the university system to make the school system more innovative in the area of Artificial Intelligence and Data Analytics,” Oluwaranti, said.

Head, IT Program and Portfolio Management at 9mobile, Oluwatimilehin Adelowo, said: “eGovernment is about the use of digital technology to improve services and to make government more effective and efficient to the citizens. Government must evaluate its eGovernment processes to rediscover where we are as country and to

understand what the government wants to achieve with eGovernment. If we understand this, we should be able to address the challenges in eGovernment. Nigeria's eGovernance rating is low. We need policies that will drive proper eGovernance processes in the country.”

According to the panelists, facilities such as Post Offices nationwide can be used for innovation hubs to drive innovation in government processes.

They therefore called on the federal and state governments to leverage digital technologies like Data Analytics, Artificial Intelligence, FinTech and the Social Media platforms like WhatsApp, Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram to enhance eGovernment service delivery to its citizens.

9.3. Third Panel Session

The third panel session, which is about Digital Transformation, Fintech and Identity Management, discussed the sub-theme: Financial Inclusion and Data Protection as a fundamental Human Right.

The panel session was chaired by the Chief Operating Officer, FintechNGR, Dr. Babatunde Oribama and the two lead papers presenters were Ag. Director, eGovernment Development and Relations, National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA), Mr. Bernard Ewah and the CEO, NewWaves Ecosystem, Mr. Olufemi Williams.

The panelists include: Managing Director/CEO, Amplus Innovative Solutions, Mr. Abdulkadir Haruna; Network Engineer, Wema Bank, Mr. Haruna Isa Fago; CEO, Alpha Crown Engineering Associates Limited, Engr. Ajibade Adetayo; Product Development, CoralPay Nigeria Ltd, Mr. Boluwaji Alepaye; Managing Director, HYTEK Computer, Mr. Mohammed Nur Kachalla; Regional Business Head, MainOne, Mr. Abayomi Adebajo and Manager, Digital Literacy, NITDA, Radiya Nasir.

In his lead paper presentation, Mr. Bernard Ewah said, as a government agency, NITDA pays attention to health-tech, agri-tech, including identity management in driving eGovernment services to the people. He talked about how eGovernment can drive digital transformation, business innovation and economic growth. He said e-Government has not created the actual value in local government administration, and insisted that local government administration remained key in driving digital revolution at the grass root level.

He said the Fintech industry is gaining more traction because of the relevant risk factors it is taking to drive the financial industry. He also spoke on regulatory instruments that will enhance data protection and identity management.

Mr. Olufemi Williams, who presented the second lead paper during the third panel session, spoke about the key drivers of financial inclusion, like accessibility, affordability among others. He talked about the banked and unbanked individuals in Nigeria, adding that so many unbanked individuals are affecting financial inclusion growth in Nigeria. He said for financial inclusion drive to be successful, Nigeria needs full internet connectivity across mobile devices in the country. He also said cybersecurity, financial literacy and awareness, as well as interoperability and fair competition must be considered for a successful financial inclusion drive. He said successful financial inclusion drive would lead to poverty alleviation and string financial base of the Nigerian economy. He however said Nigeria as a country has achieved a lot in the area of financial inclusion through the high volume of cashless transactions that are carried out through different electronic channels across the country and called for sustainability on the progress recorded so far, having achieved up to 66 per cent of financial inclusion in the country. He called for more innovation and aggressive rollout to further drive financial inclusion across the country.

The panelists insist on access to basic infrastructure and the need for government to increase the literacy level of Nigerians. They lamented lack of basic infrastructure in rural and underserved communities that will drive financial inclusion in rural and underserved communities. The panelists were of view that government must automate its systems to optimize what we have, because there is disconnect between CBN's monetary policies and physical operations by those who implement the financial inclusion process. The audience complained about bank high charges, which they said, was gradually limiting the growth of financial inclusion across the country.

9.4. Fourth And Fifth Panel Sessions

The fourth and fifth panel sessions were merged for want of time.

The fourth panel session, which is about Critical National Infrastructure (CNI) and Cybersecurity, discussed the sub-theme: Policy Protection for Infrastructure Investment and Web Safety. The fifth panel session, which is about People's Parliament, discussed the sub-theme: People's Expectations in a Technology Driven Society. While the fourth panel session was chaired by the Divisional CEO, ipNX Business, Mr. Segun Okuneye, with lead paper presentation from the Chief Operating Officer, ATC Nigeria, Mr. Soji Maurice-Diya, the fifth panel session was chaired by the Global Program Coordinator, Youverify, Ms. Damilola Amodu, with lead paper presentation from the Managing Partner, Co-Creation Hub, Mr. Oluwaseun Adepoju.

Panelists at the fourth panel session include: Chief Technology Officer, Telko Managed Services Limited, Mr. Muyiwa Alabi; Chief Operating Officer, WTES Projects Limited, Mr. Chidi Princwill Ajuzie; Manager, Core Networks and Infrastructure, Broadbased Communications Limited, Mr. Jude Ighomena; Managing Partner, Adaba Consult, Barr. Ejikeme Onyeaso; Lead Cybersecurity, Zoracom, Mr. Emmanuel Bakare; Vice President, GICL, Mr. Kazeem Oladepo and Deputy Manager, NITDA, Mrs. Aisha Salau.

The panelists at the fifth panel session include: Managing Director/CEO, Internet Solutions Nigeria Limited, Mrs. Cynthia Harb; Head, Special Projects, Opolo Global Innovation, Mr. Deji Ajani; Executive Director, Centre for Information Technology and Development (CITAD), Mr. Yunusa Zakari Ya'u; C-Suite Executive Assistant, Paradigm Initiative, Mrs. Peculiar Showale; Managing Director, DigitalWeb Application Development Limited, Mr. Omijeh Edeoghon; Practice Lead, Design for Health, Co-Creation Hub, Stephanie Okpere and FIRS representative.

In his lead paper presentation for the fourth panel, Soji Maurice-Diya talked about the protection of physical and digital infrastructure in Nigeria. According to him, telecoms infrastructure, most times, come under attack from social miscreants and vandals. He said people see telecoms operations as a cash-cow but do not recognize the impact of disruptions on the physical and digital infrastructure, which he said, exposes the vulnerability of telecoms infrastructure, not only from the vulnerability point of view, but also from the safety point of view. He stressed the need for a secure digital space to promote better service delivery. He talked about the gaps in the 2015 Cyber Crime Act, and called for amendment. He said government needed to declare telecoms infrastructure as a critical national infrastructure that should be protected by law.

Oluwaseun Adepoju, in his lead paper presentation for the fifth panel, said technology had been evolving but most times those whom the technology are developed for are not put into consideration, because their concerns and pain-points are often forgotten. He said the people are important part of the technology development framework, but that data has shown that some technologies fail because the people that were supposed to use the technology were not considered when designing and building the technology. He called on technology solution developers to always consider those that will use the technology when designing the technology to enable such technology to scale and become impactful. He also stressed on the need for technology developers to consider the emotional data of the people, when gathering big data. He said at Co-Creation Hub, developers build products that are human-centered to meet the people's expectations.

The two different panel chairs were able discuss the importance of infrastructure and the expectations of the people in a technology driven society. The panelists

talked about the huge capacities from the sub-marine cables lying at the shores of the country and the need for transmission of such capacities to the hinterlands, to address high cost of service deliveries in the hinterlands. They also discussed the strategies for internet connectivity across the country. The participants shared their views on cybersecurity and called for more awareness creation on the part of the people in protecting their critical data. They called for collaboration between the civil society organisations and the government, in order to build trust of the citizens. They were of the view that technology could be used to build citizens' trust and that technologies like Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML), could be leveraged for innovation that could drive digital transformation across all sectors of the Nigerian economy.

10.0 Challenges

Lead paper presenter at the first panel session, who is the Chief Operating Officer, WTES Projects Limited, Mr. Chidi Princewill Ajuzie, decried the situation where some government agencies will deliberately oppose to online transactions between government and the citizens and called for a serious commitment on the part of government agencies to allow all government online transactions to work effectively.

Some of the telecoms operators that were present at this year's summit, also decried the high cost of deploying broadband services in rural communities and called for policies that would enhance faster deployment of broadband services in rural, unserved and underserved communities in the country.

Participants also frowned at Nigeria's low rating in global eGovernance standard, and called for policies that will drive proper eGovernance processes in the country. Some of the panelists said e-Government was yet to create the actual value in local government administration, and they insisted that local government administration remained key in driving digital revolution at the grass root level.

11.0 Recommendations

Some of the recommendations from the summit include:

1. Develop and set strategic digital government objectives that will drive eGovernment across the country

2. Reinforcement of institutional capacity to manage and monitor eGovernment project implementation across the country
3. Assess the existing assets to guide the procurement of digital technologies
4. Review of legal and regulatory frameworks to allow digital opportunities to be harnessed.
5. eGovernment Summit should come up with solutions that the Lagos State government can tap into to address some of the critical challenges in governance.
6. Industry stakeholders should collaborate with government in the deployment of digital services to the citizens.
7. Nigeria needs reliable digital infrastructure that will enhance digital service deployment to citizens and drive digital transformation across the country.
8. Nigerian government should invest in new technologies that will promote digital service delivery among the citizens.
9. There is need for citizen education and awareness campaign to drive adoption of digital services.
10. Nigeria must find its own digital path and approach it with full commitment.
11. Nigeria needs to promote digital literacy and human development campaigns to drive eGovernment.
12. Nigeria should develop the National eGovernment Cloud of China, as a model for Nigeria's National e-Government Strategies.
13. Government regulatory agencies should be modeled towards government public service agencies that will serve the citizens, using digital technologies.
14. Private sector must provide support for smart city development.
15. Government must establish a solid foundation for the development of digital economy that will bridge digital divide.
16. The panelists called for serious commitment on the part of government agencies to allow all government online transactions to work effectively
17. Connectivity should be seen as a basic need of the citizens.
18. The need to use Big Data to set up eGovernment models for all government agencies.
19. Government should declare telecoms infrastructure as National Critical Infrastructure and also prosecute vandals of telecoms infrastructure.
20. The participants stressed the need for proper utilization of government facilities in driving eGovernment services across the country.
21. The participants also said Nigeria needs basic infrastructure like reliable energy system and ubiquitous internet connectivity to drive eGovernment services across the country.
22. The participants urged governments at all levels to leverage digital technology like Data Analytics, Artificial Intelligence, FinTech and the

Social Media platforms like WhatsApp, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram to enhance eGovernment service delivery to the citizens.

23. The participants were of the view that e-Government has not created the actual value in local government administration, insisting that local government administration remained key in driving digital revolution at the grass root level.
24. Nigeria needs more innovation and aggressive broadband rollout to further drive financial inclusion across the country.
25. For any emerging technologies to scale and become impactful, technology solution developers must always consider those that will use the technology when designing the technology.

Rapporteur

This report was put together by Emma Okonji, ICT Editor, THISDAY Newspapers, in collaboration with DigiServe Network Services, organizers of the annual Nigeria eGovernment Summit.