

**REPORT OF THE NIGERIA e-GOVERNMENT SUMMIT 2022 HELD ON TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 27,  
2022 AT THE SHERATON HOTEL AND TOWERS, IKEJA, LAGOS.**

**1.0. Preamble**

The Nigeria eGovernment Summit 2022 was held on Tuesday, September 27 at the Sheraton Hotel and Towers, Ikeja from 8am to 5pm. The hybrid summit had most of its participants physically present at the Lagos Sheraton Hotel, while some participants, including some speakers connected online. The eGovernment Summit was organised by DigiServe Network Services, in partnership with the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), the Association of Telecommunications Companies of Nigeria (ATCON) and the Association of Licensed Telecom Operators of Nigeria (ALTON) with the theme: ***Promoting eGovernment in Election Year for Improved Governance.***

Running for the fourth consecutive year, the eGovernment Summit has become a yearly programme, designed to bring together, government and technology providers, including politicians and the citizens who are the beneficiaries of technology, in order to discuss the adoption of emerging technologies in e-governance, for the benefit of the citizens and for the growth of the Nigerian economy.

**2.0. Objectives**

The objectives of the eGovernment Summit are to:

- a. To bring politicians to speed on new technologies and the need to leverage technology in governance
- b. Set strategic digital government objectives
- c. Reinforce institutional capacities to manage and monitor project implementation.
- d. Review legal and regulatory frameworks to allow digital opportunities to be harnessed.
- e. Build a mutual beneficial relationship between government and technology service providers that will impact on citizens and the Nigerian economy.
- f. To encourage collaboration between government and technology service providers that will foster adoption of the right technologies for governance.
- g. To create awareness about technology adoption in governance
- h. To create more channels for revenue generation for government, through the use of technology in tax collection.
- i. To grow capacity building and boost local content development through the use of technologies.

**3.0. Attendees**

This year's eGovernment Summit was well attended by representatives from some political parties like All Progressives Congress (APC) and Accord Party. Industry stakeholders were also in attendance in their numbers, which include government

officials from various parastatals like Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), Lagos State Internal Revenue Service (LIRS), other agencies of government like Nigerian Midstream and Downstream Petroleum Regulatory Authority (NMDPRA), Nigerian Upstream Petroleum Regulatory Commission, Association of Licensed Telecom Operators of Nigeria (ALTON), the Association of Telecommunications Companies of Nigeria (ATCON), National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA), Galaxy Backbone, and the private sector organisation like Open Access Data Centre, Rack Centre, GSMA, Whogohost, VDT Communications, Nigeria Internet Registration Association (NiRA), ATC Nigeria Wireless Infrastructure, Infratel Africa, Liquid Intelligent Technologies, PPC, Phase3 Telecom, ipNX, Coolink, and the media, among others.

#### **4.0. Welcome Address**

The Executive Chairman, DigiServe Network Services, Engr Lanre Ajayi, who is the convener of the annual Nigeria eGovernment Summit, in his welcome address, said the summit, which is in its fourth edition, recorded successes in the previous editions. According to him, the 2022 summit was organised close to election year, in order to prepare the minds of up-coming leaders on the importance of technology in governance.

“The election year, which is the time when a lot of attention is paid to governance issues, is a perfect time to promote eGovernment to the ruling class and the general public. It is in this consideration that we have chosen ‘Promoting eGovernment in Election Year for Improved Governance’ as the theme for this year’s Nigeria eGovernment Summit 2022.

“e-Governance which is the adoption of technology in government processes and service delivery, makes government service delivery efficient and cost effective. It introduces transparency in governance and builds trust between the government and the governed. This year edition will not only serve to promote eGovernment but will also focus on how governments can deploy and deepen technologies in service delivery. Technology service providers will share their knowledge, invited agencies of government at federal and state levels will showcase use cases of eGovernment in their domains, while international experts will share international best practices and use cases,” Ajayi said.

He then urged participants to tap into the many presentations and panel sessions lined up for this year’s eGovernment Summit in making the right decisions.

#### **5.0. Keynote Presentations**

This year’s eGovernment summit had several keynotes, presented by members of the political class, government officials and members of the private sector.

##### **1. FIRS keynote**

The Executive Chairman Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), Muhammad Nami, who was represented by the Director of Intelligence, Strategic Data Mining and Analysis Department at FIRS, Kola Okunola, presented one of the keynotes at the summit. According to Nami, coherent use of digital technologies across policy areas and levels of government, will increase productivity, ensure free and fair election, alleviate the rate of crime in our society, increase tax revenue due to interconnectivity and integration of government agencies.

“It will also go a long way in strengthening the ties between digital government and broader public governance agendas. For example, the social programs of the current government will be better served if government has good feedback from the people benefitting from the program, and properly track their progress. This is to know when they have crossed the poverty line so that others can benefit from such programs.

Also, in the total adoption of e-Government cum digital transformation, we need to look at the digital security and privacy issue. e-Governance comes with myriads of security and data privacy issues which we need to properly look into. As we are digitalizing and building digital infrastructures, the “big brothers” are watching like a hawk, looking for loopholes and weak points. We must invest in cybersecurity and protect the privacy of our citizens,” Nami said.

He stressed the need for digitalization, in order to develop clear business cases to sustain the digital technologies projects. He however said e-Government would not come cheap, because it requires a lot of funding for infrastructure, software and human capacity building, among others.

Nami said if fully matured, the benefits would be far higher than the costs.

## **2. Hakeem Dickson’s Keynote**

The Lagos State Gubernatorial candidate of Accord Party, Mr. Hakeem Dickson, during his keynote address at the Summit, said politicians could leverage technology to explore new frontiers and create new opportunities. “I believe in the use of technology in solving challenges. When I was Local Government Chairman in Surulere LGA in 1999, I brought in computers to replace typewriters and I used technology to automate payment of salaries. I challenge technology experts to come up with technology solutions that government must adopt to make governance a lot easier.”

“We have various natural resources in Nigeria, but we need technology to harness them for the common good of the people. I also challenge the Independent National

Electoral Commission (INEC) to adopt full technology in the next general election that is coming up next year,” Dickson said. He stressed the need for government to use technology in Agriculture and human capital development and pledged to deploy technology to the fullest in addressing the challenges of Lagos State, if voted into power in 2023 as Governor of Lagos State, under the Accord Party.

Dickson blamed the mass exodus of Nigerians to the United Kingdom and the United States in recent times on lack of job opportunities in Nigeria, and promised to create jobs for Nigerians using digital technology, if elected as the next governor of Lagos State in 2023. He said civil servants must be trained to make digital transformation work in Nigeria. He explained that eGovernment adoption would speed up revenue generation for government and advised political leaders to embrace technology in governance. Dickson assured participants that within six months, he could change the situation of Lagos and Nigeria and ensure that government and the private sector must operate digitally to speed up development.

### **3. Babatunde Ogala’s Keynote**

Former legal adviser to All Progressives Congress (APC), Mr Babatunde Ogala SAN, who presented the third keynote paper, said the use of technology would help in electoral process. He therefore called on INEC to adopt full technology in the 2023 general election. He said technology adoption in electoral process would bring about transparency and speedy dissemination of information. He said INEC must train its staff to be digitally literate in order to handle electoral processes in the most effective way.

According to him every political leader who is in government, must adopt the use of technology to save cost in governance. He also spoke on how technology has helped the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) to carry out automated online registration of company names, a development, he said, helped speed up registration process, and to eliminate the use of papers and files, while saving cost for government. He said the APC as a political party had already embraced technology to drive its processes. He concluded by saying that technology adoption in governance would enhance good governance, transparency, and accountability.

### **4. NMDPRA’s Keynote**

The Authority Chief Executive Officer, Nigerian Midstream and Downstream Petroleum Regulatory Authority (NMDPRA), Engr Farouk Ahmed, who was represented by Dr. Mustapha Lawal, presented the fourth keynote paper at the summit. According to him, e-Government has become widely accepted in improving and creating transparency in providing information to all citizens and in improving

the efficiency of government administration and in public services. He said the petroleum industry adopted e-Governance in all its processes.

“At NMDPRA, we use technology in our internal processing and all our processes are automated. In the past 10 years, NMDPRA has invested heavily in technology, which has helped us to a great extent to reduce paper work in our agency,” Ahmed said. He however listed some challenges in adopting technology in driving e-Governance, to include the development of infrastructure, the human capital, and the security of data.

#### **5. Dr. Ayotunde Coker’s Keynote**

The Chief Executive Officer, Open Access Data Centre, Dr. Ayotunde Coker, who presented the fifth keynote address, from a remote presentation, described e-Government as the use of technology in providing services to the citizens. He spoke about the use of technology in driving Citizen’s Relationship Management (CRM), which according to him, is a governance tool for the election year. Coker said governance was about the citizens and that government must treat the citizens well by giving them the opportunity to grow with government. He advised that government must adopt new technologies like the finger print technology to address identity management.

According to him, citizens have experienced different industrial revolutions, ranging from the first to the fourth industrial revolution, adding that the citizens are beginning to look forward to the fifth industrial revolution that encompasses e-Governance. He listed a whole range of emerging technologies that would support eGovernment, to include: Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning (ML) Internet of Things (IoT), and Big Data. He stressed the need for interconnectivity, supported by broadband, to drive a successful e-Governance adoption, supported by security systems, people and processes, infrastructure and logistics, to enable e-Governance. He said government must offer the citizens with different technology devices that will enable them leverage technology for innovation and wealth creation. He also spoke about the need for various governments to adopt technology that would allow cross-border communication.

#### **6. Dr. Vincent Olatunji’s Keynote**

The National Commissioner and CEO of Nigeria Data Protection Bureau, Dr. Vincent Olatunji, who presented the sixth keynote paper from a remote presentation, spoke about the National Digital Economy Policy and Strategy (NDEPS), that was implemented under the Federal Ministry of Communication and Digital Economy, which all government agencies have linked to. He said the technology model so far adopted in the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) sector, has

contributed more than 18 per cent to Nigeria's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). He said NDEPS has helped government agencies to adopt and deploy technologies that are benefiting the citizens in several ways.

He said technology adoption in governance would help in Nigeria's electoral process, while citing instances in Osun and Ekiti states elections, which he said, were largely driven by technology adoption. He said technology adoption in elections, would help reduce rigging and enhance real-time election results. He stressed the need for training, capacity building and citizen education, using technology. He also spoke about the need for proper data generation, analysis and implementation. He called on INEC to put the proper infrastructure in place to make technology adoption, a lot easier.

#### **7. NITDA's Keynote**

The Director General and CEO, National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA), Mallam Kashifu Inuwa Abdullahi, who was represented at the summit by the Ag Director, eGovernment Development and Regulation at NITDA, Mr. Bernard Ewah, said government must embrace technology for efficiency and rationalized public sector inputs. According to him, technology adoption would promote e-voting that would improve election outcomes. He said e-Government would enhance transparency and accountability in any given election year.

He said for a successful adoption of e-Government, government must engage the citizens in a more profitable way, and promised that NITDA would continue to lead in the adoption of digital technology that will enhance governance. He said government would continue to promote technology adoption for e-Governance. "As the 2023 general election comes close, government will ensure that e-voting is implemented and made a standard for the voting process. He listed countries that have implemented e-voting system to include India, Philippines, Brazil, among others, adding that the benefits of e-voting are numerous. He listed some of the benefits to include reduction of human error, accurate results, reduce rigging in election, increase in voters' participation, time and cost saving.

He however identified some of the challenges of e-voting as inadequate skilled manpower capacity of INEC staff to deploy e-voting, the inexperience in using sophisticated devices for e-voting among others.

#### **8. Engr Gbenga Komolafe's Keynote**

The Chief Executive Officer, Nigerian Upstream Petroleum Regulatory Commission, Engr Gbenga Komolafe, who was represented by Mr. Abel Nsa, said the Petroleum Industry Act (PIA) has helped the upstream petroleum sector to use technology in driving development in the sector. According to him, the Commission issues oil and

gas industry permit, using technology like the central electronic licensing processing in tracking applications and the technology has helped to reduce the tracking time from two months to three days.

“We have used technology to link other government agencies in terms of communication and fact-finding mission. The Commission adopted online technology for collaboration with other government agencies that has helped in reducing cost of operation,” Komolafe said.

## **6.0. Panel Sessions**

The 2022 eGovernment Summit had four different panel sessions that discussed industry issues centered around eGovernment in an election year. 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 to ask questions relating to the panel discussions.

## **7.0. Panel Session 1**

### **Connectivity Panel: Positioning Telecoms Infrastructure for eGovernment Deployment**

The **Connectivity Panel** discussed the theme: ‘Positioning Telecom Infrastructure for eGovernment Deployment’, and was chaired by the Managing Director/CEO, ipNX Limited Mr. Segun Okuneye, while the lead papers were presented by **Mr Kamal Tamawa, Director of Public Policy, SSA – Government & Regulatory Affairs, GSMA** and the Chief Operating Officer, Coolink, Mr. Nadim Chidiac who was represented by Mr Abdurrahman Mubi. The panelists include: Mr. Toba Obaniyi, CEO, Whogohost; Mr. Sunil Gubbi, Chief Technical Officer, Phase3 Telecom; Dr. Tola Yusuf, Executive Director, Infratel Africa and Mr. Folu Aderibigbe, Sales Director, Rack Centre.

#### **1. Lead Paper 1: Mr Kamal Tamawa, Director of Public Policy, SSA – Government & Regulatory Affairs, GSMA**

Mr Kamal Bello Tamawa, in his presentation, said a significant proportion of the Nigerian population had been excluded from an increasingly digital society. He however listed some of the factors responsible for such exclusion to include lack of access, lack of knowledge and digital skills, affordability, relevance, safety and security, among others. He said lack of access to networks and enablers such as agents and formal IDs or devices and services were yet not accessible or easy to access. He also said the inability to afford handset, data plans or other services fees, were some of the reasons why people remained unconnected.

In the area of skills, he said lack of digital skills and lack of awareness and understanding of mobile internet and its benefits, were part of the challenges. In the area of safety and security he said concerns about the negative aspects and risks of mobile and the internet such as harassment, theft, fraud and online security, were also part of the challenges. For relevance, he said lack of availability of relevant content, products and services, were part of the challenges why people still remain unconnected.

In order to support eGovernment services, Tamawa said government must license more players for additional service rollout, regulate reforms for the modern digital ecosystem, avoid fiscal and taxation policies that are sector specific, encourage affordable access to devices, and the use of regulatory fees to recoup costs, without maximizing revenues. Tamawa advised government to focus on delivery of digital skills to the citizenry and to also design campaigns to promote the relevance of access to the digital ecosystem. Tamawa also advised that government services must be fully digitalized from access to service delivery.

## **2. Lead Paper 2: Mr Nadim Chidiac, Chief Operating Officer, Coolink**

Mr. Nadim Chidiac who was represented by Mr Abdurrahman Mubi spoke about how most state governments leveraged on telecom infrastructure in their states to raise huge Internally Generated Revenue (IGR) for their states. He said government must play its role in enhancing deployment of telecom infrastructure across states, especially in the un-served and under-served areas of the country. According to him, it is the duty of government to facilitate deployment of telecom infrastructure in remote and un-served communities, and not primarily the role of telecom operators who will prefer to deploy telecom infrastructure in urban areas where there is high returns on investment, because they are in the business of making money.

He said government can provide subsidy to telecom operators to enable them roll out their infrastructure in rural and un-served areas of the country. He explained that the telecom operators were private-sector driven and that no private sector business will want to invest in areas where there is little or no return on investment, adding that telecom infrastructure deployment is capital intensive that calls for support from government to enable those in rural communities enjoy the full benefits of telecom infrastructure deployment. He therefore called for public-private collaboration to further drive eGovernment. He said government must also protect the existing telecom infrastructure with enabling laws.

## **3. The Panelists**

In their contributions, said telecom has contributed immensely to the growth of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and therefore needs the support of government to remove factors that inhibit growth of telecom in the country like multiple taxes and levies. The panelists called on government to provide sustainable business environment and enact policies that will enable telecom operators deploy more telecom infrastructure across the country, especially in rural communities.

The panelists also stressed the need for government to enact and implement laws that will protect customer data that have been generated and collected by telecom operators. They said data protection is key for national development. The panelists also stressed the need for collaboration between government and telecom operators on one hand and among telecom operators on the other hand, to enable customers get the full value of telecom service offerings. The panel also discussed the need for government to deploy national backbone infrastructure that will enable telecom operators carry out last-mile deployment of telecom infrastructure.

## **8.0. Panel Session 2**

### **Big Tech Companies and Multinational Organizations Panel: International Best Practices in eGovernment**

The second panel session was chaired by the President, Nigeria Internet Registration Association (NiRA), Muhammed Rudman, while the lead paper was presented by the Managing Director, Liquid Intelligent Technologies, Mr. Wole Abu. The panel discussed about the theme: 'International Best Practice in eGovernment.' Members of the panel include: Ag Director, eGovernment Development and Regulations at NITDA, Mr. Bernard Ewah; Delivery Programme Leader at Nokia, Engr Uchenne Onweluzo and Country Manager, Konnect Africa, Mr. Modupe Okeowo.

#### **1. Lead Paper: Mr Wole Abu, Managing Director, Liquid Intelligent Technologies**

In his lead paper presentation, Mr. Wole Abu said: "eGovernment has emerged as a widely accepted paradigm, including the use of IT to enhance transparency, swiftly deliver information to all residents, increase administrative effectiveness, and enhance public services like power, transportation, health, water, security, and municipal services." According to him, Information and communication technologies (ICTs) have developed into strategic management tools in emerging nations during the past twenty years.

He defined best practice as an increased efficiency of the system for dissemination of the information, delivery of services and assisting in public decision making. "A best practice is a standardized technique, method or a process that has proven

themselves to accomplish tasks over a period of time. The UN defines a best practice as successful initiatives towards improving people's standard of life. A best practice originates as a result of effective partnership between public and private entities and is socially and culturally self-sufficient. Governments all around the world are striving to deliver high-quality services with the help of already established best practices in both public and private sectors," Abu said.

He listed six key similarities among best practices to include: Constant focus on improvement in quality, costs and delivery of the eGovernment services; Closer interaction with the citizens; Closer interaction within the service providers; Increased and effective use of technology; Greater flexibility and less hierarchical organization and promoting continuous learning, teamwork, participation and flexibility.

Speaking about e-Governance in healthcare in Africa, Abu said: "In Nigeria, the federal government through the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) launched the National Mobile Health Insurance Programme (NMHIP) and MHealth on 21st July 2014, using mobile telecommunications infrastructure within Nigerian cyberspace as platform for enrolling additional health insurance beneficiaries. The system leverages existing mobile telecoms subscriber database (including biometrics) as initial data for populating the mHealth platform. It ensured that business intelligence and analytics achieved using Health Information Exchange (HIE) to aggregate health care information electronically." The system also facilitated secure mobility of health data.

In Uganda, the government has launched an Mtrac project to digitise the transfer of Health Management Information System (HMIS) data via mobile phone, Abu further said in his lead paper presentation.

## **2. The Panelists**

The Panelists said for e-government to succeed, government must have data on the identity for every single citizen in the country. They insisted that government must first understand the data of its citizen and have record of the exact number of all citizens in the country, in order to evenly distribute government services among the people.

### **9.0. Panel Session 3**

#### **Power and Petroleum Panel: Energy as a Critical Recourse for eGovernment Deployment**

The third panel session was chaired by the Executive Director, Health Safety and Environment, Nigerian Midstream and Downstream Petroleum Regulatory Authority (NMDPRA), Mr. Mustapha Lamode, while the lead paper was presented by the Managing Director, Germane Synergy Nigeria Limited, Mr. Anand Singh. The panel discussed the theme: 'Energy as a Critical Resource for eGovernment Deployment'. Members of the panel include: The Director of Operations at PPC Limited, Dr. Patrick Ede; Managing Director, Infratel Africa, Mr. Tunji Alabi and Group CEO, Teletok Nigeria Limited, Engr Pradeep Kumar.

**1. Lead Paper: Mr Anand Singh, Managing Director, Germane Synergy Nig Ltd.**

The lead paper presenter, Mr Anand Singh, said energy remained key in national development and should be given priority. He said Germane Synergy Nigeria Limited developed a mobile app for the energy sector and for other non-energy sectors, that monitors and protects operation online real-time, called the Novel Asset Information Application (NAinA). According to him, the app is a novel mobile application that improves efficiency in response, transparency in processes and centralization of data. It is easy to operate and follows the existing checklist and the data quality is independent of the user's interpretation. It also eliminates need for dedicated personnel for data transfer and it captures and utilizes real-time data.

**2. The Panelists**

The panelists called on government to subsidise renewable energy, since the cost of providing energy is on the high side.

**10.0. Panel Session 4**

**People's Parliament: People's Expectations in a Technology Driven Society**

The fourth panel session discussed the theme: 'People's Expectations in a Technology Driven Society.' It was chaired by the Managing Director, OAU Integrated Farms Limited, Mr. Akin Areola, while the lead papers were presented by the Director, Intelligence, Strategic Data Mining and Analysis Department at FIRS, Mr. Kola Okunola and Dr. Kenneth Okereafor. Members of the panel include: CEO, FintechNGR, Dr. Babatunde Obrimah; Partner, Simmons Cooper Partners, Mr. Ikem Isiekwena; Research Associate, Citizen's Gavel, Dr. Ire Yohanna Omoyeni and COO, Paradigm Initiative, Ms. Nnenna Paul-Ugochukwu.

**1. Lead Paper 1: Mr Kola Okunola, Director Intelligence, Strategic Data Mining and Analysis, FIRS**

In his lead paper presentation, Okunola described people's expectation in a technology-driven society as the utilization of technology for national development. He said no nation could develop without Science and Technology. According to him, technology is the utilization of the forces of nature for the benefit of humankind. Technology enables humankind to see further, hear more effectively, and travel faster over greater distances. Science and technology are required for sustainable growth, social development, and industrialization of nations, Okunola said.

Okunola identified some gaps in Nigeria's National Development to include: Declining standard of education; Unemployment; Insecurity such as crime, militancy, insurgency; Inadequate power supply for homes and industries; Low rural financial inclusion and adoption of banking services and Unavailability of high-quality health services in rural areas, among others. Addressing the role of Citizens in National development, Okunola said: "Citizens are the best assets for National Development. Citizens will voluntarily participate in national development activities once they are empowered. Citizens will voluntarily and effectively contribute to national development when government creates an enabling environment."

In the area of sustainable policies that countries have adopted, Okunola said developed nations in the West set aside about 10 per cent of their countries' GDP for the development of science and technology. He said no nation could develop without Science and Technology. According to him, Asian countries such as South Korea have followed suit and set aside over 10 per cent of their GDP for science and technology development, adding that German city of Munich adopted SUSE Linux in March 2003, while Finland's public services will stop using proprietary software and will adopt Open-Source solutions 2019. He said in 2009, United States White House moved its servers to Linux and Drupal for content management.

He advised on automation of tax administration systems to increase revenue and make taxation pivot of national development, and suggested the adoption of workflow and Business Process Management Systems for process automation and paperless offices, as well as the adoption of Integrated Human Resource Management Systems/ERP. He listed key uses and applications of technology that could help to bridge national development gaps and make life easier for the Citizens, to include: Broadband Internet, Data Analytics and Business Intelligence, Mobile Applications, IoT, Augmented Reality (AR), Computer-Aided Agriculture/E-Agriculture, Computer-Aided Manufacturing/3-D Printing, E-Health/Telemedicine and E-Learning and E-libraries.

He stressed that national development remain critical to Nigeria's growth, adding that it is imperative to put the right technology policies and regulatory framework in

place, and entrepreneurs and innovators will naturally spring up, when conducive environment and value systems are created. He said no nation would voluntarily transfer their technologies, and advised that Education/Capacity Building should be of utmost importance because human beings are the most important resources. He also said conventional and unconventional innovators must be encouraged and empowered. He was of the view that technology could be utilized to bridge identified gaps in national development, with citizens' participation and sustainable technology policies.

## **2. Lead Paper 2: Kenneth Okereafor PhD, Deputy General Manager, Department of ICT, National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA)**

Dr. Kenneth Okereafor who presented the second lead paper on the same theme: 'People's Expectations in a Technology Driven Society', spoke through video conferencing. According to him Nigeria has several challenges ranging from kidnapping, killing, to corruption, but he explained that the right technology adoption could address all the challenges if properly implemented, because technology is an enabler. He said people's expectations were high on technology because technology is a great enabler. Okereafor asked whether technology can work in Nigeria, and answered in the affirmative, citing the recent reports released by the Nigerian Communication Commission (NCC), the telecom industry regulator, which stated that telecom revolution in Nigeria has increased the growth of teledensity and the number of subscribers across networks. He also said the disruption in the banking sector was a good example to show that technology could work in Nigeria. According to Dr Okereafor, digital technology acts as facilitator, and has improved processes of good governance, while positively impacting on governance.

He said people should expect technology to fight corruption, tackle insecurity, fix the economy and stimulate fiscal growth, strengthen the healthcare services, drive foreign direct investments, foster interaction between government and society, among others.

## **3. The Panelists**

The panelists advised government to do more in the area of technology adoption to further drive digital transformation. They stressed the need for collaboration between government and the private sector in order to enhance service delivery. They suggested policy development that would cater for out-of-school children who could be given access to technology.

## **11.0. Observed Challenges**

1. Participants at the 2022 eGovernment Summit raised some of the challenges militating against adoption of technology for easy delivery of government services to the people. One of the lead paper presenters in one of the panel sessions, Dr. Kenneth Okerefor observed in his paper that Nigeria is faced with a lot of challenges ranging from kidnapping to killings to corruption, but decried a situation where government is not fully utilizing technology to address the challenges, even though technology has been identified as a great enabler that can solve diverse challenges.
2. Participants at the summit observed lack of accurate and insufficient data of citizens that would help government have good knowledge of the number of people living in certain locations, in order to have even distribution of government services to the people. The summit also observed that most government agencies still operate manually with lots of paper work and file carrying, instead of leveraging on emerging technologies to provide quality service to the people.
3. The participants observed that rural communities are largely un-served and under-served, a development that calls for more collaboration between government and the private sector in order to develop rural communities with technology tools and solutions. They also observed that government has not fully deployed technology in agriculture to boost food production and that government spending on technology was low and advised government to increase funding on technology since the benefits are far higher than the cost.
4. Participants observed that the mass exodus of Nigerians to the United Kingdom and the United States in recent times in search of jobs, underscored the lack of job opportunities in Nigeria, and blamed the development on lack of the willpower of leaders to use technology to create jobs for the citizens.

## **12.0. Recommendations**

Some of the recommendations from the summit include that:

1. Government must focus on delivery of digital skills to the citizenry and also design campaigns that will promote access to digital ecosystem.
2. Government services must be fully digitalized from access to service delivery.
3. Digital literacy must be promoted to develop citizen's capacity in understanding and using technology.
4. The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) must embark on continuous improvement of its technology in line with cybersecurity best practices to maintain data protection.

5. Citizens should be convinced with veritable evidence that the technology is secure and adequately protected from cyber-attacks.
6. Political leaders must be technology savvy in order to leverage technology in providing quality services that will impact the lives of citizens in the digital era.
7. Political parties should include digital technologies in their manifestoes and tell Nigerians how they intend to apply them.
8. Digital technology service providers should take advantage of existing legal frameworks and procurement protocols to improve upon automation.
9. Political leaders should use technology to achieve transparency, accountability in governance and also use technology to build the trust of the citizenry.
10. Technology service providers should form national working groups that will act as lobby groups to push some of the technology initiatives at the national assembly.
11. Government should fully utilize technology in agriculture and human capital development.
12. Government should have good feedback from the people benefitting from its social programs to enable government serve the people better.
13. Civil servants must be trained to acquire digital skills, if digital transformation will work in Nigeria.
14. Government should use technology to develop Citizen's Relationship Management (CRM), which is a government tool for election year.
15. Government must offer the citizens with different technology devices that will enable them leverage technology for innovation and wealth creation and also adopt technology that will enhance cross-border communication.
16. Government must adopt new technologies like the finger print technology to address identity management.
17. Participants were of the view that technology adoption in elections, would help reduce rigging and enhance real-time election results.
18. As the 2023 general election comes close, government should ensure that e-voting is implemented and made a standard for the voting process.
19. Government must protect the existing telecom infrastructure with enabling laws.
20. The panelists in their contributions said telecom has contributed immensely to the growth of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and therefore called on government to remove factors that could inhibit growth of telecom in the country like multiple taxes and levies.
21. Organizers of eGovernment summit should device means of monitoring the progress of previous summits, to find out if government is implementing some of the resolutions reached and recommendations made at previous eGovernment summits.
22. Organizers of eGovernment Summit should involve more stakeholders, especially the politicians and policy makers in government to participate actively in future eGovernment Summits.

**13.0. 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.