

**Goodwill Message at the 7th IGR Peer Learning Event**

Congress Hall, Transcorp Hilton Abuja | 29th September 2021

PROTOCOL

I’m glad to welcome you all to the 7th edition of our national IGR peer learning event. This event is organised annually by the NGF Secretariat to bring to focus policy issues around domestic financing in the country – from a sub-national perspective. This year’s event is unique in the sense that it brings two of our workstreams together – combining both our work in IGR and primary healthcare.

The theme of this year’s event is Setting the Social Minimum through a Tax for Service Programme. It is a product of our 5th IGR peer learning event organised in 2018 where the tax-for-service initiative was first presented as a model to mobilise domestic revenues and health financing in the country. This initiative seeks to improve health outcomes for the majority of Nigerians by incentivizing tax compliance and addressing the problems of low revenue base, poor health allocation and high out of pocket expenses.

Today we will be discussing the result of a country-wide study on the feasibility of the programme for informal sector workers in Nigeria. The baseline survey assessed tax compliance and the health care needs of informal sector workers and their willingness to pay taxes in exchange for free minimum healthcare. It also investigated perceptions about trust in government and their preferences in the design and implementation of the programme. These are very useful details that can inform the role of the primary institutions that are positioned to implement the programme. This is why for the first time, we are bringing together the heads of our tax authorities and insurance agencies in one room.

By the end of the day, I hope that we will be able to take these investments in resources and time further. We plan to use the evidences from both the policy research and this event to mobilise support for states that are willing to take up programme. At the NGF Secretariat, we believe such a publicly mandated social programme that addresses inequalities in health access and the missing social contract will be capable of improving the living standards of majority of Nigerians.

Welcome again and thank you for joining us.

**Asishana Bayo Okauru Esq.**

**Director General**