FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

POLICY ON ICT FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE AND ELECTIONS IN NIGERIA

FEDERAL MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

2015 EDITION

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European Union

POLICY ON ICT FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE AND ELECTIONS IN NIGERIA

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ISBN:…………

Published by

Federal Ministry of Science and Technology

Phase II, Block "D"

Federal Secretariat Complex

Abuja

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FOREWORD

One of the key mandates of the Federal Ministry of Science and Technology (FMST) is to create technology infrastructure and knowledge base in order to facilitate its wide application for development. A key strategic area of focus by the revised STI Policy is Research and Development into Information and Communication Technology (ICT). This covers various sectors and sub sectors of the economy including entrenchment of good governance with robust electoral process/system as a key element premised on the implementation of the National Policy on Science, Technology and Innovation (STI).

Election, as the central component and the minimum necessary requirement for representative democracy, remains the only legitimate instrument for entrenchment of good governance and leadership turnover. It is a core aspect that requires the active involvement of citizens. However, beyond elections, the flowering of democratic practice depends largely on the active participation of the people through different forms of political activities such as in the electoral process. One of the areas in which this active participation of the people has been enhanced, world over, is in the use of ICT platforms. Being an instrument of political socialization and means of political education, ICTs have galvanized massive citizen awareness.

The quality of governance has been enhanced over the years as a result of many factors; among which is revolutions in Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). This has, in turn, impacted participation of citizens in public affairs; in relation to plurality of voices, advocacy, activism and electoral activities, enhanced by ICT platforms including Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, and the Internet, thus deepening the democratic process. The power of these platforms as viable mechanisms for political mobilization was first noticed in advanced democracies in the mid-90s. Ever since, events and processes have further highlighted their utility to democratic politics, most notably, to the electoral process.

Stakeholders in several other democracies have since harnessed the utility of ICTs platforms in their electoral process, and Nigeria, despite structural challenges, is not exempted. The social media was first used in a remarkable way in the 2011 elections by politicians, who used Face book account to garner country-wide support. The 2015 general elections witnessed an increase in the use of ICTs platforms for election-related activity by stakeholders. In order to make Nigeria a technology driven society where ICT and other technologies are utilized for enhancing the credibility of elections, deepening democracy and ensuring good governance, the FMST deemed it expedient to develop a policy framework to actualize this goal.

Against this background, FMST in keeping with its leading role for guiding the deployment of technology in the country, with the support of Democratic Governance for Development (DGD) II Project of the United Nations Development Agency (UNDP), has articulated a policy for the use of ICTs to strengthen governance, accountability and the electoral process. The policy takes its bearing from the National Science, Technology and Innovation (ST&I) Policy whose mission statement is "evolving a nation that harnesses, develops and utilizes ST&I to build a large, strong, diversified, sustainable and competitive economy that guarantees a high standard of living and quality of life for its citizens. The Policy stipulates strategies to ensure that ICTs are mainstreamed into all government processes and services at all levels to enhance citizens' participation, transparency and accountability in governance and electoral processes.

I wish to acknowledge and commend the efforts of all the staff of the Federal Ministry of Science and Technology (FMST) and her Agencies, the key stakeholders particularly the Federal Ministry of Communication Technology, Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Federal Ministry of Youth and Social Development among others for their effective participation in the development of this Policy. My special appreciation goes to the officials of Democratic Governance for Development (DGD) II Project of the United Nations Development Agency (UNDP) for their support to this laudable project.

I want to assure all Nigerians that this Policy on ICT for Good Governance and Elections in Nigeria articulates implementable strategies that will in line with the current Administration's Change Agenda enhance the quality of governance and electoral process in the country.

God Bless the Federal Republic of Nigeria

Mrs. Winifred Oyo –Ita, FCA
Permanent Secretary,
Federal Ministry of Science and Technology,
Federal Republic of Nigeria

September, 2015

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The quality of governance has been enhanced over the years as a result of many factors; among which revolutions in Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) is key. Stakeholders in several other democracies have since harnessed the ICTs platforms in their electoral process. Nigeria, despite structural challenges facing her, should not be exempted.

Consequently, the Management of the Federal Ministry of Science and Technology with the support of the Democratic Governance for Development (DGD) II Project of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) articulated a policy for the use of ICTs to strengthen governance, ensure accountability as well as transparent electoral process in Nigeria. The policy which is derived from the National Science, Technology and Innovation (ST&I) Policy stipulates strategies to ensure that ICTs are mainstreamed into all government processes and services at all levels for enhanced citizens' participation, transparency and accountability in governance and electoral processes

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has played an increasingly important role in Nigeria's electoral process which is a reflected by INEC's adoption of ICT for the continuous voter registration exercise, permanent voter cards, civic and voter education activities, including online and SMS messages. Social media has played a highly visible role among the electorate.

The FMST Management appreciates and acknowledges the contributions of staff of the Ministry and her agencies and the Lead Consultant who developed the draft policy document.

We sincerely thank all relevant stakeholders, particularly the Federal Ministry of Communication Technology, Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC),

Federal Ministry of Youth and Social Development among others for their invaluable inputs which enriched the Policy document..

We wish to specially appreciate the Democratic Governance for Development (DGD) II Project of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for their logistic support which ensured successful development of this Policy document. This support underscores the commitment of UNDP to complement to actualizing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)..

Most importantly, we wish to thank God Almighty, who has made this whole effort to come to fruition. We assure Nigerians of the Ministry's commitment towards ensuring effective implementation of this Policy with the cooperation of the stakeholders..

Oyelayo Babajide
Director (Planning, Research and Policy Analysis),
Federal Ministry of Science and Technology,
Abuja.

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Abbreviation

1. CPN - Computer Professionals Registration Council of Nigeria
2. EMS - Election Management Systems
3. FCT – Federal Capital Technology
4. FMST –Federal Ministry of Science and Technology
5. ICT4D – Information and Communication Technologies for Development
6. ICTs - Information and Communication Technologies
7. IGR - Internally Generated Revenues
8. INEC – Independent National Electoral Communication
9. IPR – Intellectual Property Rights
10. ISPON – Institute of Software Practitioners of Nigeria
11. IT - Information Technology
12. ITAN – Information Technology (Industry) Association of Nigeria
13. ITU - International Telecommunications Union
14. MDAs – Ministries, Departments and Agencies
15. NBTE – National Board for Technical Education
16. NCS – Nigeria Computer Society
17. NITDA - National Information Technology Development Agency
18. NITDEF - National Information Technology Development Fund
19. NRIF - National Research and Innovation Fund
20. NUC – National Universities Commission
21. PPP – Public Private Partnership
22. R&D – Research and Development
23. ST&I - Science, Technology and Innovation

1.0 PREAMBLE

Over the years, Nigeria's democracy has shown remarkable resilience in the face of many challenges. The elections are progressively improving while reforms are underway to improve transparency, accountability and make governance impactful to the citizens. The vision 202020 is in place to make the economy one of the top 20 by the year 2020.

The Government has recognized the pivotal roles that Science and Technology have in the articulation of Vision 20220. It was thus in the effort to harness Science and Technology for the development process and in making the country competitive that the Federal Ministry of Science and Technology developed the National Policy on Science, Technology and Innovation.

The Ministry has also been keenly observing the roles that information and communication technologies (ICTs) have been playing globally in promoting good governance. Democracy is being substantively consolidated with the use of ICTs. From providing platforms for citizens to access information and services to the concept of open governance, there is a gradual movement in which the participation of citizens in governance has become substantive with ICT tools.

Here in Nigeria, the recent use of the card reader and associated technologies has shown that technology can really make a significant difference in improving the credibility of the election. In spite of the challenges encountered in its deployment for the 2015 general elections, the card reader has proven that it is capable of overcoming a number of the problems that have usually bedeviled elections in the country. Election alone is not what produces good governance but, the ability of citizens to participate in the decision making process and to demand and obtain accountability from elected representatives ensures good governance and accountability. ICTs have important roles to play in assuring this good governance and accountability. They offer, in particular, mechanisms and platforms for the effective and efficient provision of information, robust tools for dialogues that assure participation and tools for tracking transactions that assure accountability.

The Federal Ministry of Science and Technology in keeping with its leading role for guiding the deployment of technology in the country, has further articulated a

policy for the use of ICTs to strengthen governance, accountability and the electoral process.

The policy takes its bearing from the National Science, Technology and Innovation (ST&I) Policy whose mission statement is "evolving a nation that harnesses, develops and utilizes ST&I to build a large, strong, diversified, sustainable and competitive economy that guarantees a high standard of living and quality of life for its citizens". Evolving such an economy requires a stable polity that commands the loyalty and commitment not only of its citizens but also of foreign investors. Consequently, consolidating democracy as means of ensuring political stability is a key element in making the economy competitive.

The new policy also takes into cognizance the National ICT Policy and the National ICT in Education Policy as well as the National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA) Law and the document ICT4D by NITDA all of which aimed at ensuring the development of a vibrant ICT sector in the country. It is that vibrant ICT sector that this new policy hopes to deploy in meeting the national ICT needs to ensure good governance, improve accountability and enhance credibility of the conduct of the elections.

2.0 POLICY ON ICT FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE AND ELECTIONS IN   NIGERIA

2.1. VISION

To become a technology driven society where ICT and other technologies are utilised for enhancing the credibility of elections, deepening democracy and ensuring good governance.

2.2.   MISSION

A nation driven by technology in the discharge of its duties, that ensures credible election, democratic engagement and good governance for national development and competitiveness.

2.3. GENERAL POLICY STATEMENTS

1. Use ICTs to promote credible, transparent and sustainableelectoral processes
2. Use ICTs to engender participatory, inclusive and responsive governance in Nigeria
3. Use ICTs to promote transparency and accountability in government
4. Engender R&D and diffusion of ICTs through its mainstreaming in all governance process that will support the attainment of the vision 202020 goals of the country

2.4. Specific Objectives/Strategies

The Specific objectives are to:

1. Build capacities and capabilities of relevant institutions and personnel to generate knowledge to adapt, utilise, replicate and diffuse technologies in all areas of ICTs through Research and Development on governance issues

2. Ensure that the necessary infrastructure and equipment for deployment of equitable services for good governance are in place in all relevant institutions

3. Carry out the automation of all governments' activities and services across Ministries, Departments and Agencies

4. Support, harness, promote, and encourage the commercialization and diffusion of locally developed technologies for the conduct of elections and government activities.

5. Popularize the inculcation of the culture of citizens utilizing ICTs in all engagements with Government for transparency and accountability.

6. Establish an up-to-date, reliable and accessible databank of all citizens, governance services and institutions in Nigeria

3.0 INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK/GOVERNANCE OF ICT IN ELECTION AND GOVERNANCE

3.1. Policy Statement

To ensure that ICT and relevant technologies are deployed and effectively utilised for all governance activities and services across all sectors of the society.

3.2. Policy Objectives

3.2.1. To enhance the credibility of elections in the country

3.2.2. To enhance citizen's participation in governance

3.2.3. To improve service delivery by both government and private sector

3.3. Policy Strategies

3.3.1. Making provisions for relevant ICT equipment to all MDAs as required for day to day running of their activities and processes.

3.3.2. Establishing database of citizens and information relevant to the functions of each MDAs and election agencies for proper service delivery and accountability

3.3.3. Facilitating online real-time platforms with accessible hubs for citizens to participate easily in all government activities across states of the Federation and the FCT

3.3.4. Initiating public discourses on sectoral vision, policies and key engagements in order to sensitize citizens and encourage partnerships and participation.

3.3.5. Developing regular feedbacks and suggestion mechanisms through social media platforms for monitoring performances of government activities from time to time.

3.3.6. Collaborating with other relevant ministries to ensure that all MDAs have functional, dynamic and interactive up to date websites for citizens to access not only information about the activities of the establishments but also access services and carry out transactions

3.3.7. Liaising with the Office of the Head of Service of the Federation to establish Directorate of ICT in all MDAs that will be staffed with professionals and provide career progression as incentive for retaining the professionals in the service

3.3.8. Working with the relevant government establishments to ensure that all new employees in their service are computer literate

3.3.9. Ensuring the provision of adequate, relevant and continuous training of employees of government establishments

4.0 RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT IN ICT FOR ELECTION AND GOVERNANCE

4.1. Policy Statement

To support and carry out continuous multi - sectoral R&D in all areas of election and good governance through knowledge institutions, taking into consideration security and national development.

4.2. Policy Objectives

1. To facilitate effective and efficient R&D to service the needs for deploying ICTs for governance and credible elections
2. To facilitate the development, assembly, maintenance and promotion of biometric technology by relevant institutions for its application in improving effective governance and security challenges,

4.3. Policy Strategies

1. Encourage local knowledge based institutions to develop information systems that will enhance transparency in election and governance.
2. To promote indigeneous R&D in ICT hardware development in relevant institutions across the country and promote siting of ICT based industries at proximity to ICT Parks.
3. Trainingand Institutional capacity building to acquire and adapt as well as develop biometric technology, i.e. fingerprints, face recognition, etc.

4. Collaborating with the IT industry organizations such as NCS, ITAN and ISPON to promote the utilization of local research for the production of ICT goods and service in the country

5.0   DEFENCE AND SECURITY

5.1.   Policy Statement

To ensure that ICT deployment and use in governance and elections are consistent with national security interest

5.2. Objective

1. Promote registration and protection of all ICT Infrastructure and facilities
2. Promote development of mechanisms and tools for securing ICT facilities

5.3   Policy Strategies

5.3.1 Promoting the enforcement of cybercrime legislations

5.3.2 Facilitating relevant mechanism for the protection of privacy of Nigerian citizens and personal rights

5.3.3 Collaborating with relevant agencies to monitor and neutralize the spread of hate speech during electioneering campaign

5.3.4 Promoting mechanisms for collaborating with relevant agencies to eliminate the spread of hate speech during electioneering campaign.

5.3.5 Promoting the testing, validation and certification of electoral process

6.0   TECHNOLOGY ACQUISITION, LOCALISATION AND DIFFUSION

6.1   Policy Statement

6.1.1 In order to utilise ICT for good governance, Governmentshall encourage adaptation of appropriate and relevant technologies through reverse engineering for localisation and diffusion in the management of our democratic processes.

6.2 Policy Objectives

6.2.1 To establish a system for local development of ICTs to solve national problems whereby professionals and technicians are fully utilised

6.2.2 To ensure the continuous monitoring and evaluation of new ICTsfor their compatibility in the Nigerian context

6.3 Policy Strategies

6.3.1 Facilitating the development of necessary skills in Nigeria's technicians and IT professionals to be able to produce made-in-Nigeria ICT equipment

6.3.2 Enhancing the training and teaching modules of tertiary and vocational institutions in all fields of ICTs to meet global and national development needs.

6.3.3 Encouraging continuous networking between local and international ICT institutions and organizations for multi-dimensional management of local challenges to ensure effectiveness in ICT deployment.

6.3.4 Ensuring that all MDAs patronise and utilise locally developed and manufactured ICT software and hardware to enable ICT production and deployment.

6.3.5 Strengthening collaborative research and exchange of faculties at all levels of educational competences especially in the development of artisans in the informal sector of the economy.

6.3.6 Supporting development and adaptation of open source tools to provide software and applications as well as the use of open source applications in governance and election processes which can result in cost savings

6.3.7 Working with the Federal Ministry of Education, INEC, NBTE and NUC to support the development of centres of excellencein the development of software and applications for the governance and election purposes in the Nigerian tertiary education system

6.3.8 Repositioning the current incubator centres of the Ministry to be able to provide essential ICT based incubator programmes

7.0 STANDARDIZATION, QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

7.1 Policy Statement

7.1.1 Promote standardsolutions to all public and privateengagements that improve efficiency, effectiveness and transparency in all sectors, and make Nigeria relevant in the comity of nations.

7.2 Policy Objective

7.2.1 To foster national and international appreciation of recognition of public and private engagementsand ensure globally acceptable procedures and systems for sustainable development.

7.3 Policy Strategies

7.3.1 Ensuring public and private engagement inICT development

7.3.2 Ensuring that all ICTs (hardware or software) are of high quality at every point of delivery for any government assignments and schedules

7.3.3 Establishing standards and quality check mechanisms for all services and products deployed or carried out by any MDA,the private sector as well as individuals at all times.

7.3.4 Providing innovative tools for standards and environmental protection in the design, development, production and utilization of ICT equipment across the nation and for good governance.

7.3.5 Working with relevant agencies such as the Computer Professionals Registration Council of Nigeria (CPN) to ensure that ICT projects are implemented by qualified and registered professionals and professionally accredited firms

7.3.6 Ensuring proper disposal or recycling of alldisused/retired ICT hardware in the country.

8.0   HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT IN ICT

8.1   Policy Statement

8.1.1 Ensure the development of critical mass of Nigerians in all fields of ICTs, especially Software and Hardware, to enable local solutions for making governance processes effective, transparent and accessible to citizens.

8.2   Policy Objectives

8.2.1 To train adequate ICT and allied professionals to meet the needs of e-governance and deployment of ICT in election processes and activities

8.2.2 To ensure the local development of ICT applications and solutions for use in governance and election purposes

8.3   Policy Strategies

8.3.1 Ensuring adequate support for continuous training and retraining of ICT related personnel in knowledge and academic institutions.

8.3.2 Producing skilled and proficient Information Technology scientists, engineers and technologists who are well grounded in manufacture of hardware, software development and have ability to maintain all technologies at local level.

8.3.3 Encouraging and creating opportunities for those in the ICT informal sector to be trained from time to time.

8.3.4 Ensuring that IT experts in the military, paramilitary and all MDAs undergoregular training on security and information management skills for security of national data

8.3.5 Providing adequate incentives to IT personnelfor human resource retention and winning of their loyalty to good governance and patriotism.

8.3.6 Promoting and facilitating academic-industry exchange programmes to enhance knowledge sharing locally and internationally.

8.3.7 Encouraging and rewarding creativity and innovation through organizing knowledge fairs, especially for young people, to showcase their talents

9.0   ELECTION INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

9.1   Policy Statement

9.1.1 Establish relevant, timely and up-to-date database of all eligible citizens and electoral processes for effective, efficient, transparent and credible conduct of elections.

9.2   Policy Objectives

9.2.1 To deploy ICTs in order to enhance the transparency and credibility of elections

9.2.2 To use ICTs to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the election processes

9.3   Policy Strategies

9.3.1 Supporting INEC to create a database of all eligible voters across states and local government areas with a secured and verifiable input mode identification system.

9.3.2 Supporting efforts by INEC for legislation to allow for electronic voting in future elections

9.3.3 Supporting the development of protocols for the electronic compilation and transmission of results to various collation centres in the election chain

9.3.4 Ensuring voting system is secured, reliable and verifiable experience for all citizens

9.3.5 Working with INEC and political parties to develop a voluntary code of conduct in the use of social media for campaign purposes by political parties in the country

9.3.6 Encouraging all pre-verified eligible voters to exercise their civic rights at the polls before or during the election dates through Election Management Systems (EMS).

9.3.7 Encouraging political parties to make effective use of ICTs for their campaign

9.3.8 Encouraging collaboration across actors, such as government and civil society, towards use of new applications of social media in election processes

9.3.9 Encouraging feedback mechanism from the general public on the use of ICT for good governance and election in Nigeria

9.3.10 Using IEC materials for sensitization purposes at both rural and urban areas in order to dissuade citizens from multiple registration

10.0 PROMOTING OPEN AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

10.1 Policy Statement

10.1.1 Ensure that ICTs are mainstreamed into all government processes and services at all levels to enhance citizens' participation, transparency and accountability.

10.2 Policy Objectives

10.2.1 To promote transparency and accountability in governance

10.2.2 To improve citizens access to government services and activities

10.2.3 To reduce corruption and waste in government

10.2.4 To promote peaceful co-existence among the citizens

10.3   Policy Strategies

10.3.1   Supporting the continuing implementation of existing national framework for e-governance initiative across all levels of governance

10.3.2   Ensuring that all activities and public transactions are ICT-enabled

10.3.3   Fostering relationships through the use of social and electronic media and regular Stakeholders' forum whereby citizens can make useful inputs to government activities.

10.3.4   Sensitising citizens on governance structures, source (es) of funding and procedures for engaging with government using ICTs in all major languages for citizens' full understanding and participation.

10.3.5   Ensuring that all MDAs have functional, dynamics and interactive websites for citizens to access not only information about the activities of the establishments but also access services and carry out transactions with the MDAs.

10.3.6   Ensuring the full implementation of the Freedom of Information Act across all levels of government.

10.3.7   Ensuring the effective participation of Nigeria in global open government and open data initiatives to make sure that the country is able to quickly identify international best practices for local adaptation and deployment

10.3.8   Implementing global standards and commitments for open governance

11.0   PROMOTION OF THE USE OF ICTS FOR ELECTORALPROCESSES

11.1   Policy Statement

11.1.1   Promotion and popularization of ICTs for good governance and enhancing election processes.

11.2   Policy Objective

> **11.2.1**   To sensitize the public about the benefits of ICTs in improving credibility of election

11.3   Policy Strategies

> **11.3.1**   Raising awareness about the ways in which social media/mass and print media could be used to facilitate greater mobilization and engagement of the people with democratic cause

> **11.3.2**   Supporting the training of youth in social media for election activities

> **11.3.3**   Using religious institutions, town hall meeting and public hearing to promote the use of ICT in the electoral process

12.0   PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

11.1. Policy Statement

> **11.1.1.**   Government shall establish a system that will protect the rights of professionals, inventors, innovators, designers, patent holders, etc in all engagements with government processes.

11.2. Policy Objectives

> **11.2.1.**   To ensure the protection of the intellectual assetof ICT professionals

> **11.2.2.**   To incentivise creativity and innovation by according due recognition to them

> **11.2.3.**   To eliminate piracy in the development, deployment and utilization of ICT across all sectors and levels of society un the country

11.3. Policy Strategies

> **11.3.1.**   Building and developing local capacities ofexperts and professionals on intellectual property management for openness and effective transfer of technology.

11.3.2. Facilitating the conversion of IPR into spin-offs and companies that will produce goods and services, creating jobs and wealth for Nigerians.

11.3.3. Ensuring the promotion and protection of creativities, traditional knowledge in technological designs, indigenous technology and other intellectual assets of all citizens.

11.3.4. Recognising, and ensuring payment of royalties for intellectual properties as well as promoting a sustainable culture on intellectual property protection in all educational and knowldege generation levels.

11.3.5. Repositioning of the Nigeria Copy Right Commisison and patent registry establishment with a special focus to document and register ICT innovations and inventions in the country

11.3.6. Establishing an intellectual property right monitoring and surveillance system that will ensure compliance with intellectual property right laws in the sector

12. FUNDING ICT ACTIVITIES FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE AND ELECTION

12.1. Policy Statement

12.1.1. Sustainable funding mechanisms for continuous R&D in ICTs and deployment of new technologies to all Government MDAs shall be put in place for apt and regular updates of government activities.

12.2. Policy Objectives

12.2.1. To ensure that funding appropriation for all relevant technologies in the pursuance of good governance and conduct of credible elections is adequately put in place for massive deployment of ICTs for our national development

12.3. Policy Strategies

12.3.1. Adhering to planned budgets shall be pursued in line with laid down guidelines for all purchases and acquisition of ICT equipment needed to make all MDAs function as expected

12.3.2. Developing framework for the mobilization of fund to support local developers of Software and Hardware manufacturers through Private Joint Venture Capital Initiative to boost production and performance

12.3.3. Encouraging the protection and commercialisation of local R&D in ICTs so as to proliferate,diffuse and market locally produced goods and services through special incentives and funding support.

12.3.4. Facilitating the purchase of ICT products and equipment off the stock of local producers for use by MDAs thereby encouraging more innovation in ICTs

12.3.4.1. Funding of ICT development, acquisition and deployment through the following:

12.3.4.1.1. Federation Accounts

12.3.4.1.2. Internally Generated Revenues (IGR)

12.3.4.1.3. Donor Funds

12.3.5. Special Funds for ICT development, acquisition and deployment shall further come from such initiatives as:

12.3.5.1. National Information Technology Development Fund (NITDEF)

12.3.5.2. Industrial Training Fund (ITF)

12.3.5.3. National Research and Innovation Fund (NRIF)

12.3.5.4. Public-Private Partnership (PPP)

13. INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION ON ICT

13.1. Policy Statement

13.1.1. Foster international partnerships and collaborations in order to leverage appropriate technical and other forms of opportunities for global competitiveness.

13.2. Policy Objective

13.2.1. To streamline the process and mechanisms of collaborations necessary to enhance local productions and innovation development and foster good governance at all levels especially in election processes while avoiding undue pressure on our democratic system.

13.3. Policy Strategies

13.3.1. Identifying areas of collaborations with international communities and partners at all levels of governance.

13.3.2. Mobilizing local experts in election information systems and managements for national security and protection of information.

13.3.3. Collaborating with the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) and other global players in addressing the various dimensions of the digital divide in Nigeria

13.3.4. Engaging all global processes and initiatives for the governance of internet and fostering of global collaboration in ICT deployment

13.3.5. Maintaining a cordial relationship with the international community at all times to ensure that Nigeria benefit from global ICT programmes and initiatives

13.3.6. Ensuring that the country remains in tune with the global trends in ICT development

14.   INSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

14.1. Policy Statement

14.1.1. Ensure the enforcement of and compliance with all guidelines and action plans through enactment of appropriate laws / Acts for effectiveness and service delivery.

14.2. Policy Objective

14.2.1. To facilitate compliance and appropriate implementation of the policy guidelines, necessary bills shall be developed and transmitted to the National Assembly for law making to provide legal backing

for the use of ICT to promote good governance and credible election in the country.

14.3. Policy Strategies

14.3.1. Initiating relevant and appropriate legislations for enforcing all necessary aspect of the policy guidelines for full implementation and effectiveness

14.3.2. Developing blueprints for all sections of the policy that can foster standards, good governance ethics, and overall enhancement of election practices using ICT in Nigeria.

14.3.3. Ensuring the cooperation of the Legislators in quick and conscientious passage of the ICT-mainstreamed electoral laws as well as enact the Good Governance/Open Governance Acts for passage to enable total compliance at all levels

14.3.4. Developing appropriate legal framework to institutionalize long term commitment for the implementation of ICT policy within the context of national Science, Technology and Innovation Policy.

14.3.5. Encouraging the harmonization of ICT policies, strategies and initiatives/programmes across sectors such the National ICT in Education Policy and the National ICT Policy

14.3.6. Establishing a monitoring and evaluation system for the policy with management by the FMST with special Desks in all cognate MDAs.

14.3.7. Working with other MDAs to ensure that all staff are computer literate within the shortest possible time

14.3.8. Developing a framework for greater collaboration for linking up projects so as to upscale them, thereby reaping the benefits of economies of scale

14.3.9. Promoting vigorously the implementation of the Local Content Policy with respect to ICT

15.0 CONCLUDING REMARKS

This policy is a reflection of the determined commitment and aspiration of FMST to bring to play the use of ICT on good governance and electoral process in Nigeria. The policy seeks to articulate strategies for the use of ICTs to strengthen governance, accountability and transparency in future elections in the country. It takes its bearing from the National Science, Technology and Innovation (ST&I) Policy whose mission statement is "evolving a nation that harnesses, develops and utilizes ST&I to build a large, strong, diversified, sustainable and competitive economy that guarantees good governance and credible elections in the country. The Policy stipulates strategies to ensure that ICTs are mainstreamed into all government processes and services at all levels to enhance citizens' participation, transparency and accountability in governance and electoral processes.