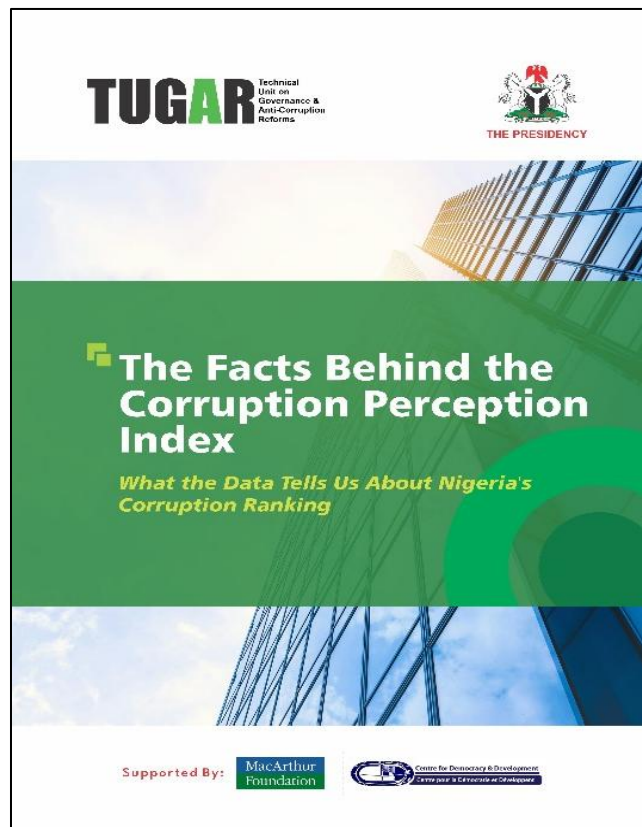# TECHNICAL UNIT ON GOVERNANCE AND ANTI-CORRUPTION REFORMS (TUGAR)

Report on the Public Presentation of the Report of Review of 6 Years (2019- 2024) of Transparency International Corruption Perception Index (TI-CPI) Assessment on Nigeria, held at the NAF Conference Centre and Suites, Abuja on 18th February, 2025.

TUGAR Technical Unit on Governance & Anti-Corruption Reforms

THE PRESIDENCY

The Facts Behind the Corruption Perception Index

What the Data Tells Us About Nigeria's Corruption Ranking

Supported By: MacArthur Foundation | Centre for Democracy & Development *Centre pour la Démocratie et le Développement*

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INTRODUCTION

This report highlights and details of the event organized to unveil the report on the review and analysis of Nigeria's TI-CPI (2019 – 2024), titled "The Facts Behind the Corruption Perception Index: *What the data tells us about Nigeria's ranking*" held on 18th February, 2025, at the NAF Conferences Centre and Suites, Jahi, Abuja.

. The event was organized by the Technical Unit for Governance and Anti-Corruption Reforms (TUGAR) under with the support of the MacArthur Foundation and the Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD).

The report is in six main parts:

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1.0. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Corruption remains a significant challenge in Nigeria, influencing governance, economic growth, and international perception. Over the years, Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index (TI-CPI) has played a key role in assessing the country's performance in the fight against corruption. However, concerns have been raised regarding the methodology, data sources, and the extent to which these reports accurately reflect Nigeria's anti-corruption progress. In response to these concerns, the Technical Unit on Governance and Anti-Corruption Reforms (TUGAR) conducted a comprehensive review of six years (2019–2024) of Nigeria's TI-CPI assessments, culminating in the report titled *"The Facts Behind the Corruption Perception Index: What the Data Tells Us About Nigeria's Corruption Ranking."*

TUGAR, a government research and evaluation unit, is dedicated to conducting in-depth analyses of corruption and governance issues in Nigeria. As part of its mandate, TUGAR commissioned a study in 2020 titled *"TI-CPI: Does the Index Tell the True Story About Nigeria?"* This study critically examined the data sources and methodology behind Nigeria's TI-CPI rankings. Building on this foundation, the 2024 study provides an even deeper analysis, assessing how the index's methodology, data sets, and respondent categories influence Nigeria's corruption rankings. The goal is to diagnose issues, strengthen anti-corruption programs, and support the implementation of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy (2022–2026).

The newly unveiled report not only aims to enhance public understanding of the TI-CPI but also seeks to foster greater collaboration among anti-corruption agencies, policymakers, civil society organizations, and the media. By dissecting the eight core survey sources used for Nigeria's CPI assessments from 2019 to 2023—along with two new data sources introduced in 2024—the report identifies opportunities for improving the country's ranking. It provides actionable recommendations, categorized into short-, mid-, and long-term

measures, focusing on public education, stronger inter-agency cooperation, governance reforms, enhanced monitoring and evaluation, and international collaboration.

One crucial aspect highlighted in the report is the role of perception in shaping Nigeria's CPI scores. Given that corruption perception influences international investment decisions and the treatment of Nigerian citizens abroad, reshaping the country's narrative is essential. The report underscores the need for greater media involvement in promoting anti-corruption efforts, ensuring that Nigeria's progress is accurately communicated both locally and globally.

As Nigeria continues its anti-corruption journey, this report serves as a vital tool for guiding policy reforms and fostering strategic interventions. The findings presented in this document will not only help refine governance mechanisms but also contribute to a more transparent, accountable, and globally competitive Nigeria.

2.0   OPENING

The event began at 10:35 with remarks from Mr. Godwin Okpene, Deputy Director, Research, Policy and Strategy, NEITI, expressing gratitude to attendees for arriving early. The national anthem was played to officially commence the proceedings.

Mr. Okpene, introduced key dignitaries, including the Chairman of the Code of Conduct Bureau, the Auditor General for the Federation, and the Executive Secretary/CEO of the Nigeria Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (NEITI), the Chairman, Economic and Financial Crimes Commission and the Secretary to the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC). He highlighted the significance of the Transparency International Corruption Perception Index (TI-CPI) Analysis for 2024, conducted by the Technical Unit on Governance and Anti-Corruption Reform (TUGAR). Mr. Okpene outlined the event's agenda and emphasized the importance of the report, which builds upon the first analysis conducted in 2020.

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Mr. Okpene gave an overview on the purpose and scope of the TI-CPI analysis. He reiterated that the 2024 analysis expands upon the previous 2020 report, covering a six-year period from 2019 to 2024. Mr. Okpene clarified that TUGAR's analysis does not validate or advocate for the TI-CPI but aims to help policymakers and anti-corruption institutions understand the implications of the index. He noted that the primary objective is to decode the index's findings and provide actionable insights for stakeholders in Nigeria's anti-corruption framework.

He further noted that while reviewing the index, the analysis identified several methodological weaknesses in the TICPI, including:

1. ***Circularity of Assessment*** – The ranking system reinforces itself, as prior rankings influence new assessments.

2. ***Non-Uniform Data Sources*** – Different countries are evaluated using varying numbers of data sources, raising concerns about consistency and fairness.

3. ***Inconsistent Assessment Periods*** – Some countries are evaluated using outdated data, leading to discrepancies in rankings.

Despite these weaknesses, Mr. Okpene emphasized the importance of understanding the TI-CPI's findings to effectively counter negative perceptions of Nigeria's corruption levels.

Ms. Lilian Ekeanyanwu who facilitated the event alongside Mr. Okpene, gave an historical context and evolution of the TI-CPI analysis in Nigeria recalling that in 2020, the Office of the Vice President commissioned TUGAR to analyze the TI-CPI following Nigeria's consistently low rankings despite significant anti-corruption efforts. She noted that Nigeria is evaluated using at least eight high-reputation data sources, making it difficult to question the validity of the assessments. She also acknowledged that while the index has limitations, it remains a valuable tool for gauging corruption perceptions.

She noted that key highlight of the 2024 analysis was Nigeria's marginal improvement in its ranking, moving from a score of 25 to 26. While the progress is slow, it signals some recognition of Nigeria's anti-corruption efforts.

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She reiterated however that despite the slight improvement, Nigeria remains among the lower-ranked countries in sub-Saharan Africa. Ms. Ekeanyanwu reflected on past efforts under President Obasanjo and Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, noting that while progress is being made, Nigeria is still in the "wrong neighborhood" regarding corruption rankings. The data, however, shows that some anti-corruption measures are beginning to be recognized globally.

She further reiterated that the analysis highlighted positive trends in Nigeria's anti-corruption landscape, including ***Asset Recovery Efforts*** – Nigeria has been increasingly recognized for its success in asset recovery, both domestically and internationally; and ***Oversight of Consequence Projects*** – The Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) has made significant strides in monitoring corruption-prone projects, which has been reflected in the index.

While these improvements are noteworthy, the report also identifies persistent challenges that require further attention. Ms. Ekeanyanwu encouraged stakeholders to leverage the findings to accelerate progress in Nigeria's anti-corruption efforts.

The event was attended by representatives of the 22 agencies that comprise of the Inter-Agency Task Team (IATT), representatives of Ministries, Departments and Agencies, the National Assembly, members of the Civil Society and the media.

3.0   WELCOME REMARKS

The Head, Technical Unit on Governance and Anti-Corruption (TUGAR), Mrs. Jane Onwumere formally welcomed all participants to the public presentation of the Report of the Review of 6 Years (2019–2024) of Nigeria's Transparency International Corruption Perception Index (TI-CPI). In her opening, extended her gratitude to the heads of agencies and guests who made the event possible. Her welcome remarks set the tone for the discussions.

Mrs. Onwumere stated that the TI-CPI is an annual ranking published by Transparency International, which assesses perceived corruption levels across the public sector in 180

countries and territories. She emphasizes that the index is widely recognized as one of the most authoritative global measures of corruption, drawing on 13 independent assessments from 12 global governance institutions. Importantly, she noted that each country's score is derived from multiple data sources—including assessments from organizations such as the World Bank and the World Economic Forum—and that the index measures perceptions of corruption rather than the direct effectiveness of anti-corruption agencies.

Mrs. Onwumere delved into the components that shape the TI-CPI, describing how the index covers various forms of corruption such as bribery, diversion of public funds, excessive bureaucratic procedures, corruption in public appointments, state capture, and issues related to access to information and public reporting. She highlighted that, over the years, there has been considerable debates regarding whether the CPI accurately reflects the effectiveness of governmental anti-corruption efforts. Many stakeholders, including anti-corruption agencies, find it challenging to reconcile the CPI ratings with their achievements, leading to divergent views on the index's overall assessment of government performance in combating corruption.

Building on this discussion, she outlined TUGAR's analytical journey. In her remarks, she noted that in 2020, TUGAR commissioned an in-depth analysis titled *"TI-CPI: Does the Index Tell the True Story About Nigeria?"* aimed at unpacking the methodology and data sources behind the CPI. This analysis sought to identify elements that could offer remedial action and support the National Anti-Corruption Strategy. She further noted that the insights gained from this study were subsequently linked with Executive Order 1 on Ease of Doing Business, paving the way for significant reforms in the maritime sector—including the launch of the Nigeria Ports Process Manual by then Vice President Prof. Yemi Osinbajo. In continuing this momentum, she pointed that TUGAR commissioned another comprehensive study in 2024 to review Nigeria's CPI ratings from 2019 to 2024.

She reiterated that the resulting knowledge product, unveiled at the event, presents a detailed analysis of the scores derived from eight survey sets (covering 2019–2023) and the two new additional data sources used for the 2024 report released on 11 February 2025. She stated that this new report not only interprets the data and highlights reasons for Nigeria's

low scores but also provides recommendations with short-, mid-, and long-term strategies aimed at improving Nigeria's CPI ranking.

Mrs. Onwumere expressed hope that the newly unveiled report will deepen the understanding of the TI-CPI and pinpoint areas for remedial action to bolster the National Anti-Corruption Strategy 2022–2026. She anticipates that the report will foster greater awareness and encourage robust engagement with the annual TI-CPI reports among the anti-corruption community and other key stakeholders. It is also hoped that the report will continue to engender inter agency cooperation and collaboration at all levels. Concluding her remarks, she offered a heartfelt appreciation to the MacArthur Foundation, the Centre for Democracy and Democracy (CDD) and to the heads of agencies for their unwavering support which has made the event a success. She finally welcomed all participants to the event.

4.0   GOODWILL MESSAGES

Goodwill messages were delivered by key anti-corruption agencies and development partners such as Nigeria Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (NEITI), Code of Conduct Bureau (CCB), Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), the Independent Corrupt Practice and other Related Offences Commission (ICPC), Nigeria Police Force, Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD) and United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

4.1   Message from Nigeria Extractive Industries and Transparency Initiative (NEITI)

The Executive Secretary of NEITI, Dr. Orji Ogbonnaya Orji welcomed guests, including key figures from Nigeria's anti-corruption agencies, law enforcement, and the National Assembly. He highlighted the importance of TUGAR's role and explained TUGAR's affiliation with NEITI. He extended warm greetings and commends the presence of stakeholders, reinforcing the commitment to governance improvements despite challenges.

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Dr. Ogbonnaya noted that the event focuses on Nigeria's performance in the recently released Transparency International CPI. He also noted that the 2024 report shows a marginal improvement in Nigeria's global ranking, signifying progress in the fight against corruption. However, he reiterated that the report also highlights the need for further efforts. He pointed that the key contributing factors to the improvement include reforms in public financial management, increased enforcement actions, and strengthened institutional frameworks. He further pointed that the report's details will be formally unveiled during the event. Highlighting key areas for improvement to include;

1. ***Strengthening Enforcement and Sanctions*** – visible, decisive actions on corruption cases, asset recovery, and judicial efficiency is crucial.

2. ***Expanding Beneficial Ownership Transparency*** - full implementation of the beneficial ownership register is necessary to track real ownership of assets, particularly in the oil and gas sector.

3. ***Enhancing Fiscal and Revenue Transparency*** – sustained reforms in budget implementation, procurement, and government expenditure disclosures are needed.

4. ***Deepening Stakeholder Engagement*** – strengthening collaboration among anti-corruption agencies, civil society organizations, media, and development partners will reinforce accountability mechanisms.

The Executive Secretary commended the EFCC's renewed courage in tackling corruption and acknowledged the complex challenges they face, including the tragic loss of an officer in the line of duty offering his condolences to the EFCC. He acknowledged the efforts of all agencies on the Interagency Agency Task Team (IATT), including the ICPC, NFIU, and the Code of Conduct Bureau.

He reiterated that NEITI remains committed to enhancing extractive sector transparency through EITI standards, aiming to eliminate revenue leakages and opaque transactions in oil, gas, and mineral sectors. He pointed that NEITI has consistently published credible reports,

with the latest data from 2022 and 2023 already available and the 2024 reports expected in July.

Dr. Orji advocated for policy and legal reforms by ensuring public access to credible data to enable informed civic engagement, aligning Nigeria's legal and institutional frameworks with global best practices as well as addressing judicial inefficiencies, which lead to prolonged court cases and hinder anti-corruption efforts. He noted that the lack of timely judicial outcomes weakens the justice system and discourages accountability.

Dr. Orji pointed efforts made by NEITI at ensuring technology and data-driven transparency. He stated that NEITI is building a state-of-the-art data center to enhance data accessibility. He further stated that the infrastructure is complete, and efforts are underway to migrate data collected since 2004. This center will provide open access to reports, enabling stakeholders and citizens to engage constructively with the government and other institutions.

He called for inclusive and transparent processes in the fight against corruption through collective responsibility requiring collaboration from the government, private sector, civil society, and citizens. He urged TUGAR to widely disseminate the report for awareness creation, ensuring that Nigerians understand how corruption perceptions are measured. He noted that this will guide future improvements and help anti-corruption agencies showcase the impact of their work more effectively.

In conclusion, he calls for transformative progress in anti-corruption efforts. He reaffirmed NEITI's dedication to supporting all stakeholders in improving Nigeria's corruption rankings.

4.2   Message from Code of Conduct Bureau (CCB)

In his Goodwill message, Dr. Abdullahi Usman Bello, Chairman, Code of Conduct Bureau, emphasized the importance of transparency and accountability in Nigeria's ongoing battle against corruption. He noted that the Transparency International Corruption Perception Index (CPI) for 2024 serves as a reflection of the nation's efforts and challenges in this area.

He pointed that Nigeria's CPI score for 2024 was 26 out of 100, ranking the country 140th out of 180 nations. While this marks a slight improvement from the previous ranking of 145, the stagnation in the score indicates persistent systemic issues. He emphasized that this modest progress should not overshadow the urgent need for deeper reforms. He noted that the Code of Conduct Bureau (CCB) perceives the CPI result as both a challenge and a call to action, urging collective efforts to achieve meaningful change.

On the role of the CCB and the way forward, he reaffirms that the CCB is committed to ensuring that public officers adhere to the highest ethical standards. This involves enforcing asset declarations, investigating violations of the Code of Conduct for public officers, and fostering a culture of integrity within public institutions. However, he acknowledged that the gap between perception and reality cannot be bridged by formalities alone; it requires concrete actions that reinforce transparency and accountability.

He noted that the Bureau faces existing challenges such as limited resources but views these hurdles as opportunities for reform and innovation. Moving forward, he highlighted that the CCB aims to:

1) Strengthen the verification process for asset declarations, making them an effective anti-corruption tool rather than a mere formality.

2) Launch educational campaigns to enhance public awareness and engagement in anti-corruption efforts.

3) Pursue legislative and policy reforms to grant the CCB greater authority, ensuring more transparent and efficient operations.

He stressed that improving Nigeria's CPI score is not solely the responsibility of the CCB but a collective national duty. Government institutions, civil society organizations, and the private sector must collaborate to dismantle corruption at its roots, addressing both the perception and reality of corruption.

Despite the CPI results, he urged resilience and determination. He reiterated that every effort toward transparency enhances not just Nigeria's international standing but also the well-being of its citizens.

He concluded his address with a commitment to the fight against corruption and an invitation for all stakeholders to actively participate in transforming Nigeria's governance landscape. He expressed gratitude to TUGAR for their analysis of Nigeria's CPI performance and extends appreciation to all attendees for their attention and dedication to this cause.

4.3   Message from Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC)

The Chairman EFCC, Mr. Olanipekun Olukoyode expressed appreciation for TUGAR's efforts in organizing the event as it emphasizes the importance of collaboration to drive national progress. While noting reviewing the slight improvement of Nigeria's rating in the Transparency International Corruption Perception Index (TI-CPI)2024, he stressed on the need for Nigerians to focus on adding value to their social and economic lives rather than fixating on international ratings. He encouraged prioritizing internal improvements over external assessments. He argued that value addition to Nigerian lives is more critical than international rankings.

Mr. Olukoyede highlighted the substantial progress made in the past year in fighting corruption, attributing successes to the legislature, executive, and judiciary. He asserted that even if the international community does not recognize these advancements, Nigerians must acknowledge them. He noted that a major milestone in anti-corruption efforts is the Supreme Court ruling on the financial autonomy of local governments, a development he describes as a significant leap forward. He also acknowledged the legislative interventions that have facilitated the fight against corruption. He commended the increased allocations to anti-corruption agencies.

The Chairman criticized TI for not recognizing key accomplishments, such as the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) recovering over 700 real estate properties in a single operation, a feat unmatched by agencies like the FBI. He also highlights the significant

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law enforcement operations, including the arrest of over 790 suspects, among them 194 foreigners, many from countries with better TI ratings than Nigeria.

Drawing on a metaphor about the resilience of a lizard, the Chairman urged Nigerians to recognize their achievements even if the world does not. He stressed the need for continuous progress while acknowledging that much work remains. He underscores the importance of maintaining momentum in anti-corruption efforts.

In his closing speech, he emphasized the need for synergy between the Executive, Legislature, and Judiciary to sustain anti-corruption progress. He applauded TUGAR and stakeholders for supporting the initiative. He finally reiterated the importance of self-recognition in the fight against corruption.

4.4   Message from the Independent Corrupt practices and other Related Offences Commission (ICPC)

The Chairman ICPC, represented by the Commission Secretary, Mr. Clifford Okwudiri gave a goodwill message. He acknowledged the importance of reviewing TI's Corruption Perception Index and the challenges of fighting corruption in Nigeria. He also acknowledged that corruption remains widespread despite governmental efforts. He however stressed that independent assessments must be critically reviewed to understand Nigeria's true progress in combating corruption.

He highlighted Nigeria's rankings in the TI Index from 2019 to 2024, emphasizing that while improvements have been marginal, perceptions may not fully reflect the reality of Nigeria's anti-corruption efforts. He further highlighted ongoing efforts to strengthen institutions, change societal attitudes towards corruption, and increase accountability through the National anti-corruption strategy and monitoring mechanisms in place. In conclusion, he thanked TUGAR for the initiative appreciating the efforts made by stakeholders. He reiterated the need for more synergy and collaboration in the anti-corruption fight.

4.5   Message from the Inspector General of Police (IGP)

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The goodwill message from the Inspector General of Police was delivered by his representative, AIG Okon Efiong . He stated that corruption is a global issue and a threat to any Democracy. He highlighted that corruption poses one of the greatest threats to democratic governance, whether in Nigeria or elsewhere. To underscore the severity of the problem, he reiterated the statement made by a former head of an Anti-Corruption Commission: *"If we do not kill corruption, corruption will kill us."*

He commended TUGAR for organizing the event, recognizing that the fight against corruption is not the responsibility of a single agency but a collective effort. He stressed that every Nigerian, regardless of their position, is a stakeholder in this fight.

On behalf of the IGP, he expressed the police force's appreciation for TUGAR's work and affirms their commitment to supporting anti-corruption initiatives. He acknowledged the challenges the Nigeria Police face but also noted the recent study that recognizes and awarded the Nigerian Police as the most improved agency of government in the fight against corruption. This is a motivation to the Force to continue supporting efforts to eradicate corruption. Additionally, he emphasized the importance of national progress despite international perceptions. He encouraged Nigerians to remain resilient and focus on continuous improvement rather than being discouraged by external opinions.

In conclusion, he emphasized that there is always room for improvement. He expressed optimism for Nigeria's future and extended best wishes to all participants at the event. He closed by thanking the audience and invoking blessings upon Nigeria.

4.6   Message from the Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD)

Representing the Director, Center for Democracy and Development (CDD), Mr. David Alechenu extended warm greetings to all present. He reiterated that the report serves as a critical assessment of Nigeria's progress in combating corruption over the past six years. It presents modern statistical insights, acting as a reflective tool for stakeholders to evaluate systemic corruption and the nation's institutional performance in addressing it. He noted that this period in Nigeria's democratic journey has been marked by both significant challenges and opportunities for institutional strengthening.

On the institutional effort and strategic partnerships, he emphasized that the CDD recognizes that tangible progress in fighting corruption requires sustained commitment. Over the years, it has forged strategic partnerships with key anti-corruption agencies, including the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC); the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC); the Code of Conduct Bureau (CCB); the Nigerian Financial Intelligence Unit (NFIU); and the Office of the Auditor General for the Federation. He further noted that through these collaborations, CDD has supported efforts to enhance forensic capabilities for evidence-based prosecutions, improve cross-agency collaboration frameworks, and develop capacity-building programs for investigators and prosecutors. Additionally, policy advocacy has been a focus, aiming to strengthen accountability mechanisms across various institutions.

He emphasized that while the TI-CPI report presents data on score trends, its deeper significance lies in prompting critical self-examination. He stressed that key questions raised by the report that we should be asking is;

1)   Are Nigeria's institutions becoming more resilient?

2)   Do citizens perceive real improvements in anti-corruption efforts?

3)   How can short-term progress be converted into lasting systemic reforms?

He further reiterated that the fight against corruption is described as a marathon rather than a sprint. He urged stakeholders to strengthen preventive mechanisms, integrate technology into anti-corruption efforts, ensure consistent enforcement at all levels of government, and build public confidence through transparency. Additionally, the protection of reformers and whistleblowers within institutions remains a crucial challenge that must be addressed.

He reaffirmed CDD's unwavering commitment to Nigeria's anti-corruption agenda. He appealed that rather than serving as a final judgment, the TI-CPI report is framed as a guiding tool for shaping the next phase of reforms. He noted that achieving transparency requires both institutional courage and collective societal action.

In closing, he conveyed apologies on behalf of the Director of the Center for his absence, while reaffirming his unwavering commitment to the project and the fight against corruption in Nigeria.

4.7 Message from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

Ms. Princess Chifiero represented the Country Representative, Mr. Cheikh Ousmane Toure. At the event. The UNODC acknowledged Nigeria's progress in the fight against corruption as recent surveys indicate improvements, which are worth celebrating. She emphasized that even small advancements in anti-corruption efforts are significant, reinforcing the importance of continued dedication to this cause.

On the importance of advocacy and storytelling, she encouraged the audience to persist in their anti-corruption efforts and share their successes with the world. Nigeria, known as the "Giant of Africa," should ensure its narrative reflects its progress. She emphasized that public awareness and engagement are essential, as citizens must be informed participants in the fight against corruption. She stressed the importance of strengthening institutions and taking bold actions that will reinforce Nigeria's reputation.

The UNODC reiterated that collaboration is another key aspect expressing joy in seeing stakeholders come together, even if full cooperation is not yet achieved. She noted that this gathering itself is a step forward, and further collaboration is encouraged. She reminded all stakeholders that the upcoming Conference of State Parties to the UNCAC presents an opportunity for Nigeria to showcase its achievements on a global stage.

She urged Nigeria to take control of its narrative rather than allowing others to tell her story, emphasizing the importance of self-representation in international forums. She further reiterated that more work is needed in the area of corruption prevention. The fight against corruption requires collective effort, including active citizen participation. She urged that citizens should be engaged and informed about their role in the process.

In her concluding remark, she reminded the audience on the upcoming Conference of State Parties to the UNCAC, scheduled for December in Doha, Qatar. She stressed that this event

will serve as a platform for Nigeria to present its progress and reinforce its commitment to anti-corruption initiatives assuring participants that the UNODC remains committed to supporting Nigeria in this mission.

5.0   PRESENTATION ON THE REVIEW AND ANALYSIS OF NIGERIA'S TI-CPI (2019 - 2024): RATING, METHODOLOGY AND DATA

PROLOGUE

Mr. Godwin Okpene highlighted underscored the critical role of data in assessing national progress. He reiterated that the 2024 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) includes two additional data sources, bringing the total to ten. He noted that without these new sources, Nigeria's aggregate score would have declined by two points. He further noted that the absence of data in previous years prevented these sources from contributing to Nigeria's ranking, indicating a past lack of transparency.

Mr. Okpene pointed that the CPI is not solely about data but also about broader perceptions of corruption. He emphasized that if no new data had been available, Nigeria would have regressed in the rankings.

He encouraged a critical review of the report's indicators, which include over 50–60 indices, to determine their accuracy in representing Nigeria's corruption landscape. He urged a patriotic duty to challenge both negative perceptions and actual corrupt practices.

He reiterated that, beyond disputing unfavorable perceptions, Nigerians must actively fight corruption. He highlighted the successful recovery of over 700 properties in a single operation, showcasing anti-corruption efforts. He also reiterated that though one of the data sources acknowledges the EFCC's asset recovery efforts, another indicator questions the integrity of Nigeria's systemic controls that allowed an individual to amass such wealth undetected. Mr. Okpene noted that the case of large-scale corruption scandal raises concerns about Nigeria's institutional integrity. He refrained from commenting on media reports but notes that if the EFCC had not investigated, the individual might have escaped justice. This he further noted highlights systemic weaknesses.

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He emphasized that the CPI does not solely evaluate the performance of anti-corruption agencies. Less than 10% of its indicators focus on prosecution effectiveness, while over 90% assess the overall functioning of the civil service and governance structures.

He reiterated that Nigeria's CPI ranking is based on ten data sources for 2024. However, not all of them assess corruption levels or anti-corruption efforts specifically for 2024.

On the limitation of the current CPI data, he emphasized that some recent anti-corruption efforts are not yet reflected in the CPI due to the time lag in data collection. He further emphasized that current initiatives may only be visible in future rankings.

5.1   Introduction and Objective of the Presentation

Prof. Babajide Fowowe made a presentation on the findings of the in-depth analysis which focuses on Nigeria's performance in the Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index (TI-CPI) over the past six years. The main emphasis is on understanding the data sources used in the index to develop better strategies for improving Nigeria's ranking.

In his presentation, Prof. Fowowe noted that the project has four key objectives: (1) analyzing Nigeria's TI-CPI rating from 2019 to 2024, (2) understanding the methodology and data sources behind the ratings, (3) engaging stakeholders to discuss findings, and (4) making recommendations for improvement.

5.2   Understanding the TI-CPI Methodology and its Global Impact

Prof. Fowowe clarified a common misconception—that Transparency International (TI) does not conduct corruption surveys within Nigeria. Instead, various independent organizations worldwide conduct expert assessments on public sector corruption, and TI aggregates and standardizes these measures to produce the final index score.

He reiterated that the TI-CPI does not directly assess Nigeria's anti-corruption agencies but reflects how corruption is perceived in the public sector. This perception is crucial because the TI-CPI is widely recognized globally and significantly influences international investors, credit rating agencies, and financial markets. A lower corruption perception score can deter investment, while an improved rating can attract foreign capital and economic opportunities.

5.3   Nigeria's TICPI Scores and Rankings

On Nigeria's TI-CPI scores and ranking, Prof. Fowowe stressed that the TI-CPI ranks countries based on perceived corruption, using a scale from 0 to 100, where 0 represents extreme corruption and 100 represents a very clean system. Countries scoring closer to 0 are generally regarded as highly corrupt, often with authoritarian tendencies, while those closer to 100 are seen as clean and strongly democratic.

He highlighted Nigeria's average score over the six-year period (2019-2024) was around 25, meaning it is perceived as highly corrupt. Specific scores were: 2019: 26, 2020: 25 2021: 24; 2022-2024: Slight increase back to 26.

In terms of ranking, Nigeria consistently placed between 140th and 154th out of 180 countries, reinforcing the perception of widespread corruption. He emphasized that Nigeria's score remains closer to the bottom of the scale, indicating high corruption levels.

5.4   Limited Changes in Scores Due to Data Stability

Prof. Fowowe reiterated the reason for Nigeria's stagnant scores and rankings is that the underlying data sources used to calculate the index have not significantly changed over time. Between 2019 and 2023, TI-CPI relied on eight data sources, and in 2024, two additional sources were included.

For instance, the **Bertelsmann Foundation Index** fluctuated only slightly between 32.85 and 34, while the **Economist Intelligence Unit** remained between 18 and 20. Many other data sources showed minimal variation, with some maintaining the same scores for multiple consecutive years. Since these sources provide the raw data for Nigeria's CPI score, any lack of movement within them directly translates to a lack of improvement in the national ranking.

He noted interestingly, the two new data sources introduced in 2024 had relatively high scores (81), slightly boosting Nigeria's overall rating. This suggests that if more data sources with higher scores were included, the country's ranking could improve further. However,

critics argue that this system does not necessarily reflect actual progress in reducing corruption.

5.5   Comparison with Global and Regional Averages

Prof. Fowowe presents a comparative analysis of Nigeria's scores relative to global and regional benchmarks. Western Europe & EU: The highest average CPI scores, ranging between 64-66; Asia-Pacific & the Americas: Averaging around 42-45.

Sub-Saharan Africa: Nigeria's average score (24-26) is below the regional average of 32-33.

Within Sub-Saharan Africa, Nigeria ranks in the bottom third, placing 14th from the bottom. Countries like Seychelles (above 60), Cape Verde, and Botswana (above 50) perform significantly better. This comparison highlights that Nigeria is among the more corrupt nations in its region and lags behind several of its African peers.

5.6   Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) Scores and Rankings

He noted that over the six-year period from 2019 to 2024, Nigeria consistently received low scores on the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), which resulted in poor rankings. These low scores indicate a high perceived level of corruption in the country.

5.7   Understanding the Computation of CPI Scores

In his presentation, Prof. Fowowe emphasized that to improve its CPI scores; Nigeria must first understand how Transparency International computes the index. He stated that the CPI aggregates data from multiple sources, and for some countries, more data sources are available than for others. Between 2019 and 2023, Nigeria's CPI score was based on eight data sources. In 2024, two additional sources were incorporated into the computation.

5.8   Evolution of CPI Methodology

He reiterated that Transparency International has refined its methodology over time, ensuring that scores are standardized. This standardization allows for comparisons across different years, such as between 2005, 2010, and 2015.

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5.9   Steps in Computing the CPI

Prof. Fowowe noted that Transparency International follows a four-step process in computing the CPI:

1.   **Selection of Data Sources**: Data is collected from various sources, and in Nigeria's case, it has primarily relied on the same set of sources over time. These sources measure indicators such as bribery, embezzlement, misuse of public office, state capture, and nepotism.

2.   **Standardization of Data**: The selected data is assessed based on reliability, institutional reputation, data granularity, cross-country comparability, and time consistency. The data is then calibrated to fit a 0-100 scale, where 0 represents a highly corrupt country and 100 represent a corruption-free country.

3.   **Averaging the Scores:** After standardization, the CPI is calculated as an average of all available data sources for a given country. For Nigeria in 2024, this was based on 10 data sources.

4.   **Statistical Adjustments:** Transparency International applies statistical measures such as standard errors and standard deviations to ensure accuracy and account for uncertainty.

5.10   Key Data Sources Used in Nigeria's CPI

Several key data sources contribute to Nigeria's CPI score

1. *Bertelsmann Foundation Transformation Index*

This is a qualitative survey conducted by experts assessing government effectiveness in curbing corruption. Recent findings highlight corruption in public procurement, inflated contracts, weaknesses in fiscal transparency, and systematic corruption.

2. *Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) Assessment*

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This source uses both qualitative and quantitative measures to evaluate financial risks. It identified key concerns such as abuse of public resources, bribery for securing contracts, and lack of accountability in government funds

3. *Global Insight Business Conditions*

This source used a qualitative measure assessing corruption in budgeting and administrative processes. It found significant issues in bribery and corruption in contract awards, permits, and trade documentation.

4. *PRS International Country Risk Guide*

This source used a mixed qualitative and quantitative assessment focusing on public sector corruption. It experts analyze corruption indicators and provide rankings based on available data.

Other sources include the Varieties of Democracy Project, World Bank CPIA Country Policy and Institutional Assessment, World Economic Forum Specific Insights on Nigeria and World Justice Project Rule of Law Index. Prof. Fowowe noted that Transparency International compiles and compares data from these sources to generate the final CPI score, which reflects the perceived level of corruption in each country.

6.0   UNVEILING OF THE REPORT

Dr. Orji Ogbonnaya Orji, Executive Secretary/ CEO NEITI led the unveiling of the report. He began with an acknowledgment of earlier concerns regarding the criteria used in the Transparency International (TI) assessment. He emphasized the importance of understanding these criteria to help Nigeria improve its ranking. He noted that the review and analysis by TUGAR which provides insights highlighting the need for Nigerian agencies, both state and non-state actors, to take these insights seriously.

He recommended that TUGAR convenes a workshop in the near future to examine the report in greater detail. The goal is to deepen stakeholders' understanding of the assessment

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process and to align national efforts with the TI criteria for better performance in future rankings. He reiterated the need for strong collaboration with both civil society and the media as amplifying the message through these channels is crucial to ensuring that the report's insights reach a wider audience.

Looking ahead, he expressed hope that by the next TI assessment, Nigeria will achieve not just a marginal but a substantial improvement in its global rating. He underscored the broader implications of these ratings, including their influence on investment decisions, international perception, business engagements, and citizen transactions.

The Report was unveiled by the Executive Secretary/CEO NEITI, the Chairman, the Code of Conduct Bureau, the Nigeria Police Force, the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC), the Chairman Economic and Financial Crimes Commission and the Civil Society present. Civil society and media representatives were encouraged to actively disseminate findings of the report.

7.0   COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Mr. Abiodun Adebanjo, Head, Research unit in the Department of Policy Planning, Research, and Statistics EFCC shared shared insights from a training he attended in 2013, which introduced the "40 principles of life." He challenged the common belief that integrity is a relative concept, arguing instead that it is governed by universal standards. He highlighted that certain fundamental elements define integrity, and their absence means integrity is compromised. He further explained that international benchmarks exist, and Nigeria must adhere to them to improve its Corruption Perception Index (CPI) rating. Raising national standards to align with global expectations is essential for progress.

8.0   CLOSING REMARK

The closing remark was delivered by Mrs. Bosede Oguntuberu-Adewale on behalf of TUGAR. She appreciated all participants at the event, recognizing key officials and stakeholders

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present. These include representatives from various anti-corruption agencies. Other attendees include members of the Monitoring and Evaluation Committee of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy (2022-2026), the Interagency Agency Team (IATT), and the Project Steering Committee for the Corruption Risk Assessment at Nigerian seaports. Additionally, development partners, civil society organizations (CSOs), and media representatives were acknowledged.

She emphasized the need for increased collaboration among Anti-Corruption Agencies (ACAs) to achieve greater impact. She stressed the importance of effectively communicating their efforts to the public to ensure transparency and accountability. She noted that the ultimate goal is to ensure that the benefits of their work reach ordinary citizens, improving their daily lives.

She specially acknowledged the MacArthur Foundation and the Center for Democracy and Development for supporting the project. She encouraged all present to continue working towards a corruption-free Nigeria and improving the country's Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index (TICPI) ranking.