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Nigeria: Nitda, Stakeholders to Parley On ICT4D Plan

The National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA) will this month host an all stakeholders' meeting to articulate views on the draft of the country's Information Communication Technology for Development (ICT4D) Action Plan.

Input from stakeholders drawn from various sectors of the economy is expected to help beef up Nigeria's work plan for full integration of ICT in achieving its development goals and positioning it among the 20 leading economies in the world by year 2020.

A statement made available to THISDAY disclosed that the stakeholders' meeting will include leaders in the country's financial, technology, educational and health sectors, among others who will offer NITDA a good ground to strengthen the link between ICT integration and the achievement of President Yar'Adua's Seven- Point Agenda for meeting the Millennium Development goals (MDGs).

Director General of NITDA, Professor Cleopas Angaye said: "A fundamental document such as this would require the input of all concerned parties. NITDA has the mandate to provide the country with achievable socio-economic goals using ICT. We feel it is important to get all stakeholders involved in the creating of this very critical document.

"The national ICT Strategic Plan of Actions and programmes will cover the various sectors and identify particular programmes for short, medium and long term implementation by identified stakeholders. The idea is to set out a time-sensitive action plan with realistic targets and benchmarks for sectoral applications of ICT for national development. NITDA cannot on its own do this without engaging stakeholders", Angaye stated.

The Nigeria's ICT4D document is being put together by a ministerial strategic action committee inaugurated over four years ago by the then Minister of Science and Technology Professor Turner Isoun. Launched September 2003 and charged with the responsibility of producing a blueprint on strategic actionable programme for the implementation of the Nigeria IT Policy (NITP), Nigeria's ICT4D Committee is a broad based. Members were drawn from various segments of corporate Nigeria such as technology, health, banking, education and the media. They include those in the public and private sectors. The committee itself is chaired by a private sector player in the person of Dr Armstrong Takang, CEO of Abuja based Alteq Consulting.

Since 2003, the ICT4D committee has had several strategic sessions Abuja and Lagos. Also, at the instance of NITDA in collaboration with the (United Nations) Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), experts have been recruited in various fields to join the committee as resource persons tasked with providing empirical data which would form the bases of the ICT4D blueprint.

All the experts are working to facilitate the development of the sectoral plans in each sub- groups that make up the strategic committee such as Research & Development in ICT, Security & Law Enforcement, ICT in Agriculture, e-Government, ICT in Education, Private Sector, Legal & Regulatory Framework, ICT Popularization & Deployment in Rural Areas, Health and Infrastructure among others created to reflect the various sectors of the economy.

Funding for the ICT4D Action Plan is being provided by the ECA which is also sponsoring the expert input of Professor Clement Dzionu, the external consultant to the Nigeria ICT4D Action Plan. Dzionu has overseen the draft of ICT4D Plans in several African countries including those of Rwanda, Ghana and Swaziland. He consults on ICT for many African countries including those of South Africa and Uganda.

"The ICT4D would help provide a sound work-plan for the implementation of ICT strategies as it concerns every sector of the economy from agriculture to education. We have adopted a holistic approach to drawing up a blueprint to meeting our challenges as a nation using ICT," said Dr Ubaru, senior official of NITDA. Ubaru is the coordinator of the ICT4D Committee to mirror an underlying desire by government to show that any achievable ICT agenda would have to be a public private partnership (PPP) scheme.

Source : [This Day](#)

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This came out at a focused group discussion held by the Science and Technology Policy Research Institute (STEPRI) of Ghana last Wednesday as part of the LICOM project

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