



## **Director General's Opening Address at the 8<sup>th</sup> IGR Peer Learning Event**

Wells Carlton Hotel Abuja | 19<sup>th</sup> September 2022

### PROTOCOL

I'm glad to welcome you all to the 8<sup>th</sup> edition of our IGR Peer Learning Event. Every year, we invite you to share lessons on State-level tax reforms and how we can strengthen our work to improve domestic revenue mobilization in the country.

Last year, the meeting focused on our tax-for-service initiative and the launch of our publication on the analysis of the perceptions of informal sectors workers to pay taxes in exchange for free minimum basic healthcare. The event was attended by commissioners of finance, commissioners of health, executive secretaries of the insurance agencies of states as well the executive chairmen of the internal revenue service of states. This is still an engagement we are passionate about. We will continue to play an active role in mainstreaming the programme through advocacy and by securing the commitment of governors to mobilise resources to support the programme.

This year, our theme is on the 'state' of tax reforms in Nigeria. The theme stems from our work over the last 8 years to strengthen domestic resource mobilisation through our IGR Dashboard and HelpDesk programmes that have supported the use of evidence in tax reforms, advocacy, and technical assistance provision to states.

The country's first open-source database of the fiscal data of the 36 state governments will also be launched today. The portal will host comparable annual data on government spending, revenues, and financing in all states, and will feature hundreds of performance indicators that measure the quality of public spending and the intersection of public financial management and service delivery in the country.

Technical sessions after will focus on the three (3) primary tax reforms that we see as essential for all states – specifically, the implementation of state Consolidated Revenue Codes (CRCs), autonomy for tax authorities and tax-for-service programmes. These reforms, when properly integrated in the tax administration system, are capable of scaling up effective organizational management, the quality of taxpayer services, taxpayer compliance and tax revenues.

With our engagement with states, we have seen that where tax authorities have been fully supported by state governors, administrative reforms have led to increased digitalisation, taxpayer compliance, and tax revenues. This accounts for the increase in IGR over the last few years, particularly last year when it rose from N1.3 trillion to N1.7 trillion in 2021. At 35% of the total recurrent revenue of states, IGR definitely plays a major role in state-building today than in the past.

I should also mention that our tax reform work will feature significantly at our forthcoming induction programme for new and returning governors which will hold after the general elections next year. The induction programme is organized as part of NGF's onboarding plan for new and outgoing governors as they transition into new roles. The visibility of economic, social, political, and environmental challenges today, and the expectation for immediate action places a heavy burden on State governments for timely action.

Through our IGR programmes we will continue to help States close their capacity gaps by continuing to share innovative practices that have worked and by demanding action from governors to support the work you do.

I wish you all a very productive session today and look forward to taking the next steps forward

Thank you.

**Asishana Okauru**  
**Director General**