

# **Report On The Nigeria E-Government Summit 2024, Powered By DigiServe Networks Services, Held On Friday September 20, 2024 At Radisson Blu Hotel, 38/40 Isaac John Street, GRA, Ikeja, Lagos.**

## **1.0 Preamble**

The sixth edition of the Nigeria eGovernment Summit 2024 was held on Friday, September 20 at the Radisson Blu Hotel, Ikeja from 8am to 5pm, beginning with registration and visit to exhibition stands, recognition of special guests and speakers, the national anthem and a welcome address by the Executive Chairman, DigiServe Network Services and convener of the eGovernment Summit, Engr. Lanre Ajayi.

The eGovernment Summit had 65 distinguished professionals as speakers lined up for the summit, and among them were panelists that discussed several topics built around the theme: ‘Transforming Governance with Technology for Improved Economy’.

The Nigeria eGovernment Summit is an annual programme, designed to bring together, government and technology services providers, including the citizens who are the beneficiaries of technology services, to discuss the importance of leveraging emerging technologies that will enhance government services that are delivered to the citizens.

## **2.0 Objectives of The Nigeria eGovernment Summit**

The objectives of the Nigeria eGovernment Summit 2024 are as follows:

1. To set agenda for the federal and state governments on the adoption of technology for service delivery.
2. To encourage government at all levels to drive their service delivery with technology.
3. To propose to governments, solutions and strategies required for effective deployment of eGovernment services.
4. To make governance easily accessible and productive.
5. Offer recommendations on policies that will drive government processes and make them beneficial to the citizens.
6. Design strategies for implementing eGovernment processes.
7. Build a mutual beneficial relationship between government and technology services providers that will positively impact on citizens and the Nigerian economy.

8. To encourage collaboration between government and technology services providers.
9. To grow capacity building and boost local content development through the use of technologies.
10. To expose government and participants to emerging technologies that will enhance the financial inclusion drive of the federal government.

### **3.0 Attendees**

This Nigeria eGovernment Summit 2024, which is in its sixth edition, was well attended by industry stakeholders, which include government officials from the Lagos State government, National Identity Management Commission (NIMC), Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA), and Galaxy Backbone Limited.

Other industry stakeholders in attendance were the Association of Telecoms Companies of Nigeria (ATCON), Nigeria Computer Society (NCS), VDT Communications, 9mobile, CWG, KOICA, AVANTI, Sath, WIOCC, Liquid Intelligent Technologies, Open Access Data Centres, Africa Data Centres, Tecom, Cloudsa, Thnos, Infratel Africa, Fibreworld, ATC Nigeria, ipNX, 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 sixth edition of the summit, and stressed the importance of the theme: ‘Transforming Governance with Technology for Improved Economy’, which he said, was in tandem with the current mood of the nation where Nigerians are looking up to the federal and state governments to leverage technology to enhance government service delivery.

Although Ajayi commended the federal and state governments for the progress recorded so far in leveraging technology in delivering government services to the people, in the area of international passport application that can now be done online and the deployment of eGates by the immigration department in some of the airports, he however said technology adoption by government was still slow, insisting that more have to be done.

“Generally speaking, the progress has been quite slow and un-impressive. This means we still have a lot more work to do to promote eGovernment deployment.

Most government forms are still in paper form, when the forms can simply be put online for the convenience of the people. There is next to zero eGovernment deployment taking place at the state and local government level, except probably for few states like Lagos State where services like tax administration is put online and payment for intra-city buses, ferry and train is done through what they called cowry card,” Ajayi said.

He stressed the need for states and local governments to leverage technology in providing services to the people, which according to him, is the reason why a number of delegates from the state governments were invited to the summit to share the state of eGovernment deployment in their states and for them to benefit from the experience of professionals that were invited to speak at the summit.

“In response to the demand of industry stakeholders, we have developed an eGovernment platform called OneGov, which department and agencies of governments at all levels, can use to deliver services to citizens online. With OneGov.ng, governments can now provide basic services to citizens online, put all their forms online and accept payments online. OneGov is made available for use to all government agencies at no cost to them,” Ajayi further said.

He emphasized the need for increased connectivity and software development, and he informed the large audience that connectivity providers and software developers were among those assembled at the 2024 eGovernment Summit, to offer services and advice to government and industry stakeholders.

“We have assembled about 65 distinguished professionals in this one-day event to share their experiences with us. I am confident that we shall all benefit greatly from their wealth of experiences,” Ajayi added.

## **5.0 Goodwill Messages**

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

### **5.1 ATCON**

The President of the Association of Telecoms Companies of Nigeria (ATCON), Mr. Tony Izuagbe Emoekpere, commended Engr. Lanre Ajayi, a former President of ATCON, for his consistency in organising the Nigeria eGovernment Summit. He described this year’s summit as timely because it is addressing the need to digitize government services at a time when digital transformation is sweeping across the globe. He said government must leverage technology in providing digital services to the citizens. He advised industry stakeholders to key into the

summit and pledged the support of ATCON in supporting the annual eGovernment Summit, organised by DigiServe Network Services.

## **5.2 NCS**

The President of Nigeria Computer Society (NCS), Dr. Muhammad Sirajo Aliyu, who was represented by the Executive Secretary of NCS, Mr. Olusegun Adekunle, appreciated the organisers of Nigeria eGovernment Summit, and pledged the support of NCS in driving advocacy in the area of eGovernment for better service delivery.

## **5.3 NiRA**

President of Nigeria Internet Registration Association (NiRA), Mr. Adesola Akinsanya, called on government at all levels to play an active role in supporting the private sector in driving digital transformation across all sectors of the Nigerian economy. According to him, technology is fast evolving and has transformed all aspects of human lives, adding that government must take the lead in today's era of digital transformation, to promote efficiency and trust in governance. He said the role of government would be more of creating the enabling environment for technology innovation among the private and public sectors.

“Studies and statistics from studies have revealed that when government takes proactive steps towards promoting innovation, there will be economic boom that will further drive healthy competition among industry players. He advised all government agencies to embrace technology and ensure that all government websites are hosted on the .ng domain name, which is Nigeria's identity in the cyberspace,” Akinsanya said. Being the body that manages Nigeria's domain name registration and renewal, Akinsanya said NiRA would continue to ensure that the .ng domain name, which is a valuable resource, would promote digital transformation in Nigeria. According to him technology adoption in governance is a necessity for advancing development and building trust among the citizens.

## **5.4 KOIKA**

The Country Director, Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOIKA), Nigeria Office, Mr. Sungil Son, said the adoption of technology in governance would promote transparency, trust and improve governance and the economy. He promised that KOIKA would continue to support the Nigeria eGovernment Summit initiative.

## **6.0 Host Governor's Address**

Lagos State Governor, Babajide Sanwo-Olu, assured Nigerians of the state's readiness to continue to invest in technology to deliver government services to the people.

According to him, technology will address inefficiency in governance, advance development and impact economic growth.

Sanwo-Olu who was represented by the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Information, Science and Technology, Ibilola Kasumu, said Nigeria e-Government Summit 2024, reaffirmed government's commitment to harnessing technology's potential to drive inclusive growth, enhance service delivery and foster transparency.

“Technology offers us an unprecedented opportunity to address inefficiencies in governance through the adoption of e-government strategies, where technology is seamlessly integrated into government processes and service delivery, to revolutionise governance in ways that can profoundly impact economic growth. Incorporating technology into governance brings with it many advantages that we cannot afford to ignore. First, it enhances the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of government service delivery. In a world where time and resources are precious, leveraging technology enables faster and more reliable service provisions, reduces bureaucratic bottlenecks and eliminates redundant processes. It will help citizens to access government services from the comfort of their homes, and businesses, interact with government agencies more easily, leading to increased productivity and economic activity,” Sanwo-Olu said.

According to him, the private sector thrives when government services are delivered efficiently. By improving how government interacts with businesses, we reduce the administrative burden on companies, cut down on delays, and create a more favourable business climate. This, in turn, drives investment, fosters innovation, and stimulates economic growth. With e-government, we are building the infrastructure that will support the private sector's role as the driver of the economy, Sanwo-Olu said.

“As we inject technology into government service delivery, we will see a ripple effect across various industries, creating opportunities for increased productivity, employment, and wealth creation. I'm excited about the line-up for this year's summit. This year's summit promises to be a thrilling event, with an impressive line-up of speakers and exhibitors. We're not just here to discuss e-government, we are also diving deep into the practical steps and tools needed to make it a reality,” Sanwo-Olu further said.

## **7.0 Keynote Presentations**

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

### **7.1 NIMC Keynote**

The Director General/CEO, National Identity Management Commission (NIMC), Engr. Abisoye Coker-Odusote, who was represented by the Director, Enterprise Services and Network Infrastructure at NIMC, Mr. Elias Okafor, delivered the first keynote address.

According to her, government must leverage technology to create systems that will be efficient, inclusive, transparent, and cost effective, adding that digital governance is the bridge pillar for achieving improved service delivery, citizen engagement and economic growth.

“As we embrace the journey, we understand that identity management is fundamental to unlocking the potential of digital services, ensuring security, trust and inclusivity in the ecosystem. At the National Identity Management Commission, our mission is clearly defined to provide the robust, secure and inclusive digital identity infrastructure that supports the modernization of governance and the empowerment of Nigeria's economy,” Coker-Odusote said. Through partnership with key agencies such as the Federal Immigration Service, the Nigerian Immigration Commission, Federal Roads Safety Corps, the Nigerian Interbank Settlement System, the National Health Insurance Authority, the Joint Admission and Matriculation Board, the National Pension Commission, and the National Youth Service Corps, we have integrated and extended verification to a wide array of services, enabling seamless interaction between governments and citizens. The harmonization and integration framework is also being used for social intervention programs and health care services, ensuring that resources are distributed equitably and transparently, Coker-Odusote further said.

The next aspect of our endeavoring to technology has to do with the self-serve. The self-serve has given Nigerians the need to be able to manage their data themselves. This enhancement provides a one-stop-shop for applicants, enabling them to manage their need records efficiently.

None of these innovations would have been possible without the entire workforce driving this innovation. At NIMC, we have invested heavily in capacity building, ensuring that our staff members are equipped with the latest knowledge in identity management, cybersecurity, and digital governance. This commitment to human capital development extends beyond our organization as we actively collaborate with industry experts to share knowledge and best practices, Coker-Odusote said.

NIMC's goal is to continue leveraging technology to transform governance at every level. Our vision is to achieve full digital identity coverage for all Nigerians and arrivals by 2030, ensuring that no one is left behind in the digital economy. We are also exploring new frontiers, such as the use of blockchain technology for secure identity verification and artificial intelligence to ensure data analysis for governance, she added.

## **7.2 Galaxy Backbone Keynote**

The Managing Director/CEO, Galaxy Backbone Limited, Prof. Ibrahim Adeyanju, delivered the second Keynote address at the Nigeria eGovernment Summit 2024. He said to promote e-government and share strategies for effective deployment and to enable government leverage technology to make governance easily available and productive, among other benefits, platforms like the e-government summit must continue to play a pivotal role in bringing together, government officials, industrial experts, and international experts to share knowledge, best practices in e-government.

“The theme's primary focus demonstrates Nigeria's resolve and motivation to make a critical advancement in its quest for digital transformation, as well as a calculated stride ahead,” Adeyanju said.

According to him, through smart governance, digital platforms, and innovative data-driven solutions, we are witnessing an era where public services are more accessible, decision-making is more informed, and our economies are poised for exponential growth.

“This transformation is not just about adopting new tools, it is about fostering a culture of innovation that empowers communities, strengthens our economic resilience. Nigeria has made significant strides in digital transformation of government services, and I want to mention a few of these.

“A prime example is the Government Service Portal, developed under the e-Government Master Plan 2.0. The Government Service Portal aims to integrate services across federal MDAs into a secure, unified platform, simplifying citizen access and enabling data-driven decision-making. The first phase, scheduled for completion by December 2024, will integrate over 20 services from about 12 federal MDAs, establishing a solid foundation for broader expansion. At Galaxy Backbone, we see ourselves as an enabler, a platform, and an integrator of digital services across the nation. Our purpose is for digital inclusion in Nigeria with the mission of extending these particular services hopefully to the shores of Africa outside Nigeria,” Adeyanju said.

According to him, with the continuous growth in the ecosystem, improved digital infrastructure, and a supportive regulatory environment, businesses can leverage digital tools to enhance operation and reach new markets within and outside Nigeria. Additionally, individuals stand to benefit from improved access to digital services and better governance through e-governance initiatives, he said.

### **7.3 NITDA Keynote**

The Director General/CEO, National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA), Mr. Kashifu Inuwa Abdullahi, presented the third keynote address at the Nigeria e-Government Summit 2024.

He was represented by the Director, eGovernment Development and Regulations at NITDA, Dr. Dimie Shively Warriwei.

According to Abdullahi, there must be proper coordination of the activities of government, the private sector and the citizens, before government can deliver efficient services to the people.

“The coordination is key and in the case of Nigeria, the government has taken a bold step to ensure that government services are delivered using technology. It is important to note that the 8th Pillar of the Renewed Hope Agenda of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, addresses e-governance and delivery of effective services to Nigerian citizens. Then, our minister, Dr. Bosun Tijani, came up with his own blueprint on cascading the hopes of Mr. President, how he will implement that. And then, we also have what each of those agencies under the ministry should perform.

That has now trickled down to NITDA, where we have eight pillars addressing literacy, addressing policy delivery, addressing infrastructure, addressing collaboration and partnerships. So, all these are made to ensure that the desires of Mr. President are carried to the letter.

The UN index places Nigeria at number 140 out of 193 countries under the UN scope. That number is not good enough, as far as Nigeria is concerned. With our myth, with our capacity, human intellect, and everything, that number is not good enough. And I will urge this country to ensure that we leapfrog a good number of those countries that are between us and those that need the e-governance development index.

Abdullahi however said without effective connectivity, e-governance would not actually work.

“So in the process of this, Nigeria needs to look at few countries that have done very well in the area of e-governance. We need to learn from them. If we are able



to be that consistent and determined to deliver on each of those components, then we will be able to make progress,” Abdullahi further said.

## **8.0 Interactive Session With Special Guests And Keynote Speakers**

During the summit, there was an interactive session that brought together, all the special guests and keynote speakers to discuss key points in their presentations and to answer questions from the audience.

During the interactive session, the keynote presenters stressed the need for government to leverage technology to create systems that would be efficient, inclusive, transparent, and cost effective. According to them, if government fails to leverage technology, government will be left behind in global development.

The Director, Enterprise Services and Network Infrastructure at NIMC, Mr. Elias Okafor, who represented the Director-General/CEO of NIMC, commended the presentation of the Lagos State government in the area of technology development and advised other state governments to emulate Lagos government in using technology to advance development in their states.

According to him, those in government must begin to think about how to further deepen government services to the people.

The keynote speakers also discussed modalities to strengthen local government administration in order to deliver better services to people at the grassroots.

They also discussed how best to promote local content. President of Nigeria Internet Registration Association (NiRA), Mr. Adesola Akinsanya, spoke on the need for Nigerians to use the ccTLD.ng domain name in promoting local content development.

They advised NIMC to harmonize all data that are currently in silos into a single database that will enable Nigerians access information from a single portal controlled by government.

They raised questions why it was practically impossible for intra-departmental corporation, to have the same single access code from NIMC. They gave instances with developed countries, where the thumb print of individuals on a controlled system, could pop-up every information about the individual. They also raised questions why it was impossible to achieve a single database in Nigeria.

Responding to the questions raised, NIMC representative said the Nigerian government, through NIMC, was already working on some of the issues raised, leveraging on technology to achieve results.

According to the NIMC representative, hopefully, in the next few months, Nigerians will start seeing the results. The NIMC representative however blamed some of the challenges on the refusal of some government agencies to do what

they were supposed to do. Based on the issue raised, the speakers called for a legal framework that would help in enforcing some of the activities of government. NITDA representative, Dr. Dimie Shively Warriwei, narrated how he received first hand digital transformation, when he visited Korea. According to him, “I happened to be an alumnus from Seoul National University in Korea, and while I was there, I had the experience firsthand of digital service delivery to citizens. Both nationals and residents as well were made to implement the process of digital transformation. Now, for every single major legal requirement of e-governance, there is a legal framework that gives everybody the right to sue if their rights are infringed upon or if they are delayed for some reason due to somebody else's inefficiency,” Warriwei said.

Discussing about Nigeria's population, some of the speakers said there were no clear statistics of the actual population of Nigeria, which according to them, makes it difficult for government to deliver adequate services to the people. Now, if we expect almost everybody to partake of digital services, we need to know the actual population of the Nigerian people in order to present an effective digital literacy programme to run with, some of the speakers said. They further said: “We have the capacity, we have the internet, and NITDA is driving digital literacy for all initiative, meaning that we can still reach out to every Nigerian.”

They stressed the need for active citizens' participation in digital transformation, to enable government provide the right services.

## **9.0 Panel Sessions**

The 2024 eGovernment Summit had six panel sessions that discussed industry issues centered on how to transform governance with technology for improved economy. Each of the panel session had a sub-theme to discuss. 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 sub-theme and the panel discussions.

### **9.1 First Panel Session**

The first panel session, which focused on government activities, discussed the sub-theme: ‘Promoting eGovernment At State Level As A Strategy For Enhancing

Ease of Doing Business’. The session was chaired by the CEO of VDT Communications Limited, Mr. Biodun Omoniyi, while the lead paper was presented by the Director, Enterprise Services and Network Infrastructure at NIMC, Mr. Elias Okafor. The panelists include: Executive Secretary, Zamfara Information Technology Development Agency, Dr. Habib Gajam; Commissioner, Science, Technology and Innovation, Plateau State, Prof. Goselle Obed Nanjul; Commissioner, Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation, Nasarawa State, Hon. Samuel Kafu Emgba; Special Assistant, ICT and eGovernance to Oyo State Governor, Mr. Adebayo Akande.

Elias Okafor, in his lead paper presentation, gave some technical solutions to digital identity management. According to him, digital identity system provides a way to electronically verify the identity of the individual and ensure a secure and accurate identification. Before, in Nigeria, one of the problems we had was that we had no database, the reason why most of the previous ID systems have failed. So the new identity will have problems in taking care of this, and giving access to any organization that is present. We have got to reduce identity fraud, enhance service delivery, streamline administrative process, and restore public confidence and participation.

In the digital world, identity is a tool. Either you are having an identity as a fundamental identity or as a functional identity. If it is fundamental, it can always be defective. But if it is functional, it can come in any form, just to serve the purpose of that time, Okafor said.

According to him, in terms of technology solutions, we are talking about blockchain technology. A lot of things have been said about the data being porous or not porous, things like that. So we want to see how we can handle the data to make data accessibility a lot easier, and more protective to restore the confidence of Nigerians.

He elaborated on the need for more data generation that would enable government to make informed decision.

The Commissioner for Science, Technology and Innovation in Nasarawa State, Samuel Kafu Emgba, gave instances of how the state is leveraging technology in providing services to the people. He said the state provided identity cards to citizens that address the issue of health insurance that is not addressed in the National Identity Card issued by the federal government.

“The card is all encompassing and it will help in solving all the payments you can do in any of the ministries, any of the departments, and in any of the agencies in the state government. The same single card will help you to pay for electricity bills, pay for school fees, among others,” the commissioner said.

Executive Secretary, Zamfara Information Technology Development Agency, Dr. Habib Gajam, highlighted the need for collaboration among government agencies in delivering government services to the people. He spoke about the digital strategy policy of the state in driving technology development in the state.

Other panelists that contributed to the discussion, spoke about the need for government to create awareness on digital skills and literacy for the citizens. They said state governments must work together to expand and protect the network infrastructure in their various states.

## **9.2 Second Panel Session**

The second panel session centered on Connectivity and it discussed the sub-theme: ‘Positioning Telecoms Infrastructure for eGovernment’. The session was chaired by COO of SATH, Mr. Ndubuisi Ogbechie, while the lead papers presenters were the Chief Operating Officer, WTES Projects Limited, Mr. Chidi Princewill Ajuzie and Senior Business Development Manager, Baicells Technologies Limited, Engr. Ademakinwa Adetoro. The panelists include: Chief Executive Officer, 9mobile, Mr. Obafemi Banigbe; Head, Digital Skills and Services, Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), Mrs. Hauwa Buba Wakili; Regional Director, Avanti Communications, Mr. Reuben Oshomah; CEO, Fibreworld Telecommunications Network Limited, Mr. Tayo Adenuga-Taiwo; Regional Executive West Africa, Africa Data Centres, Dr. Krish Ranganath; Head, Networks and Solutions, Information Connectivity Solutions (ICSL), Tinuade Oguntuyi; Director, Adaba Consult Limited, Mr. Ejikeme Onyeaso Esq.; and Co-founder, PDMA Technologies/Xpark360 Media, Mr. Salvation Alibor.

In the first lead paper presentation from the second panel session, Mr. Chidi Princewill Ajuzie, quoted Nigeria’s broadband penetration level, which NCC puts at 53 per cent, and explained that eight active sub-marine cables that have berthed in Nigeria, were responsible for driving broadband connectivity across Nigeria. He however pointed out that some gaps still exist because the over 219 million subscribers are not fully connected to the internet.

He also quoted NCC to have reported that in 2022 there were about 35,000 towers and around 127,000 base stations across Nigeria, which he said were not enough to offer full connectivity services to all Nigerians.

He also pointed out the shortfall in metro fibre cable, which he said, has created limited access to the internet.

According to him, the eight submarine cables that have landed at the shores of Nigeria, offer over 340 terabits of data of capacity within the shores, with less than 40 per cent of the data capacity, transmitted to the hinterlands.

He further said the total of 252 Internet Service Providers (ISPs) in the country as at January this year, are no longer fully active, adding that only about a hundred of them are currently active, serving the large population of Nigeria, which he described as inadequate.

Ajuzie said in order to enhance economic growth and job creation, the right infrastructure must be put in place to drive connectivity.

He gave instances of how countries like Denmark, Sweden and Estonia have gone into networked space, where all government activities are uploaded online, and he advised Nigerian government to do same in order to serve Nigerian citizens better. He called for better regulation and legislation that will make internet connectivity accessible to all. He commended the federal government for signing into law, the Critical National Infrastructure and Information (CNII) Bill and called for full implementation of the CNII Act.

He stressed the need for government to balance between regulation, obligation, and levies in order to bridge the rural, urban, and e-government initiative.

In the second lead paper presentation from the second panel session, Engr. Ademakinwa Adetoro, emphasized the need to address the 'Ease of Doing Business' adding that the focus of the Nigerian people should be on three key pillars: People, Business, and Government.

He advised the three tiers of government- federal, state and local government to complement each other in providing connectivity services to the people.

For easy connectivity, Adetoro said registration of National Identification Number (NIN), should be done seamlessly from the comfort of the home and offices, if there are better connectivity services rendered across the country.

He also said there would be no need for police checkpoints to ascertain accurate vehicle licences and driver's licences if Nigeria has a proper connectivity system, where the police can check and verify without mounting roadblocks.

With better connectivity, government to government services can be accessed, government to business, and government to employer can also be accessed, Adetoro said.

During the panel discussion, the panelists hinged the growth of e-Government on three major things: Online services, Telecoms connectivity and Human capacity building. They however said a lot have been done in Nigeria in all the three areas, but stressed the need for more investment in the area of telecoms connectivity.

In her submission, the Head, Digital Skills and Services, Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), Mrs. Hauwa Buba Wakili said secure and robust telecoms infrastructure remained key in the advancement of e-governance in Nigeria.

According to her, NCC, as the telecoms regulator, is not oblivious of that fact, and it is ensuring that the necessary infrastructure is in place to drive e-governance

transformation through the national broadband plan.

### **9.3 Third Panel Session**

The third panel session focused on Big Tech Companies And Multinational Organisations, with the sub-theme: ‘International Best Practices in eGovernment’. The session was chaired by the Divisional CEO, ipNX Business, Mr. Segun Okuneye, while the lead paper was presented by the Founder/CEO, Innovative Digital Entrepreneurship Academy (IDEA), Mr. John Kofi Annan. The panelists include: Director, eGovernment Development and Regulations at NITDA, Dr. Dimie Shively Warriwei; MD/CEO, CWG Plc, Mr. Adewale Adeyipo; Head, Projects Implementation, Prembly, Modupe Odunyemi; Head, IT Security and Governance, 9mobile, Mr. Oluwatimilehin Adelowo; Chairman/CEO, Alpha Crown Engineering Associated Ltd, Engr. Ajibade Adetayo; Regional Technical Sales Manager, Cambium Networks and Growth & Product Marketing Consultant, Metriks Growth Agency, Princewill Ejirika.

The lead paper presenter, who is the Founder/CEO, Innovative Digital Entrepreneurship Academy (IDEA), Mr. John Kofi Annan, said from data possession to data storage to access to data, Nigeria has big challenges that were yet to be addressed, adding that in Nigeria, different agencies of government collect data, including banks and telecoms operators, and that all the data sit in silos. He therefore called for harmonization of all data sitting in silos to enable easy access of the data,

He talked about interoperability and data sharing, and gave an example with Singapore's smart solution initiative, which according to him, promotes interoperability between different government systems, enabling data-driven decision-making, especially in urban planning and healthcare development.

Giving instances about the population and digital identification initiative in India and Estonia, where the population of India alone is put at 1.4 billion, Annan said even with the high population of India, about 95 per cent of India's population is already enrolled in their digital identification platform.

He compared the Indian population with that of Nigeria, which is estimated at 230 million, and concluded that Nigeria could emulate India and other countries like Sweden and New Zealand that have fully digitized their economies.

He also spoke about cybersecurity and privacy protection, and gave instances how Israel and Germany are leading the way in cybersecurity and privacy protection. He therefore called on Nigerian government to put the necessary cybersecurity infrastructure in place.

He also talked about the multi-channel service delivery, and used Australia and Denmark as example. According to him, both countries offer government services via a variety of channels, including mobile applications, websites, phone services, and ensuring inclusivity of citizens with different access needs, insisting that Nigeria can do same.

He said for every Nigerian to be able to access digital services provided by government, Nigeria needs to build satellites, insisting that Nigeria has the resources to do that.

He also spoke on the need for active citizen participation and engagement, adding that citizens in developed countries of the world, do participate in budget and policy development, through different channels provided by the government. The panelists discussed how best practices could be adopted in governance to further support and enhance e-governance.

Some of the panelists however said adopting best practices of other countries without first analyzing our local expectations and needs and challenges, could lead to colossal failure in adopting best practices.

The panelists also discussed about economic development and mission building. According to the them, a lot of economic growth in most advanced countries of the world, is largely been powered by e-government. They stressed that the use of technology tools by advanced nations have helped to improve the life of their citizens, encouraging active citizen participation and making government to become more transparent, more accessible, reliable, and credible.

#### **9.4 Fourth Panel Session**

The fourth panel session focused on the citizens and tagged People's Parliament, with the sub-theme: 'People's Expectations in a Technology Driven Society.' The session was chaired by the Co-founder, Infratel Africa, Dr. Tola Yusuf, while the lead paper was presented by the CEO, Liquid Intelligent Technologies Nigeria, Mr. Wole Abu. The panelists include: Director, IT, Oyo State Management Information Centre, Engr. Raheemat Abisola Adabanija; Director, Renewable And Conventional Energy Technology, Nasarawa State Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation, Musa Ali; Managing Partner, Placidcode Labs, Napa Onwusah; Content/Digital Strategist, Albert and Wand, Nkiruka Joy Omojoye; CEO, Utopian Health Services Limited, Dr. John Adesioye; Freelance Social Media Manager, Kehinde Balikis Kenku; Presales Consultant, Expertflow, Chukwunenye Ekwe, and 3MTT Nigeria Community Manager, Lagos and Software Engineer, Oluwaseyi Ayodele.

In his lead paper presentation, Wole Abu spoke about e-governance in today's 4th industrial revolution, where Artificial Intelligence (AI), Big Data, Internet of Things (IoTs), Blockchain Technology, and Cybersecurity are in the centre stage. According to him, it presupposes that the 3rd industrial revolution has happened, which was centered around ICT, electronic and digital manufacturing, which happened in the early 60s with the advent of the internet.

He explained that the fourth industrial revolution had begun to drive people's expectations of government, where people expect government to connect everything with the use of technology. He however said government should prioritize the needs of the people, using technology, adding that technology should drive education, because without education, the nation cannot move forward.

He therefore insisted that government must first prioritize education and agriculture and use technology to deliver education to the citizens, by way of empowering the people. Government according to him, must also use technology to fix hunger by ensuring availability of food for all the people.

Citing global statistics, which put the rate of infant mortality at 2,000 daily, Wole Abu advised government to invest in health technology to reduce the rate of infant mortality.

He also spoke about the need for government to use technology to address insecurity and traffic challenges in the country and ensure that security number like 112 that is offered by telecoms operators is effective and accessible to the people in addressing emergency services.

He also stressed the need for government to use technology in conducting elections across the country in order to save citizens from the dangers associated with elections in Nigeria.

He concluded that putting the right technology in place and adopting technology in governance, would help in addressing corruption in the country.

The panelists, while discussing the lead paper, stressed the need for transparency and accountability in government, in order to earn the trust of the people.

The panelists also deliberated on remote work style, and encouraged government to allow workers to work remotely with support of technology tools, thereby using technology to improve the country's workforce.

According to the panelists, more than 50 per cent of Nigerian workforce expects that government should be involved in improving their processes in terms of needs and everything that concerns the welfare of workers.

## **9.5 Fifth/Sixth Panel Session**



The fifth and sixth panel sessions were merged by the organizers of The Nigeria eGovernment Summit in order to manage time effectively.

The combined panel session focused on digital transformation, Fintech and Identity Management, as well as on Critical National Infrastructure and Information (CNII) Act and Cybersecurity. The combined panel session was chaired by the President, Crypto Economy Institute of Africa (CEIAfrica), Dr. Olutoyin Oloniteru, while the lead papers were presented by the Managing Partner, DigitA, Mr. Oswald Osaretin Guobadia, and the Group CISO, First Bank, Dr. Harrison Nnaji. The panelists include: President, Women in Mining (WIM) Nigeria, Dr. Janet Adeyemi; President, Internet Society, Nigeria Chapter, Engr. Kunle Olorundare; Co-founder, Opolo Global, Mr. Kalejaiye Olufemi; CEO, Tenth Code Media, Mr. Francis Ebuechi; Founder, Money Africa & Ladda, Oluwatisin Olaseinde; Product Manager, MoniePoint, Boluwaji Alepaye; Startup Growth Specialist, Seunfunmi Bolarinwa; and Chief Technology Officer, AlphaBeta Consulting LLP, Mr. Olumide Idowu. Other panelists include: Director, Strategic Business Initiative ipNX Nigeria, Mr. Olusola Teniola; Director-General, Nasarawa State Information Technology and Digital Economy Agency (NASITDEA), Haruna Sani Sani; Managing Director, Tecom Concepts Limited, Happiness Obioha; Former Chairman, Education and Capacity Building Committee of the Institute of Software Practitioners of Nigeria (ISPON), Mr. James Agada; Executive Head, Legal & Regulatory Affairs, ATC Nigeria, Chinwe Odigboegwu; Acting Director-General, Nigerian-American Chamber of Commerce, Ms. Wofai Samuel; and CEO, FOUND Africa Technology, Mr. Jide Aboderin.

In his opening remarks the combined panel chairman, Dr. Olutoyin Oloniteru, stressed the importance of the combined sub-themes for both panel sessions. He explained that the sub-themes, Fintech/Identity Management and Critical National Infrastructure and Information, were related in several ways and thanked the organisers for combining such related sub-themes for a single panel discussion. Dr. Olutoyin Oloniteru added that Nigeria had made a lot of progress in the area of national infrastructure, which he said has not been well communicated to the citizens.

He commended President Bola Ahmed Tinubu for using the executive order to declare the country's national assets as critical national infrastructure.

The first lead paper presenter, who is the Managing Partner, DigitA, Mr. Oswald Osaretin Guobadia, spoke on Digital Transformation, Fintech and Identity Management.

According to him, identity is foundational and financial services rely on trusted digital identity. Identity management is key to secure transactions, but Nigeria has a total addressable market problem, due to digital inclusion and digital literacy, he

said. He explained that several people relied on digital data, which according to him, has made data to become very critical.

He stressed the need for data and human protection in order to address security concerns and cyber threats.

He said because digital literacy continued to be a problem, digital inclusion and digital literacy also continued to be a challenge, and called on African governments to start finding solutions that address the issues.

He said Nigeria should start looking at and understanding the impact of policy on how transmission works, adding that policy is a critical part on how we're able to develop a market and do digital evolution. He said Nigeria must co-create and collaborate with government, to drive digital evolution, since no country survives without government support.

The second lead paper presenter, who is the Group CISO, First Bank, Dr. Harrison Nnaji, spoke on Critical National Infrastructure, Cybersecurity, Policy Protection, Investment, and Web Security.

According to him, if there's a loss or compromise of our national infrastructure, there will be detrimental impact on either availability or integrity or delivery of essential services.

“If you look at our GDP, from crop production to trade to food, beverage, and tobacco to construction, there are key contributions that serve as economic backbone, facilitating trade and commerce, supporting essential services, attracting investment, supporting the national security, and again, at the background, job creation,” Nnaji said.

He further said Nigeria was battling with the challenges of infrastructure, insecurity, political instability, terrorism and insurgency, adding that if the country does not have data infrastructure, it becomes more difficult to unlock emerging technologies.

The panel chairman summarized the presentation by stressing the need for all Nigerians to protect critical national infrastructure located in their various domains. He also challenged women on the panel to speak more on the need to educate the family and create awareness from the family in addressing most of the challenges highlighted by both lead paper presenters.

The panelists said collaboration would be a key driver in addressing the identified challenges. Some of the panelists however want government to create the enabling business environment and the right policies that will drive investments and grow the Nigerian economy.

## **10.0 Challenges**

Some of the challenges identified from the various topics discussed at the Nigeria eGovernment Summit 2024, centered on lack of innovation and political will on the part of government to use technology in delivering digital services to the citizens. Some of the panelists raised the issue of lack of adequate awareness on the part of government in sensitizing the people on what some of the government agencies are doing to promote development through the use of emerging technologies.

Some lead paper presenters also raised the challenge where different agencies of government collect data, including banks and Telcos, and all the data sit in silos, with huge delay to harmonize all data that are in silos into a single data base. Other lead paper presenters blamed Nigeria for not looking up to countries that have used technology to develop their economies, like Estonia, Sweden, India and Germany. Some of panelist identified some factors like infrastructure development that would drive digital connectivity across the country.

Other panelists identified the lack of citizen participation and engagement through various channels to sensitize Nigerians of the benefits of e-Government.

## **11.0 Recommendations**

Some of the recommendations from the summit include:

1. Government must take proactive steps towards using technology to promote innovation, and to boost economy.
2. There should be increased interface and collaboration between government and the private sector.
3. Technology adoption in governance will eliminate inefficiency and promote economic growth, making government to become more transparent, more accessible, more reliable, and more credible.
4. Technology adoption in governance is a necessity for advancing development and building trust among the citizens.
5. When government takes proactive steps towards promoting innovation, there will be economic boom that will further drive healthy competition among industry players.
6. Government agencies must embrace technology and ensure that all government websites are hosted on the .ng domain name, which is Nigeria's identity in the cyberspace.
7. Government must not only adopt technology, but must also champion technology innovation among all government parastatals.

8. Government must digitize its processes, in order to minimize opportunities for corruption, improve transparency and build trust between government and the people.
9. Nigeria needs to learn from countries like Estonia and Korea that have done very well in e-governance.
10. Government agencies need to collaborate in order to provide better services to the people.
11. Government must work together to expand and protect the network infrastructure in their various states.
12. To enhance economic growth and job creation, the right infrastructure must be put in place to drive connectivity.
13. The summit commended the federal government for signing into law, the Critical National Infrastructure and Information (CNII) Bill and called for full implementation of the CNII Act.
14. There must be a balance between regulation, obligation, and levies in order to help bridge the rural, urban, and e-government initiative.
15. Nigeria needs to build satellites to enable all Nigerians have access to digital services provided by government.
16. There should be more citizen participation and engagement through various channels to sensitize Nigerians of the various benefits of e-Government.
17. The summit stressed the need for systems interoperability and data sharing, that would enable data-driven decision-making, especially in urban planning and healthcare development.
18. Although the summit hinted on the need to adopt best practices from developed countries of the world, it however cautioned that adopting best practices of other countries without first analyzing Nigeria's local expectations, needs and challenges, could lead to colossal failure.
19. Government should prioritize education and agriculture by using technology to provide access to education and food for all citizens.
20. Government should use technology to reduce the rate of infant mortality among children, since 2,000 infants die daily, according to global statistics.
21. Nigeria must co-create and collaborate with government to drive digital evolution.
22. Nigeria needs data infrastructure to unlock emerging technologies.
23. Government should establish synergies across the cybersecurity ecosystem and also invest in the people, the institution and the ecosystem.
24. Government must promote national and regional cooperation to drive essential digital services to the citizens.
25. Nigerians must learn to protect critical national infrastructure located in their various domains.

## **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.