PLENARY SESSION PAPER — PLENARY 4

DIGITAL GOVERNANCE: LEVERAGING TECHNOLOGY FOR ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY

Presented by:

Engr. (Dr) Abisoye Coker-Odusote
Director-General / Chief Executive Officer
National Identity Management Commission (NIMC), Federal Republic of Nigeria

1. Introduction & Executive Protocol

Executive Protocol

- Distinguished Chairman of this Session
- Esteemed Members of the High Table
- Representatives of Government Institutions
- Distinguished Policymakers & Technology Experts
- Development Partners, Academia, & Captains of Industry
- Ladies and Gentlemen

The Core Imperative of Digital Trust

It is an honour to present on a theme essential to the future of public administration under the *Renewed Hope Agenda* of **His Excellency, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR**.

Central Question: How can public institutions leverage emerging technologies not merely to automate administrative processes, but to strengthen public trust, promote institutional accountability, eliminate systemic leakages, and deliver measurable public value?

Strategic Paradigm Shift: Digital governance moves technology from an operational back-office tool to a *strategic instrument for institutional transformation*.

2. From Automation to Institutional Accountability

Digitization does not automatically produce transparency, nor does automation guarantee accountability. Successful digital governance requires replacing manual vulnerabilities with secure, verifiable systems.

Traditional Manual & Fragmented Systems	Integrated Digital Governance Framework
Difficult-to-verify, paper records Enables administrative opacity and delays.	**Immutable digital audit trails** Creates end-to-end operational visibility.
Disconnected agency databases Creates duplication and high operational overhead.	**Interoperable data exchange** Enables secure, real-time agency verification.
Repetitive citizen submissions Inconveniences citizens and reduces institutional trust.	**Single-source identity trust** Foundational verification via National ID (NIN).
High discretionary vulnerabilities Increases susceptibility to administrative leakage.	**Automated, rules-based flows** Minimizes unauthorized human intervention.

3. Digital Identity & The NIMC Act 2026 Landmark Reform

Foundational Role of the NIN

The National Identification Number (NIN) serves as the legal identity gateway across key sectors:

- **Social Protection:** Eliminates ghost beneficiaries and secures safety-net disbursements.
- **Financial Inclusion:** Streamlines KYC and expands credit access.
- **Public Sector Payroll:** Ensures payroll integrity and verifies personnel.
- **Health & Education:** Optimizes administrative tracking and planning.

NIMC Act 2026: Root CA Mandate

Signed into law on **26 June 2026** by H.E. President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR, repealing the 2007 Act.

Designates NIMC as the **Root Certification Authority (Root CA)** for Nigeria's Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) & DPI.

Key Impact: Equips government with digital signatures, cryptographic verification, non-repudiation, and legal integrity across all public procurement and fiscal approvals.

4. Translating Governance into Practical NIMC Reforms

Reform Initiative	Core Function	Strategic Governance Impact
NINAuth & Share Code	Consent-based authentication portal.	Allows citizens to generate time-limited verification codes, protecting raw NIN exposure and enforcing data privacy.
Self-Service Modification	Online portal for updating identity records.	Eliminates middleman friction, reduces physical queues, and creates transparent transaction histories.
Pre-Enrolment System	Digital pre-capture of applicant data.	Improves operational predictability, reduces processing delays, and enhances citizen service experience.
WorkflowPro	Paperless internal management platform.	Digitizes administrative workflows, tracks decision timelines, and prevents file misplacement or arbitrary delay.
Ward-Level Enrolment	Decentralized community outreach.	Drives digital inclusion for rural, low-income, and vulnerable populations across all geopolitical zones.

5. Responsible Interoperability & Emerging Technologies

Breaking Down Data Silos

Interoperability connects agency databases securely through governed protocols, eliminating redundant submissions.

Crucial Paradigm: Interoperability is NOT creating one massive, monolithic central database. It is a secure, federated exchange where agencies verify only purpose-specific minimum data.

Leveraging Emerging Tech Safely

- **AI & Analytics:** Audits high-volume procurement and payroll records to flag fraud patterns in real-time.
- **Human-in-the-Loop:** AI must never make final autonomous administrative decisions without human oversight.
- **Regulatory Compliance:** Strict alignment with the **Nigeria Data Protection Act 2023**.

6. Strategic Roadmap for Digital Governance in Nigeria

1. Scale National DPI Build foundational identity, PKI trust services, data exchange protocols, and digital payment rails as unified utilities.	**2. Mandate Interoperability** Require all Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs) to integrate using standardized API architectures.	**3. Institutionalize Audit Trails** Embed immutable logging, access monitoring, and public service standards into all governance platforms.
4. Fortify Cybersecurity Treat cybersecurity as an executive governance priority with continuous compliance and resilience testing.	**5. Promote Inclusive Design** Ensure multi-channel, multi-lingual access points serving citizens with lower digital literacy or remote location.	**6. Track Outcome Metrics** Evaluate transformation success by reduced turnaround times, cost savings, and fraud elimination rather than platform count.

7. Conclusion: Building a Government That Earns Trust

The Ultimate Objective of Digital Governance

The true promise of digital governance is not found in software sophistication, application volume, or database size. **It lies in building a government that is transparent in operation, accountable in decision-making, efficient in process, and inclusive in delivery.**

"Ultimately, the success of digital governance will not be determined by how much technology a government possesses, but by how much trust that government earns."

Thank you for your attention.
God Bless the Federal Republic of Nigeria.