

**WELCOME ADDRESS OF THE ACTING DIRECTOR-GENERAL,
BUREAU OF PUBLIC SERVICE REFORMS (BPSR), MR. D.I ARABI,
ON THE CEREMONY OF OFFICIAL RELEASE OF THE 2018
EVALUATION RESULTS OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT
SCORECARD FOR RANKING WEBSITES OF FEDERAL PUBLIC
INSTITUTIONS, HELD AT BPSR CONFERENCE HALL, ABUJA ON
THURSDAY, 6TH DECEMBER, 2018**

PROTOCOL

It is indeed my pleasure and honour to welcome you all to this official ceremony of the release of the 2018 evaluation result of the Federal Government scorecard for ranking websites of federal public institutions in which seventy pilot Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) participated.

As a Bureau, we feel much honoured to welcome representatives of the MDAs which participated in the process of the pilot evaluation, as well as members of Civil Society Organisation (CSO), social media experts and Men of the Press present here today to witness this groundbreaking event.

We are very grateful to the Secretary to the Government of the Federation (SGF), for the leadership, cooperation and consideration he graciously accorded us in ensuring today's event becomes a reality. We are equally grateful to the Head of Civil Service of the Federation for her continual support to the Bureau.

On behalf of the Management and staff of BPSR, I am particularly honoured to welcome you to this event.

We are all aware that the determination and quest to enshrine conducive enabling environment for businesses and investments to thrive in Nigeria prompted the signing of the Executive Order 001 on Ease of Doing Business Policy by the current administration, in 2017. The policy, which is a clear demonstration of the government aspiration to diversify the nation's economy was predicated on the

fact that the responsibilities of government could no longer survive on mono-economy system.

Contrary to the intention of this laudable policy, outcome of various investigations had shown that about majority of the MDAs, which are the machinery for implementation of government policies for lacking standardized and functional websites required for the policy on Ease of Doing Business to be effectively and efficiently implemented.

It had been revealed that less than 30% of the MDAs have accessible websites and less than 25% have active email addresses/telephone numbers, underpinning the poor performance in the implementation of FOI Act. In most cases, the websites are deficient of requisite capacity to drive MDAs' operations and the much envisaged reforms in the way government businesses are rendered.

Responding to these constraints, the Bureau in collaboration with relevant government agencies (which later metamorphosed into Inter-Ministerial Task Team) institutionalized the Federal Government scorecard for ranking websites of the federal establishments including Ministries, Parastatals, Agencies and Commissions. The key objectives behind the conception of the scorecard was to remove constraints in accessing information on government websites and reduce human contacts in the delivery of public goods and services by creating a peer review platform for the MDAs. Other objectives include:

- that they become more accessible to the public about its operations and overall mandates;
- that their information are made readily available and disseminated widely;
- that their websites are up to date and review as the need arises;

- that they are available at all times to attend to public complaints/enquiries; and
- that they promote openness and transparency in line with the provisions of Freedom of Information Act and any other extant provisions for accountability.

In pursuance of these objectives and their relevance to reform effort of the administration, the SGF vide a Circular ref: SGF/OP/1/S.3/XII/64 dated 10th December, 2017 approved that it be piloted for seventy MDAs which selection were categorized into core Ministries, Sector relevant MDAs, Agencies with huge customers interface and MDAs identified to be focal in the Presidential Enabling Business Environment Council operations.

The facilitation process towards the realization of the objectives of the scorecard involved composition of some key agencies of government, Civil Society Organisations, Non-Governmental Organisations and private bodies into a Jury. The scorecard has been designed upon a criteria in fourteen thematic areas, with which the Jury would evaluate and score the participating MDAs, through three stages. Final evaluation is validated by the IMTT and forwarded for the SGF's approval for it to be publicized, which is the basis of our gathering here today. In addition to this, this initiative which is in line with OGP commitments signed by this Government is aimed at opening up government agenda and activities to public view for scrutiny by non-government actors, citizens and civil society groups.

At this juncture, I would like to use this opportunity to express sincere appreciation to all members of the IMTT drawn from the Office of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Office of the Head of the Civil Service of the Federation, Federal Ministry of Communication Technology, Federal Ministry of Justice, National

Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA), Galaxy Backbone Plc., Nigeria Internet Registration Association (NIRA), SERVICOM and Right to Know Initiative, for their tireless efforts, sacrifice and utmost integrity in working with the Bureau, since the start, to make the dream behind the scorecard project to become a reality.

We wish to also extend my profound gratitude to the Secretary to the Government of Federation, Chairman Steering Committee on Reforms and the Head of Civil Service of the Federation, and the Deputy Chair Steering Committee on Reforms. Our gratitude to our development partners, Mac Arthur Foundation for its continued technical and financial support. It is our hope that ICT regulators and service providers both in the public and private sector would take this evaluation results to deepen synergy among themselves and promote adherence to guidelines that engender good governance. Once again, I warmly welcome you all to this event.

Thank you.