

Public Hearing on Federal Ministry of Interior Relating to Issuance of Travel Documents

Submission to the House Committee on Interior

by



National eGovernment Strategies (NeGSt)

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1.0 Preamble

The House Letter

Reference is hereby made to the extract below from letter dated 28 January 2016 with Ref. NASS/HR8/56/CT.76 from House of Representatives, Committee on Interior:

*... House Committee on Interior was mandated to examine all agreements entered into by the Federal Ministry of Interior with any company or persons on any matter relating to the issuance of travel document including international passports, residence permits and border surveillance and patrol ... and therefore require you to **forward written presentation as it concerns your organisation** attaching contract documents and any other relevant documents ...*

A Note on Our Organisation

The National eGovernment Strategies (NeGSt) was established in March 2004, as a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV), with the mandate to facilitate the implementation of eGovernment in Nigeria under a Public Private Partnership (PPP) arrangement leveraging strong private sector participation to ensure its rapid short-term takeoff and long term sustainability. The PPP model is a tripartite agreement between the Federal Government represented by the National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA), Strategic Partners and Private Financial Investors.

The mandate of NeGSt is derived from Section 6, Sub-sections (6a) – 6(f) and 6(j) of the NITDA Act 2007. In line with this mandate, NeGSt has responsibility to:

- A. Carry on business as Special Purpose Vehicle for Public Private Partnership with the Federal Government for the actualization of the national policies, programmes and implementation on Information Technology as these apply to eGovernment and related projects in Nigeria as provided under the NITDA Act 2007;
- B. Develop models, programmes and projects for implementation of eGovernment Services;
- C. Develop and maintain the National eGovernment Platform for integration, shared and common services for MDAs of Governments and the general public;
- D. Develop benchmarks, standards, guidelines and frameworks for interoperability of all forms of eGovernment applications by and for MDAs;
- E. Develop and implement Capacity Building for MDAs and eGovernment stakeholders in respect of basic IT skills, eReadiness and eGovernment projects and collaborate with local and international Organisations to promote global best practices.

2.0 Project Background

Birth of elmigration Project

Before Year 2007, operations of the Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS) with regards to the issuance of passports and other immigration functions were hitherto conducted manually and were characterised by myriad of challenges including multiple acquisition of passports, long delays, perennial duplications of passport payments, poor record keeping and management, inefficient revenue management gave rise to high-level systemic corruption and lack of accountability and transparency. These problems did not only hinder the service performance of the NIS, they led to loss of revenue to the Federal Government and significant dissatisfaction and discontent from citizens and general public whom the NIS was set up to serve.

Desirous of curbing these problems and delivering on its mandate, the Nigeria Immigration Service wanted an Enterprise, System-wide Platform to enable it deliver better and more efficient services. The main objectives were to increase their effectiveness and efficiency, leverage global best practices for service delivery and transform the NIS into a more compact and transparent Agency offering faster, easier and more efficient access to services for the benefits of the citizenry.

The **elmigration** Project was thus conceptualized and designed by NeGSt and developed to provide the NIS with a smooth transition into the digital paradigm and make it a model government agency by leveraging cutting-edge Information and Communication Technologies. Following series of consultations, practical demonstrations and proof-of-concept on the enterprise solution to the Federal Executive Council in August 2005, the elmigration Project was approved by the Federal Executive Council (FEC) in October 2006 as a Public Private Partnership (PPP) project and finally launched in March 2007 and the Project Agreement was duly signed. The initial agreement was signed in 2007 for a first tenure of six years renewable after its expiry. The Agreement has been renewed for another period of six years in March, 2013. (See Annexures 1 and 2)

The PPP contract agreement for the elmigration Programme is between the Ministry of Interior for the Nigeria Immigration Service as the **Project Owner**, National eGovernment Strategies (NeGSt) as the **Project Integrator** and **Certifier** herein subsequently referred to as the **Project Consultant** and SocketWorks Limited as the **Service Provider**. Start-up fund requirement for the project was **₦350 million** outside of operating costs and this was to be facilitated by the Service Provider through special arrangements from the private sector.

The Federal Executive Council also approved that technology or platform fees of ₦1,250 be charged for the recovery of the private sector capital investment, continuous operation of the project and maintenance of the solution platform. This is essentially to guarantee long-term sustainability of the project. This Platform fee is payable on each passport issued and is in addition to the statutory fees for the passport as approved by the Federal Executive Council. Both fees are payable by the applicant as per approval of the Federal Executive Council. In accordance with the Project Agreement, the platform fee (or technology fee) is shared by parties in the project agreement on a ratio of 30:55:15 for the *Project Owner*, the *Service Provider* and *Project Integrator* respectively. This is in order to defray initial investments and operational costs on the parts of Service provider and project integrator and ensure substantial requisite training and ownership for NIS. All these are critical for overall sustainability of the elmmigration Project.

Project as a Model

The elmmigration project was one of the first deliverables that was launched under private sector initiative as a PPP. It received international applause and, in fact, made Nigeria the second country in Africa and one amongst the first few in the world to launch the ePassport. The project has remained a model for several countries. This feat has been made possible through private sector participation.

3.0 Current Status of Project Implementation

The current status of the project is considered working satisfactorily in Nigeria and all over the world. Recent upgrading and developments are briefly highlighted below:

The eVisa sub-Project

In collaboration with the Service Provider, series of activities are ongoing towards the successful implementation of an eVisa sub-Platform within the elmmigration platform. This is part of continued efforts towards ensuring effective service delivery of the Nigeria Immigration Service. The eVisa sub-Project will guarantee the identification, validation, verification and authentication of visa applicants and stem the tide of terrorism across our borders.

The project scope covers the construction of a data centre at the NIS HQ, development of an end-to-end case management system for visa application/verification, development of visa biometric enrolment systems, visa production, establishment of NIS Customer Service centres, setting up of visa sorting centres worldwide etc. Currently, the development of visa biometric matching systems at border control checkpoints, workshops and training sessions for seamless deployment are

ongoing. It is worth mentioning that technical partnership has been established with a reputable Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) – L-3 National Security Solutions in the deployment of a world-class eVisa suite of applications. The involvement of NeGSt guarantees that the technical partners offer services in line with best global practices and that project is delivered on time, and at reasonable budget and cost.

Nigeria Biometric Visa Implementation Committee

In view of the importance of the eVisa to national security and improved service delivery, the Federal Ministry of Interior established the Nigeria Biometric Visa Implementation Committee comprising personnel from the Ministry, NIS, National eGovernment Strategies (Project Consultant) and Newworks Limited (Service Provider, under Novation Agreement signed with SocketWorks) to work out the modalities for the successful implementation of the project. In line with our role, we act as the interface between Government and the Service Provider including their technical partners by providing appropriate technical guidance and guidelines.

4.0 Project Management and Assurance Role of NeGSt

In view of the fast changing and dynamic nature of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), and to ensure that the project is on track and performing at an optimal level, NeGSt has since the inception of the project continued to provide technical management services including project management and assurance, certification, standards, and guidelines etc in line with global best practice. Against this backdrop, we constantly review and evaluate the operating environment of systems and the processes as well as infrastructure and the people that support them.

In furtherance of our role in the elmmigration Project therefore, we are involved in conducting evaluation of the operations and processes as well as providing technical advisory and support services as demonstrated in the following activities:

Technical Performance Monitoring Exercise

This is an exercise designed to evaluate current operations of Nigerian Missions overseas with a view to identifying gaps, improving effectiveness and efficiency of project and ultimately ensuring quality service delivery. We have recently conducted an extensive performance monitoring of eight missions namely London, Atlanta, Washington DC, New York, Beijing, Bern, Madrid and Ottawa and reports of the technical visits have been submitted to the Service and Ministry of Interior (See Annexure 3). As part of our continued efforts at ensuring service delivery, we have scheduled visits to other missions in our 2016 Offshore Technical Performance Monitoring Plan.

The primary purpose of our evaluation exercise is not only to assess the operations, management and administration of the ePassport project but also to provide a comprehensive technical recommendation document for improvement in the following critical areas: process capacity, service delivery, human capacity needs; and operational & infrastructural capacity. This is an ongoing exercise aimed at service improvement.

Management of the Ongoing Integration Project

A major activity in our project management role is our supervision of the ongoing integration of the Passport Production and Payment Sub-systems developed by two different Service Providers. We have successfully managed the completion of the first phase deployment of the integrated system in 19 passport offices across the country with the submission of a comprehensive report to the Nigeria Immigration Service (See Annexure 4). The objectives of the integration project are (i) to prevent generation of multiple applications with same payment, (ii) to prevent applicants from obtaining passports without valid payments and (iii) to guarantee payment validation and integrity. Through strict adherence to our project management methodology, the exercise has been largely successful and had great impact in meeting its objectives and enhancing revenue. Based on the success recorded in the first phase of the integration, we received a letter of commendation from the Nigeria Immigration Service and approval to proceed on the second phase of the project (see Annexure 5). We are currently conducting and supervising series of technical meetings in preparation to going to the fields.

It is worthy to mention that under the System Integration Project, we have provided **basic eReadiness training for 19 Passport Control Officers (PCOs), 133 Passport Enrolment and Production officers** of the Nigeria Immigration Service and **82 Cybercafé operators**. The training is designed to help the NIS officials have a proper understanding of the workflow, features and benefits of the integrated system and how they can offer first-level technical support, while it provides the Cybercafé operators the basic training required to help citizens who need assistance avail the services of the NIS. NeGSt will continue to provide the basic eReadiness training for the duration of the project.

Certification Role & Continuous Improvement Programme

Since the inception of the project, NeGSt has acted and continues to act as the technical interface between Government and the Service Provider by ensuring that all upgrades, updates, and maintenance carried out on software, applications and hardware meet best global practice to guarantee return on investment for the private sector and value for the Nigeria Immigration Service. Our certification role and continuous improvement programme include evaluating proposed

technical changes, signing-off on technical specifications, constant review of processes and systems, ensuring compliance with standards and guidelines etc at all times. This has kept the project running at optimal level, while we continue to evolve practical and technical strategies for service improvement and innovation.

As part of our project management role, we have also conducted a scoping of the entire directorates of the Nigeria Immigration Service Headquarters, with a comprehensive report submitted to the Service. The scoping exercise is a periodic assessment.

We have served and continue to serve on several technical committees at both the Ministry of Interior and the Nigeria Immigration Service. We are a key stakeholder in the Project Implementation Committee (PIC), the apex decision making body of the elmmigration Project where we continue to play our technical advisory role.

5.0 Scope of the Project under the Agreement

As per Annexure 'A' of the Agreement, the scope of the elmmigration Project covers the following:

- I. End-to-end automation of the operations and management processes of the Nigeria Immigration Service including:
 - a. Online application for passports and visa;
 - b. ePayment platform for all immigration services using scratch cards and smart cards;
 - c. Management of Applicants (including vetting of IDs) by immigration officers nationwide;
 - d. Online and real-time payment processing for Visa and Passport applications.
- II. Schedule of duty administration for immigration officers;
- III. Border Control Administration (enabling the monitoring of all alien entry and exit at the nation's ports in real time);
- IV. Expatriate Quota Administration, Work Permit/Residence Permit Administration including ePayment system {excluding the Combined Expatriate Residence Permit and Aliens Card (CERPAC) until the determination of the contract between the Ministry and Continental Transfer Technique Ltd (CONTECH)};
- V. Homeland Security System – integration of vertically linked national security activities in

- real time (the National security agencies, Customs, Police, with other agencies such as the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA), etc.);
- VI. Data Centre for Immigration Service to be located at the NIS headquarters.

6.0 Obligations of NeGSt under the Agreement

Under the terms of the Agreement in Section 4.2, NeGSt shall:

- I. Provide **technical management services** that may be required to assist the Service Provider for the integration of the Project to make it compliant with eGovernment platform;
- II. Provide **standards, guidelines and interoperability framework** to enable the Project to be compatible and able to operate seamlessly with other IT-driven projects and solutions by other MDAs at Federal, State or Local Government levels;
- III. Provide **standards** and **guidelines** to enable the Nigeria elmmigration solution to conform with and integrate with the National eForm System as directed by the Government Circular: OHCSF/MSO/702/Vol.I/7 of August, 2006;
- IV. Provide framework for the connection and relationship between Public Service reforms and eGovernment with special reference to elmmigration and other mega projects such as eTRCN, eFRSC, eNHIS etc;
- V. Coordinate **Change Management** process for transformation to the eGovernment paradigm in MDAs including the Agency;
- VI. Provide **guidelines** to enable the Agency to conduct a continuous assessment using **FAIR**- Framework for Agency Interoperability Readiness;
- VII. Enable **integration** of Agency to National Platform for shared services such as eNaira, eForm, eRegistration, eLearning, eSecurity, etc;
- VIII. Provide **Certification** and **Checks** for the programmes and applications of the Service Provider in terms of Quality Assurance in order to meet the needs of the Ministry, its Parastatal referred to as 'Agency' and the specifications and details of the proposal in Annexure 'A'.

7.0 Attachments to Submission

The following documents are attached to this submission

- I. Copy of 2007 Agreement;
- II. Copy of 2013 Agreement;
- III. Report of the Technical Performance Monitoring Exercise;
- IV. Report of the Integration Project;
- V. Letter of commendation from NIS;
- VI. Statement of accounts, accruals and disbursements;
- VII. Evidence of WTH and VAT.