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## IMPLEMENTATION OF SMALL-SCALE ICT PROJECTS IN NIGERIA

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The rising awareness of the great importance of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) increases and improves the standard of education and its related services, which have become an essential part of education projects. The usefulness of ICT cannot be overemphasized. It is generally acknowledged that investment in ICT is a key factor of economic growth and development, particularly in economies with infrastructural deficiencies who are floundering to make their economic system more advanced. The increasing use of ICT in many developing countries, especially Nigeria, will always be a thing of interest to all stakeholders. And the development of a country thrives towards global economy considering the priority of the nation and the importance attached to their ICT policy which arises from the rate of ICT project and business resulting in failure [1].

Significantly, physical infrastructure as well as social infrastructures contributes hugely to investment opportunities and developmental prospects in Nigeria ICT sector. Hence, the Federal Ministry of Communication Technology stated that, the requirement for first National Implementation Plan (2010–2013) investment was approximately N32 trn (US \$212 bn). Moreover, nearly 20 % since 2007 and 27 % from 2010 to 2011 of unequalled inflow of FDI projects growth of telecom-related infrastructure accounted for about 30 % of US \$21 bn (£13 bn) in Africa. Whereas, US \$72 bn (£46 bn) was invested in new infrastructure every year by African governments and private sources. However, there are still clear gaps when investing in ICT infrastructural development in developing economies of Africa including Nigeria.

The ICT sector is one of the leading sectors expanding Nigeria's economy. One of the major drivers of growth of the Nigerian economy in the year 2012 was the Telecom and Postal sector. The sector, in the same year, the fourth highest contributor of the nation's GDP. In 2014, the Nigeria ICT sector was said to have contributed more than N500 billion to the country's economy which has provided a new promising career path and additional income opportunities to many small-scale ICT projects. In addition, \$30 billion foreign investment was attracted between the year 2003 to 2014 because of its impressive growth.

There has been continuous maintenance of resilience in Nigeria's economy over the years. The ICT sector in Nigeria has grown from less than 1 percent of GDP in 2001 to almost 10 percent of GDP in 2018. According to the Nigerian Minister of Communications and Digital Economy, Dr. Isa Pantami, the ICT sector contributed 14 % to the country's GDP in the year 2019 up from 13.32 % that was recorded in the preceding year to 13.9 % of Nigeria's GDP. This corresponds with the prediction that the internet will contribute USD300 billion to Africa's GDP by 2025 [2]. As regards this, there is more influence on growing mobile money providers in emerging markets like Africa than in developed countries. It is widely known that there is tremendous transformation in ICT in developed countries, while in developing countries the transformation is often deeper which is beneficial to not only the wealthy, but also the middle- and lower-income earners. Several years of policy implementation and investment drive in the ICT sector have been considered as a part of the reasons for the growth in the sector.

Nigeria is easily regarded as Africa's largest ICT market whose outstanding performance lifted the country out of recession in the fourth quarter of 2019. Nigeria has also

outdone South Africa to become region with destination of premier investment of about fifty five (55) regarded as active tech-hubs, this raises a total of US\$ 94.9 million. On the other hand, South Africa was said to have raised about US\$60.0 million with fifty nine (50) regarded as active start-ups [3]. Sub-Saharan Africa is also projected to be higher in terms region which is growing steadily with a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 4.6 % which is expected to cross \$3 billion by 2025, growing at a CAGR of over 12 % during the forecast period and an additional subscriber enrollment of over 167 million in the next five years. Ordinarily, Nigeria is to account for over 55 % of this. However, the deployment of ICT as a panacea for the enhancement of education and related services has often not always been perceived as successful [4] because of many reasons hindering its enforcement. These factors include: lack of skills, financial constraints, and project management techniques involved. On the one hand, measuring the success of ICT based solutions and developing of goals is still a challenging factor.

Nigeria IT Policy: ICT policy and its implementation strategy is to drive the technological development across the country for increased competitiveness and fulfillment of the vision 2025 and other developmental goals and targets. This is aims to address a multitude of vital socio-economic issues such as reliable infrastructure, skilled human resources, open government and other essential issues of capacity building in order to transform the economy of Nigeria from being agrarian to information-rich knowledge-based economy. Also, the policy is handled by National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA). NITDA is an agency under the aegis of the Federal Ministry of Science and Technology. This body is to be set up to ensure the achievement of the articulated National IT vision, foster and co-ordinate the accelerated development of IT in Nigeria and promote the efficiency and international competitiveness of the IT industry in Nigeria, among other responsibilities.

Conclusion. The world is undergoing transformation, ICT is now introduced to access, retrieve and disseminate information. The ICT policy and new ideas with their capital intensive nature need to be fully implemented for the private sector, and increased social benefit for the public sector. Also, public-private sectors collaboration and partnership should be strengthened to the National broadband plan, which was first proposed in 2013.

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