



FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA



# National Ethics and Integrity Policy



Office of the Secretary to the Government of  
the Federation (OSGF)



Independent Corrupt Practices and Other  
Related Offences Commission (ICPC)

and



National Orientation Agency (NOA)

ABUJA, NIGERIA  
SEPTEMBER 2020





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Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission was established in 2000 by Act No. 5 of Year 2000. Its mandates include enforcement, prevention, public education and enlightenment

## **APPROVAL**

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**T**he **National Ethics and Integrity Policy** was approved by the Federal Executive Council at its (2020) 20<sup>th</sup> meeting, held Wednesday, 19<sup>th</sup> August, 2020, in consideration of the Memorandum EC(2020) 146 by the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Approval of the Policy was conveyed vide an extract from the conclusions of FEC meeting dated 27<sup>th</sup> August, 2020 from the Office of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation (OSGF). The Policy was approved for the good and ethical conduct of the Nigerian citizenry.



**MUHAMMADU BUHARI**  
PRESIDENT, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE ARMED FORCES  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA



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## FOREWORD

**T**rust in Governance in Nigeria has over the years been eroded by high level corruption, characterized by lack of transparency, accountability, non-adherence to ethical and professional standards, especially in the public sector as witnessed in past administrations. In the words of President Muhammadu Buhari -

*“If we do not kill corruption, corruption will kill Nigeria”*

Given the determination of the current administration, the scenario is beginning to change for Nigeria, as the Buhari administration's efforts in improving transparency and accountability mechanisms in government is gaining ground. Notable among recent government measures are the vigorous implementation of the e-government platforms of Treasury Single Account(TSA), Government Integrated Financial Management Information System (GIFMIS), Integrated Personnel and Payroll Information System (IPPIS); enforcement of the Bank Verification Number (BVN) and its integration with other identity management platforms like the National Identity Number (NIN); Whistle-Blowing Policy, enforcement of the Freedom of Information Act 2011, signing up to the Open Government Partnership; introduction of the Open Treasury Portal etc.

Despite these achievements, government is mindful of gaps in the fight against corruption. As aptly captured in the Policies, Programmes, and Projects Audit Committee (PPPAC) report of the government and its roadmap for governance in its second term of office (2019-2023), four underlying challenges need to be addressed: one of which is decline of national values and ethics and the resultant glorification of illicit wealth. The advent of COVID-19 and its implications for social and economic stability further underscore the need for citizen obligation to watchdog the government and take personal responsibility for actions to protect individual and social cohesion in the interest of the collective.

In fulfillment of government's promise to address the decline of national values, my office and the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission set up 20 years ago as the first anti corruption agency of the millennium, initiated this National Ethics and Integrity Policy as a framework preceding design of a more robust National Action Plan and related measures to close the gap in our quest for reclaiming our lost ethical and integrity values. This quest is supported by the National Orientation Agency as the key mobilizer of citizens towards behavioral change.

The challenges posed by COVID-19 is a timely wake-up call for a rethink and re-orientation of our values in moving Nigeria towards development. This initiative is also a key marker of Nigeria's 60<sup>th</sup> independence anniversary and ICPC's 20<sup>th</sup> year of establishment.

It is the hope and expectation of government that all Nigerians will own this document and use it to hold public office holders accountable to the highest level of integrity and ethical behavior. At the same time we expect that ownership will result in personal responsibility for us all as citizens to act with integrity towards building the nation of our

dream. Furthermore, we hope that key stakeholders – religious and traditional leaders and institutions, civil society, private sector, media, youths, and all Nigerians will contribute to the critical next steps of deciding what actions should be taken and by whom towards actualizing the pillars of this framework.

God bless Nigeria.

**Boss Gida Mustapha**

Secretary to the Government of the Federation  
May 2020

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

**T**he journey towards developing a policy on Ethics and Integrity for Nigeria started in 2014 under the former leadership of the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC).

The ICPC as a millennium integrity institution in Nigeria established year 2000 initiated the policy with the active support and collaboration of several individuals and institutions too numerous to mention including but not limited to the Office of Secretary to the Government of the Federation (OSGF), National Orientation Agency (NOA), representatives of faith based institutions, traditional rulers, civil society, media and selected MDAs to mention a few.

Technical support was provided by Justice for All Project (J4A) and the EU funded Rule of Law and Accountability Project (RoLAC) both managed by the British Council. The steadfast and patriotic contributions of several officials of the Education and Public Enlightenment Departments of the ICPC ensured the ultimate realization of the objectives. These and numerous others who made valuable contributions during consultations are all gratefully acknowledged.

## BACKGROUND TO THE POLICY

The Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) is the apex anti-corruption agency in Nigeria vested with the responsibility of ridding the nation of corruption. The core mandates of the Commission are investigation and prosecution of corruption (enforcement), prevention and public education and enlightenment against the ills of corruption. This statutory responsibility derives from Section 6(a)-(f) of the Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Act 2000.

The Commission's most prominent mandate is its enforcement power, however, its prevention and public education mandates are no less significant. In fulfillment of its prevention mandate, ICPC initiated Government circular OHCSF/MISO/192/94 of 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2001 for the establishment of Anti-Corruption and Transparency Unit (ACTUS) in MDAs. As at the end of 2019 over 400 ACTUs have been inaugurated in MDAs. Similarly, it conducts System Study Reviews and Corruption Risk Assessments on MDAs and issues directives on corruption prevention.

Furthermore, it deploys the Ethics and Integrity Compliance Scorecard in MDAs to assess integrity profile and conducts ethics training for public officials through its Anti-corruption Academy of Nigeria (ACAN). It uses its niche within the Africa sub-region as expert on Corruption Risk Assessment capacity building a skill recently deployed in support of President Muhammadu Buhari's role as AU anti corruption champion by training of heads of anti-corruption agencies in Africa in 2018.

In 2003, the Commission developed the National Values Curriculum for teaching of ethics and civics in Nigerian educational institutions. The document was adopted by the National Council on Education and in 2012 a Teachers' Guide was launched to assist instructors infuse the curriculum in various subjects. The promotion of the National Ethics and Integrity Policy is a befitting follow up to the 2003 initiative and is done in collaboration and consultation with stakeholders most notably the National Orientation Agency.

The National Orientation Agency (NOA) is responsible for mobilizing the general public towards understanding and implementing government policies and programs. The agency promotes ethical values such as dignity of labor, honesty, discipline in society, obligations of citizen reorientation against affluent lifestyle, prevention of abuse of power or privilege amongst other laudable objectives. It has championed a number of citizen responsibility campaigns the most recent being the “Change Begins With Me” initiated with the Federal Ministry of Information and Culture.

Previously it had the “Do The Right Thing: Patriotism and Ethics First” campaign and conducted capacity building for MDAs on “Character, Integrity, Honesty, Temperance, Tolerance, and Perseverance based on Section 23 of the 1999 constitution as amended. It is a prominent part of Nigeria's Open Government Partnership (OGP) initiative and it has the widest reach within Nigeria with presence in all 774 local government areas.

This policy coming at ICPC's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary and Nigeria's 60<sup>th</sup> year of nationhood is timely. For this, the role of key stakeholders in its construct since 2014 is acknowledged.

Prof. Bolaji Owasanoye  
Chairman, ICPC

# SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Context:

For over a number of decades now, governments in different parts of the world have instituted a variety of measures to restore and revitalize the public sector, in response to the demand for change unleashed by the forces of globalization, democratization and liberalization, among others. These measures include re-defining and sharpening the role and focus of government, enhancing the service delivery capacity of public agencies, incorporating private business ethos and techniques in decision-making processes, and applying modern information and communication technologies in public management process. These include the growing consensus amongst governments that corruption including bribery of foreign public officials must be prohibited; the increasingly extra-territorial nature of anti-corruption statutes; and the introduction by the international community of the UN Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) in 2003. changed the parameters for evaluating corruption and unethical behavior.

For the first time the international community through UNCAC recognized as variants of corruption acts of bribery, embezzlement, trading in influence, abuse of function, illicit enrichment, laundering of proceeds of crime, concealment, obstruction of justice etc. These variants all subsumed under the generic word corruption broadened the scope of the word corruption and consequently flagged these conducts as unethical behavior. Some countries introduced standards such as "failure to prevent bribery" thereby forcing international and domestic private sector actors to carefully consider their attitudes towards corruption, especially within their value chains, subsidiaries, business partners and intermediaries.

Other measures include enhancing procurement and financial management systems, with a view to promoting transparency and accountability and investing in human and institutional capacity building and streamlining or at least re-defining the role of regulation and regulatory oversight which impacts and pressures the majority of micro, small and medium enterprises who make up 96% of Nigeria's private sector to be corrupt. Susceptibility to corruption within the public and private sector is sometimes driven by the following factors amongst others –

- (a) uncoordinated and conflicting instructions from regulators;
- (b) inconsistent actions by regulators;
- (c) unfair and uneven application of rules and standards;
- (d) regulatory actions sometimes generating unintended consequences rather than solving industry problem;
- (e) opaque regulator communication;
- (f) undue delay, inconsistency and non commensurate consequences for inappropriate behavior or offence sanctioned;
- (g) resistance by regulators to open their actions to public scrutiny thereby tending towards lack of accountability and unwillingness to justify those actions; and
- (g) regulatory approach not being flexible enough to keep pace with developments in industry of oversight.

The foundation for the National Ethics and Integrity Policy the Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Act of 2000; the National Orientation Agency Act Cap N64 Laws of Nigeria 2004 and the United Nations Convention against Corruption, as adopted by the UN General Assembly, by Resolution 58/4, of 31<sup>st</sup> October 2003. These instruments seek to:

1. Promote and strengthen measures to prevent and combat corruption more efficiently and effectively;
2. Promote integrity, accountability and proper management of public and private affairs as articulated with national and international legal instruments;
3. Enhance the role of citizens and personal responsibility in national development;

Therefore, the main objective of the National Ethics and Integrity Policy is to enhance transparency and accountability, especially in the public and private sectors, in line with global best practices. It is expected to change public mind-sets about corruption, its incidences and ways it can be controlled. It is meant to restore public trust and confidence in governance and influence a change of attitude for the better among the citizenry, thereby restoring the nation's traditional core values of honesty, transparency, accountability and respect for the rule of law. It is also designed to emphasize the role of personal responsibility in national development. The adoption and enforcement of a National Ethics and Integrity Policy is one of the key strategies to improve the understanding of the public about corruption prevention mechanisms, and thus increase the commitment and participation of everyone in the fight against corruption.

The National Ethics and Integrity Policy is not just an instrument to help prevent corruption in the country. The policy embraces a more comprehensive approach that appeals to the re-engagement of all citizens of Nigeria with core national values. This will allow the nation to heal from partisan sentiments and attitudes that fuel or support corruption and citizen parochial narrow view of corruption from the prism of politics, religion and ethnic lenses which ultimately result in violence, insecurities, intolerance and mistrust. Furthermore, the policy will enhance citizen power over elected leaders and the role of money in politics as a measure of restoring power to the electorate rather than the godfather.

The policy is expected to positively boost the internal energies of the nation to push the country beyond dread caused by the erosion of values in all dimensions of national life, by entrenched sectional enclaves that plunder national resources to serve sectional interests, by entrenched poverty due to neglect, and by the paralysis of national political institutions and their inability or unwillingness to be responsive to the demands of democratic values and accountability. This policy document is therefore inspired by the urgent need to improve integrity, accountability, and responsibility in national affairs.

## **1.2 Design Methodology of the National Ethics and Integrity Policy: Focus and Scope**

Background work on this Policy combined documentary research, desk review, analysis and synthesis of various national and international institutional ethics policies. Additionally, various codes of professional conduct of public and private sector organizations in Nigeria as well as countries doing well in the fight against corruption were consulted.



### **1.2.1 Focus:**

The substantive content framing this policy considered several existing conventions and codes, including the following:

1. Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 as amended
2. Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Act 2000
3. National Orientation Act Cap N64 LFN 2004
4. The United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC)
5. The African Charter on Values and Principles of Public Service and Administration (African Union)
6. The Standards of Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch of Government, United States Office of Government Ethics (OGE)
7. The Kenya Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC)
8. The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms
9. Values and Ethics Code for the Public Service, Canada
10. Code of Conduct for Public Servants, The Code of Conduct Bureau, Nigeria
11. The Public Service Rules, Nigeria
12. The Codes of Professional Associations, such as National Union of Journalists, Nigerian Bar Association, medical profession, professional accountants, business associations, the Council for the Regulation of Engineering in Nigeria, the Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria, among others.

### **1.2.2 Scope:**

The Policy takes into account the multi-cultural composition of Nigeria and captures diverse core values from a multi-cultural and religious perspective. For example diverse cultural contexts reflected through customary law, Sharia legal system, common law system, substantive laws as well as the judgments and decisions of courts on these values were taken into account because they are representative of the different cultural identities within the country. This approach recognized that these cultural contexts and decisions of courts associated with them propagate values that are contested through those courts. Values that impact social behavior on responsibility and accountability of leaders, land ownership, family and domestic relations, testate and intestate rules, property claims and distribution, individual and community rights, entitlements, transactions and exchanges, contracts, rights of the vulnerable especially women and children, persons with disability, abuse of power, etc. Majority of citizens appeal to these cultural and religious values in their daily interactions, aspirations and conflicts. Thus, the principles of the National Ethics and Integrity Policy contain a synthesis of a consensus on core values that are collectively shared throughout the country.

## **SECTION 2: FRAMEWORK OF THE NATIONAL ETHICS AND INTEGRITY POLICY**

In the context of this National Ethics and Integrity Policy, ethics is taken to be the socially established body of standards, norms, principles, values, and ways of doing things by which we make sense of the world and answer most questions of our lives. Through these, we guide existence and determine how we relate to the world and to each other, in the light of what promotes wellbeing (**good**) and what undermines wellbeing (**bad**), what is the preferred pathway or state of affairs to achieve wellbeing (**right**) and what is established as the avoidable pathway or state of affairs that is inconsistent with the pursuit of our wellbeing (**wrong**). Furthermore, the policy considered them the nexus between and what links ethics with integrity and the drivers of the choices that people make in standing for these values or against them.

Ethics form the basis of collective decision-making, social preferences (understood as **core values**) and social action. The core values we derive to define ourselves (our social vision), and to determine the social arrangements by which we manage our collective affairs and existence, receive meaning from ethics as described above. Therefore, the principles of the National Ethics and Integrity Policy should be interpreted in the light of the above understanding of ethics.

### **2.1 Purpose of the National Ethics and Integrity Policy:**

The National Ethics and Integrity Policy is necessary to strengthen efforts at positive national transformation. This is possible when all citizens and those who relate with Nigeria imbibe and embody these core values. The country can reach national development goals when we reframe the meaning of the national purpose and adopt frames of mind, attitudes, behaviors, choices and actions based on the demands of national core values.

The call for a national ethics and integrity policy is based on what we believe to be an invitation to save a country from what is generally lamented to be an erosion of ethics from national life and the general collapse of an ethical culture nationwide. The crisis of ethics we refer to here concerns the widespread neglect of core values, where Nigerians either refuse to allow these to regulate national life in the public interest, rather than just isolated private interests, or that Nigerians are blunted to the impact that values can have to promote life at all levels.

The National Ethics and Integrity Policy urges all citizens to put Nigeria above all else and to allow the core values we all hold in common to inspire our commitments and efforts. Truth be told, there are those who see corruption as a survival rather than an ethical issue because corruption seems central to survival. However, by supporting the enthronement of ethical values and higher-level accountability for those saddled with governance on the one hand and citizens on the other hand, new possibilities emerge and the impact of corruption to existential reality will diminish. The practical benefit will be that by letting go of corruption in exchange for ethics and integrity we enhance the survival of the weak and control the power of the strong.

The core values will form a common reference point on how we relate, interact and work with one another, for the good of all, without self-regard, favour or discrimination. When our convictions of mutual benefit, mutual survival, interdependence, and solidarity reframe our consciousness and guide our actions, in all domains of national and community life, we will survive and manage ourselves better together.

This National Ethics and Integrity Policy is by no means complete, nor will the process of a national dialogue on ethics stop with the adoption of a policy. The current version of the document is a foundation for further and broader national-level conversation about practical steps required to actualize the broad principles contained in this policy. Stakeholder input and action will be required as we progress incrementally from stage to stage seeing improvement in standards of ethical behavior within the public and private sectors in particular and society at large in general. We must never be satisfied with status quo nor assume we have a final document or template in the short term. That is utopia. We must keep refining our behavior to bring the best out of ourselves.

Therefore, this policy framework is expected to open up more creative, intensive, meaningful, and fruitful insights into how our national life can be improved, through sustained and courageous pursuit and implementation of national core values. Ultimately, this will improve the ethical culture, as well as advance social, economic, political and cultural transformation of Nigeria. Furthermore, we will look at what we must do for citizens to prefer ethics and integrity to corruption or other unethical behavior as the route to attaining desired goals.

The National Ethics and Integrity Policy will supplement and strengthen the National Anti-Corruption Strategy (NACS) that already provides for States and Local Governments to domesticate the Strategy.

## **2.2 Constitutional Foundations of a National Ethics and Integrity Policy:**

The 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended) contains prescriptions for national ethics. This is one of the components of Chapter II: “Fundamental Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy”. This forms an assurance that ethical standards are critical to national life in all domains and thus, the basis for the design of a national ethics and integrity policy. We uphold the norms of the Constitution to be the supreme value standards. Hence, the entire provisions of the Constitution are a reference point and a guarantee for prescribing ethics in national life. We also consider the intent of the Constitution to be the basis for ethical concerns.

Thus, ethics become integral to the way the country shall be guided, in order to accomplish, according to the preamble to the Constitution the “purpose of promoting good government and the welfare of all persons in our country on the principles of Freedom, Equality and Justice, and for the purpose of consolidating the unity of our people”.

This National Ethics and Integrity Policy seeks to strengthen national cohesion, social equity, and equality of purpose in the pursuit of basic freedoms, individual and social rights as well as the material development of all Nigerians. The Policy outlines courses of

action that are responsibilities and obligations for Nigerians with respect to upholding core values critical for sustaining and protecting national life and promoting mutual wellbeing. The Policy enjoins all Nigerians to uphold and embody the core values of the principles as a matter of national priority. Therefore, the obligation to comply with its provisions derives from this mission.

### **SECTION 3: FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF THE NATIONAL ETHICS AND INTEGRITY POLICY:**

The fundamental principles underlying this policy are drawn from those key provisions enshrined in the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, as mentioned earlier. The supreme law of the land outlines national self-identity as well as an agenda for realizing national purpose. According to this supreme law, Nigerians and their country shall be governed in line with the core values of human dignity, freedom, liberty, and security. Further, national life and action shall be based on and guided by principles of ethics and an ethical culture as translated through care, personal responsibility, integrity and honesty.

Beyond the Nigerian Constitution, other key national policy positions on education and service excellence by public and private sector institutions, uphold similar key principles. These highlight and prioritize the same core values to be the foundation of a national education policy as well as a culture of efficient and effective service delivery. Examples include the National Policy on Education (2004) and the SERVICOM Charter Principles (2004).

Therefore, the National Ethics and Integrity Policy presents basic principles and values that obligate all Nigerians, and everyone who resides within the borders of Nigeria or who relates with the country in one form or the other, to commit to uphold these core values. By the fact that one is a Nigerian, resides in Nigeria or relates with Nigeria, this guarantees that any violation of the principles will be actionable. This will happen through the national institutions established to uphold the federal laws of Nigeria, the provisions of the national constitution, as well as other Federal and state agencies established for those purposes.

The National Ethics and Integrity Policy will serve a similar purpose as other state laws and policies established to ensure national cohesion, law and order, security and safety of person and property, freedoms and duties enshrined in the national constitution, civic responsibility and accountability.

The principles of the National Ethics and Integrity Policy are to be interpreted in line with provisions of federal laws and regulations, the Nigerian Constitution, standing rules and codes of conduct of professional bodies, as well as the statutory rules guiding the operations of public and private sector institutions.

The National Ethics and Integrity Policy will be implemented in line with existing codes that are in principle in harmony with and not contrary to the core principles of the Policy. Each Federal, State and Local government entity will endeavor to integrate or revise existing policies to be in harmony with the National Ethics and Integrity Policy. Governments at all levels will pass laws to reflect the principles of the Policy and provide guidance on compliance, sanctions, remedies for breaches, and enforcement mechanisms to ensure compliance. Following wide consultations, supplementary documents will follow to define compliance and consequence management arrangements.

Therefore, henceforth, all Nigerians, all those within the borders of the country, and all those who relate with or do business with Nigerians, and with the country as a sovereign nation, will uphold and be guided by the following core values in all aspects of national and international life and activity, as herein established.



**SECTION 4:**  
**THE CORE VALUES OF THE**  
**NATIONAL ETHICS AND INTEGRITY POLICY**



**4.1 HUMAN DIGNITY**

The core value of human dignity shall be translated and conserved through the following other values: importance of the individual human being, fairness, justice, respect for persons, sense of humanity, tolerance, freedom, equity, acceptance, and care and concern for persons.

Human dignity derives from the conviction that human persons have an inherent worth that must be respected and never violated. The major religions including Christianity and Islam lead in insights regarding the concept of human dignity. The consensus of thinking in these beliefs is that all human beings, on account of being created by God, essentially

are special in and of themselves. They have a worth that nothing can replace. As such, it is imperative that human beings be treated with the utmost respect, since it is God that gives life to every human person. Although not specifically defined in the United Nations Convention on Human Rights, it is this religious understanding that underlies the conviction that all human persons have this dignity and must not be subjected to anything that undermines this human worth. On this basis, all human persons have basic and inalienable rights that must be respected. The right to life, and the freedom to pursue happiness without hindrance, within the bounds of the law, is the hallmark of constitutional democracy. Human dignity presupposes that every person has a right to be treated with respect irrespective of his or her creed, vocation, gender, race, or social status. There is also a need for the State to actively pursue actions that will give citizens a sense of well-being, which is a necessary condition for the respect of human persons.

#### **4.1.1 Articles of the Value of Human Dignity:**

The articles of the value of human dignity include the following as enshrined in the Nigerian constitution:

The right to life; the right to freedom of movement, speech, association, and equality before the law; the right to fair hearing before the courts of law; the right to freedom of expression and the press; the right to freedom from discrimination on the grounds of ethnic group, place of origin, circumstance of birth, gender, religion or opinion. These civil liberties ensure that citizens are treated with dignity, and that all are equal before the law. These rights can only be suspended through judicial provisions and after due judicial process.

#### **4.1.2 Legal Foundations of the Value of Human Dignity**

The 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, as amended, provides for the right of citizens to be treated with dignity. At Chapter II, Section 17 (2a), the Constitution states that every citizen shall have equality of rights, obligations and opportunities before the law. Section 17 (2b) continues that “the sanctity of the human person shall be recognized and human dignity shall be maintained and enhanced”.

#### **4.1.3 Objectives of the Value:**

Objectives of the value of Human Dignity are to create respect and equal treatment of all persons within the Federal Republic of Nigeria and to affirm a sense of national belonging for all the citizens of the country. These objectives will engender the following:

- Respect for all persons in the country will ensure loyalty and patriotism and contribute to the achievement of state policy. Thus, the sense of well-being by the people of Nigeria would create the necessary condition for a more productive citizenry who would contribute to national goals and objectives.
- The ability of the State to guarantee the protection of the dignity of its citizens would reduce social conflict and create more harmonious relationships among citizens and between the State and citizens.



Therefore, under the National Ethics and Integrity Policy, every Nigerian shall have the right to the following:

- a. Respect for their individual worth and dignity;
- b. Participate fully, without encumbrances, in the life of the society;
- c. Have a say in the services that affect them, including participating in decisions concerning the types of assistance provided and the way it is provided. Further, persons can refuse services (and such refusal shall not affect or prejudice any future access to same or other services);
- d. Privacy and confidentiality (except for compelling moral or legal reasons, e.g. child protection, under legislation or court injunction);
- e. See any information held about them by an agency of government except prohibited or prevented by law;
- f. Express grievances and seek redress without fear of reprisals, intimidation or discrimination;
- g. Regard as unacceptable conduct on the part of any other person, words or actions that are intended to be, or that are reasonably foreseen to be discriminatory, hate crimes, threats, intimidation, or harassment;
- h. No business shall place profits ahead of human dignity, either through unsafe working conditions and poor wages for employees or through the neglect of its responsibility to be an ethical corporate body;

#### **4.1.4 Justiciability: How to Enforce the Provisions on Human Dignity**

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) was set up by the NHRC Act of 1995 as amended. It is an agency set up to enhance the protection and enjoyment of human rights and an avenue for citizens to seek redress against the violation of their rights. The decisions of the governing council can be registered as decisions of a High Court.

## **4.2 VOICE AND PARTICIPATION:**

Voice refers to a right to express an opinion and influence a decision. Participation is an act of taking part in an activity or event. In doing government business or any other business, the key articles of the value of voice and participation shall include democratic principles, such as good governance, leading by example, representation, mutual accountability, non-discrimination, fair hearing, protection against coercion or intimidation and supremacy of law among others.

### **4.2.1 Legal Foundations of the Value of Voice and Participation:**

Chapter IV of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as Amended), provides for Fundamental Human Rights. Chapter IV, Section 36 (Right to Fair Hearing), (2a) "provides for an opportunity for the person whose rights and obligations may be affected to make representations to the administering authority before that authority makes decisions affecting that person". Chapter IV, Section 39 affirms the right of freedom of expression and of the press, while Chapter IV, Section 42 establishes the right to freedom from discrimination. The provisions of the value of voice and participation shall therefore supersede any professional code of ethics should any conflict arise in the pursuit of the value in the public interest.

#### **4.2.2 Objectives of the Value of Voice and Participation:**

Objectives of the value of Voice and Participation are to:

- Promote unity, peace, socio-economic and political development.
- Provide every Nigerian the space to contribute their opinions, wisdom and skills to serve the public good.

#### **4.2.3. Articles of the Value of Voice and Participation:**

##### **4.2.3.1 Democratic Principle:**

Every citizen shall conduct their affairs based on the principle that all people have an equal right to participate in running a public or private sector institution or organization subject to distinctions preserved by existing laws on the ownership and management of private institutions and enterprises. All citizens shall have an obligation to inform themselves about public issues, to express their opinions with cordiality and tolerance, and to monitor their conduct and that of their leaders and representatives, in order to advance the collective interest. More importantly, all citizens shall take active interest in the political and electoral process by ensuring that ethical and responsible persons emerge as political leaders. In this regard, citizens shall shun political god-fatherism, and electoral violence and refrain from selling their votes but hold elected and appointed officials in the three arms of government to strict account for their conduct and actions while in public office.

##### **4.2.3.2 Good Governance:**

The conduct of government business shall concentrate on and serve the desire of all Nigerians, without discrimination or favoritism. Public sector personnel in all government institutions shall, at all times, provide goods and services adequate to the mandates and policies guiding those goods and services and to advancing the welfare of the Nigerian people.

Similarly private sector organizations shall provide and establish feedback and whistle blower mechanisms so that consumers, host communities and stakeholders generally can have a say in matters pertaining to the activities of a business that could determine and shape their future or simply impact them.

##### **4.2.3.3 Leading by Example:**

Every person in the position of authority in the public and private sector shall incorporate attitudes and practices of accountability, trust and selfless service in the exercise of leadership on behalf of the public good and the national interest. Leaders in the private sector shall exemplify behavior and ethos that they wish to be associated with their company, brands, products and services.

##### **4.2.3.4 Representation:**

Different interests and constituencies, in accordance with the federal character principle, shall be fairly and equitably represented at the federal, state, and local government levels

of governance. Nigerians shall ensure that they are adequately represented according to established laws and regulations concerning such representation at the national, state and local community levels. Any public representative of a community or constituency interest shall be accountable for serving such interests and shall not pursue private interests to the detriment of the public interest of the community or constituency.

Public and private entities shall ensure the existence of platforms for stakeholders to express their views on matters of mutual interest and provide genuine avenues for grievances to be aired and resolved.

#### **4.2.3.5 Non-Discrimination:**

The principle of non-discrimination requires the equal treatment of individuals or groups, irrespective of particular characteristics or affiliations. Therefore, Nigerian citizens shall not be discriminated against based on gender, religion, state of origin, state of birth, geographical zone, region, disability, or station in life in the conduct of any public and private sector business.

#### **4.2.3.6 Fair Hearing:**

All citizens and everyone who resides in the country shall be accorded fair hearing in affairs of state regardless of station in life. Every citizen shall have open access to justice through the courts in the country and where relevant to each standing case.

#### **4.2.3.7 Protection Against Retaliation:**

As a requirement of the obligation to protect the human dignity of all persons, every citizen, and all who reside in the country, shall be protected against coercion or intimidation. Any individual or party shall be so protected when they report wrongdoing related to the conduct of public affairs, or private business that bears on the well-being of the public or national interest.

#### **4.2.4 Practical Application of the Value of Voice and Participation:**

This value applies to all Nigerian sectors: public and private sectors, professional bodies, youth, media, security agencies, political class, civil society organizations, faith based organizations, grassroots communities as well as international community:

- In governance or business, there shall be a right of representation of people and their opinions by credible stakeholder engagement and management and transparent grievance handling mechanisms.
- Government business shall be conducted through the active participation of every citizen or through their representatives, and with open and honest communication and access to public resources that bear on increasing the voice and participation of every citizen in the affairs that matter to citizens.
- Citizens shall give honest and unbiased opinion as well as make all information available to their representatives, as that would guide informed decisions.

- Citizens shall be voluntary whistle blowers and disclose to government through ICPC, EFCC, the Police or any other law enforcement or government agency, a possible misconduct or violation that has occurred, is ongoing, or is about to occur with specific concerns which are in the public interest.
- Public officers may report misconduct and violations of ethics and integrity or any extant law preventing corruption and promoting transparency and accountability to anti-corruption agencies, the Police or any other law enforcement body or the Anti-Corruption and Transparency Units (ACTUs) located within MDAs;
- Citizens shall not engage in hate speech, peddling unverified information (fake news) as this is capable of heating the polity, discrediting government, persons and disintegrating the nation.
- People in authority shall at all times lead by example in accordance with relevant rules and regulations concerning the exercise of such authority.
- Citizens should ensure that the value of transparency is upheld in doing any business.
- Everyone in authority in the performance of public duties or private responsibilities that bear on the public good shall act at all times within the law as established. There shall be no preferential treatment for anyone acting outside the law. Therefore, no one shall be above the law in any circumstance.

#### **4.3 PATRIOTISM:**

Patriotism refers to love of one's country and the willingness to defend it. Embedded in this core value are the following sub-values: a sense of nationhood, loyalty, solidarity, national pride, sense of belonging, respect, tolerance, dedication, acceptance, unity, hard work, faithfulness, obedience, civic responsibility, service, respect for constituted authority, respect for national symbols and upholding the spirit, and a sense of the future. In addition the dedication of Nigerian businesses to source materials locally first, employ locals first, repatriate proceeds of export home, use local suppliers first indicate a sense of patriotism.

The current consensus of thinking in Nigeria is that the lack of patriotism has resulted in the dysfunctional behaviour exhibited by Nigerians from all walks of life. National challenges such as corruption, intolerance, tribalism, selfishness, lack of productivity in the public service, marginalization in the public and private sectors, have created deep-seated schisms within the nation. Government on its part commits to promote and strengthen citizen sense of belonging beyond ethnic nationalities to bridge the nationalism and patriotism gaps.

##### **4.3.1 Legal Foundations of the Value of Patriotism:**

In Chapter II, Section 23 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as Amended), it is stated that the national ethics shall be to pursue “Discipline, Integrity, Dignity of Labour, Social Justice, Religious Tolerance, Self-Reliance and Patriotism”.

##### **4.3.2 Objectives of the Value of Patriotism:**

The main objectives of the value of patriotism are to:

- Generate a sense of pride in the Nigerian nation.

- Engender the feeling and display of love for the country and protection of its good image.
- Promote inclusion and a sense of belonging for all citizens.
- Engender respect for the interests and rights of others.
- Promote national integration and peaceful co-existence.
- Enable the harnessing of the nation's diversity for synergy and unity in a common destiny.
- Enhance citizens' rights and their duties to the nation.
- Uphold the spirit of service to the nation.
- Elect upright, ethical and responsible persons to political office based on competence, integrity and qualification for public officer and not parochial sentiments such as tribal, ethnic, religious or political bias or due to monetary or other inducement.

#### **4.3.3 Practical Application of the Value of Patriotism:**

The official premises of all public agencies shall display the National Flag and Coat of Arms as a practical demonstration and reminder of the value of patriotism. In personal behaviour, all citizens shall demonstrate patriotism by being law-abiding, respect other people's rights and seek lawful means of redress when aggrieved.

#### **4.4 PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY:**

Personal responsibility shall be translated and conserved through the following other values: Discipline, respect, hard work, upholding national values and compliance, selflessness, patriotism, commitment, self-control, law abiding, loyalty, service, friendship, team spirit, reliability, dependability, duty to stand up and protect human rights and human dignity, and duty to speak up against violations of societal values.

##### **4.4.1 Legal Foundations of the Value of Personal Responsibility:**

The Nigerian Constitution, as well as the standards of conduct and practice of public and private sector entities, the laws and regulations of the federal, state, and local government bodies, form the legal bases for the value of personal responsibility.

In particular section 24 of the 1999 Constitution as amended provides that it shall be the duty of every citizen to –

- (a) abide by this Constitution, respect its ideals and its institutions, the National Flag, the National Anthem, the National Pledge, and legitimate authorities;
- (b) help to enhance the power, prestige and good name of Nigeria, defend Nigeria and render such national service as may be required;
- (c) respect the dignity of other citizens and the rights and legitimate interests of others and live in unity and harmony in the spirit of common brotherhood;
- (d) make positive and useful contribution to the advancement, progress and well-being of the community where he resides;
- (e) render assistance to appropriate and lawful agencies in the maintenance of law and order; and
- (f) declare his income honestly to appropriate and lawful agencies and pay his tax promptly.



The observance of this value is without prejudice to other values that may be identified in the National Ethics and Integrity Policy or to the sectoral values contained in each public, private or professional values framework.

#### **4.4.2 Objectives of the Value of Personal Responsibility:**

The main objectives of the principles of personal responsibility are to:

- Engender peaceful coexistence in the nation.
- Guide and support both public servants and private individuals in their relationships.
- Improve discipline, respect, commitment and self-control in the nation at large
- Enhance trust and reliability especially in the private sector towards providing goods and services that meet minimum acceptable international standards in demonstration and reflection of personal responsibility to consumers and other stakeholders
- Enhance quality of political representation amongst elected and appointed public officials.

#### **4.4.3 Practical Application of the Value of Personal Responsibility**

In public and private life, personal responsibility shall guide day-to-day activities. When individuals are loyal to each other and to the core values that define their nation, they can rely on each other and stand up to protect one another. We therefore pledge to be personally and collectively responsible to care for each other and to defend against anything that will destroy our co-existence. Therefore, as required by the obligation to take personal responsibility for individual and collective lives in social interactions citizens commit to uphold the following in the public and private sectors:

- To be disciplined, hard-working and respectful of one another in the discharge of duties and responsibilities at all times.
- To uphold national values individually and collectively for the good of the corporate existence of the nation, while showing great commitment to duty, selflessness and patriotism in daily life. Public servants especially shall pursue the public interest before personal or private interest.
- To be loyal to the nation, and abide by the laws of the nation, while displaying team spirit in relationships with colleagues.
- To exhibit dependability and reliability in fulfilling official duties and responsibilities;
- To constantly protect human rights and human dignity and stand up to defend the nation.
- To accept personal responsibility as a value applicable in public and private sectors.

#### **4.5 INTEGRITY:**

The core value of integrity shall be translated and conserved through the following other values: honesty, mutual accountability, fear of God, courage, standing up for what is right, honour, transparency, faithfulness, commitment, dependability, trust, perseverance, self-esteem, self-control, truthfulness, personal responsibility, honest

custodian of communal goods, stewardship of resources and values at all sectors of national life, and discipline.

The concept of integrity is derived from the Latin word “integer”, which means whole or complete. To act with integrity entails that one acts in consistency with one's declared principles or consistent with established standards, principles, expectations, and values regulating a particular undertaking. Integrity entails doing the right things and doing things right consistently and acting in complete compliance with accountability standards and the requirements of moral responsibility. These are necessary tools for maintaining such consistency. In the domain of ethics, integrity is considered to include acting in consistency with honesty, truthfulness and accuracy of one's actions. It is acting according to one's beliefs and values at all times and in all situations. Integrity also includes the ability to discern what is right and what is wrong and to act according to one's declared principles or values.

#### **4.5.1 Legal Foundations of the Value of Integrity:**

The Nigerian Constitution, as well as the standards of conduct and practice of public and private sector entities, the laws and regulations of the federal, state, and local government bodies, form the legal bases for the value of integrity. The observance of this value is without prejudice to other values that may be identified in the National Ethics and Integrity Policy or to the sectoral values contained in each public, private or professional values framework.

#### **4.5.2 Articles and Practical Application of the Value of Integrity:**

**4.5.2.1 Honesty:** We shall all be truthful and straightforward in our dealings with one another. We shall eschew mistrust and build trust in our interactions with each other as one people and with others who relate with us. As business people we are who we say we are; we do what we say we will do; and what people find when they observe us is what we are when they are not looking;

**4.5.2.2 Courage:** We shall uphold moral strength and courage to venture, persevere, and withstand danger, fear or difficulty in the conduct of our lives and in the pursuit of the public and national good, irrespective of the costs to us. We shall courageously defend ourselves against everything that will undermine our lives and our values, our communities and endeavors. We fight to preserve values in the face of forces that undermine them. In doing so, we achieve community and national well-being and development.

**4.5.2.3 Fear of God:** We shall all live under the fear of God as the guide to our interactions with each other and with others. We shall use our religious convictions and teachings to foster peace, unity, coexistence, tolerance, and community.

**4.5.2.4 Mutual Accountability:** We pledge to be accountable for our actions and to answer to any question raised by our actions or inactions. Where necessary, every Nigerian shall render account of his or her actions or behaviour to others and to constituted authorities. Every citizen of Nigeria shall be equally responsible for

upholding and acting in accordance with federal, state, and local government laws and regulations.

**4.5.2.5 Honour:** We shall at all times maintain uprightness of character, personal integrity, dignity and pride in ourselves as individuals, as one community, and as one nation. Therefore, in all spheres of life, we shall do what is demanded by our common values and laws that we hold to be true, in accordance with our national identity and in accordance with the values enshrined in our national laws and practices as one country. As Nigerians, we shall stand up to challenge those vices that impede the pursuit of our existence with uprightness. We shall celebrate those Nigerians who are upright.

**4.5.2.6 Transparency:** In our interactions and communication with one another, we shall operate with openness, and in such a way to be able to easily see and understand the actions of others, and those of institutions and structures of government.

**4.5.2.7 Faithfulness:** We shall faithfully adhere to the principles of integrity by staying true to our word when we make a promise or conclude an agreement. We shall also follow strictly the policies and procedures laid down to guide the performance of our duties.

**4.5.2.8 Commitment:** We pledge to be dedicated and to persevere to achieve peace, solidarity and national unity.

**4.5.2.9 Self-Control:** We pledge to exercise self-control in our endeavors and in our interactions with each other. We shall restrain ourselves and refrain from actions that will endanger the national interest or national well-being. These shall enable us to maintain security and stability in our communities and in the country at large.

**4.5.2.10 Honest Custodians of Communal Goods:** We commit ourselves to be judicious stewards of public and national resources entrusted to us, either as elected, appointed, or private custodians. In the performance and management of our public duties and services, we shall act with rectitude and accountability to promote the public good and the national interest.

As corporations and business entities entrusted with handling any of Nigeria's common natural and other resources, we understand we are dealing with a resource owned by all and therefore pledge to provide accurate, comprehensive, timely, and accessible self-disclosures on the management of such resources.

## **4.6 NATIONAL UNITY:**

National Unity shall be translated and conserved through the following values: Solidarity, interdependence, friendship, unity in diversity, mutual trust, freedom, respect, acceptance, service, equity, fairness, justice, fraternity, love, patience, tolerance, fear of God, cooperation, community, mutual well-being, and a sense of the future.

Nigeria is a nation with about 250 ethnic groups. There are 2 major religions and more than 500 languages and dialects. There is need for a common ground for the nation to exist as one entity therefore it is imperative for all ethnic nationalities to have a sense of



commonality, belonging and of being united as a people in one sovereign nation. Under this framework, everyone can work together for the progress of Nigeria. As a core value, therefore, national unity means having the sense of oneness of Nigeria as a nation, of belonging to a nation where all citizens are equal regardless of tribe or origin.

#### **4.6.1 Legal Foundations of the Value of National Unity**

The Unity of the Country is anchored in the Constitution which is the supreme law of Nigeria. Accordingly, the introductory statements of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as Amended) says that “We the People of the Federal Republic of Nigeria: Having firmly and solemnly resolved: To live in Unity and Harmony as one indivisible and indissoluble sovereign Nation under God dedicated to the promotion of the inter-African solidarity, world peace, international co-operation and understanding: And to provide for a Constitution for the purpose of promoting good government and welfare for all persons in our country on the principles of Freedom, Equality and Justice, and for the purpose of consolidating the Unity of our people: ...” Chapter 1: Section 2(1) of the Constitution also states that “Nigeria is one indivisible and indissoluble sovereign state to be known by the name of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.”

Furthermore, Chapter II, Section 14 (3) states that “...the composition of the Government of the Federation or any of its agencies and the conduct of its affairs shall be carried out in such a manner as to reflect the federal character of Nigeria and the need to promote national unity, and also to command national loyalty, thereby ensuring that there shall be no predominance of persons from a few States or from a few ethnic or other sectional groups in that Government or in any of its agencies.”

#### **4.6.2 Objectives of the Value of National Unity:**

The core value of national unity will accomplish the following:

- Create a sense in all citizens that being together rather than being separate offers the best opportunity for attaining well-being to the fullest.
- Convince citizens that their interests will always be represented in national affairs especially as they have the right and own the power to elect their representatives and hold them accountable and refuse to cede this right and power to godfathers or moneybags to determine who holds elected positions;
- Raise the consciousness of Nigerians to work for the progress of the Nation.
- Motivate citizens to take pride in the nation.

#### **4.6.3 Article of the Value of National Unity:**

Unity in Diversity: As one people in one nation, we commit ourselves to be united since we share a common history and identity. There is a lot more that unites us than there is that divides us. Therefore, we shall uphold and defend the positive values of solidarity, interdependence, friendship, unity in diversity, mutual trust, freedom, respect, acceptance, service, equity, fairness, justice, fraternity, love, patience, tolerance, fear of God, cooperation, community, a sense of mutual well-being, and sense of the future.

#### 4.6.4 Practical Application of the Value of National Unity:

It is generally accepted that a people united cannot be defeated. Unity strengthens while strife and division weakens. Therefore:

- As Nigerians, we shall stand together in solidarity with one another;
- Within and outside the shores of the country, each citizen shall regard other citizens as brothers and sisters and thus treat every other person as a member of his or her family;
- We are interdependent and need one another. We shall share our human, community and national resources and assets for mutual benefit and to collaborate to grow stronger communities and a stronger and united nation;
- We shall relate with one another and with others in mutual respect. Each citizen shall treat others with respect regardless of their tribe, religion, gender, language, age or station in life;
- We shall act and treat one another with tolerance. Citizens do not have to agree with others in their religions, cultures and beliefs. But all citizens shall respect the different cultures, convictions, and people through acceptance. We shall therefore accommodate and respect differences, and shall, through the richness of our diversity, cooperate with one another and act to promote our collective unity.
- We shall uphold and defend each human being to be equal under God and under the laws of the country. No citizen (inside or outside of Nigeria) shall be regarded as an inferior human being;
- Every citizen shall be entitled to all human rights as provided for under the Nigerian Constitution, and by national and international conventions and agreements;
- As one people, we shall peacefully coexist with other citizens. We shall desist from anything that can destroy mutual peace in the country;
- We shall cooperate to achieve national good;
- We shall desist from using violence or violent means to resolve conflicts and disputes. Therefore, we shall manage our conflicts and resolve our disputes in line with the laws and regulations of the Federal Republic of Nigeria or in line with other established peaceful mechanisms as may be provided for by national, state, local government or local community standards.
- We shall uphold our common convictions to live and treat one another under the fear of God. Therefore, we regard all as created of God and uphold and use the positive beliefs and values of our various religions to promote the well-being of all.

#### **4.6.5 Justiciability and Enforcement of the Value of National Unity:**

National unity can be justiciable and enforced with respect to compliance from everyone without regard or favour in the following ways: -

- In the recitation of the National pledge, there is a phrase that requires all “To defend her (Nigeria's) unity...” Therefore, all Citizens shall recite the National Pledge in every official gathering, while the second stanza of the National Anthem shall continue to be offered as National Prayer at official gatherings or government events. All citizens shall actively defend national unity as a matter of the highest national interest.
- Anyone or group that works to undermine or destroy the unity of the country should be considered to have committed a treasonable offence and shall be sanctioned accordingly.

#### **4.7 PROFESSIONALISM:**

In the performance of public and private sector duties, conduct, practice and service, professionalism shall be translated and conserved through the following values: Service, efficiency, compliance with due process, accountability, fairness, adherence to statutory standards and regulations, dedication, loyalty, trust, integrity, dependability, commitment, and hard work.

Professionalism is defined by the *Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary* as the high standards expected from a person who is well-trained in a particular job. It refers to commitment to excellence in service, adherence to established standards and regulations related to a profession. This includes the exercise of office with efficiency, dedication to duty, fairness and compliance with due process. It also includes loyalty to the institution, trust, integrity, dependability, and obedience. This means that private and public sector institutions and practitioners shall function according to basic operational structures and norms in order to ensure that high professional standards are maintained.

##### **4.7.1 Legal Foundations of the Value of Professionalism:**

Section 4.04401 (I – XXII) of the Public Service Rules outlines acts of misconduct that can attract penalties for public officers, in the case of breaches. These penalties range from interdiction, suspension and dismissal (Sections 04302-04306). Similarly, the 5<sup>th</sup> Schedule, Part 1 of the Nigerian Constitution, on the Code of Conduct for Public Officers says that “a public officer shall not put himself in a position where his personal interest conflicts with his duties and responsibilities”.

These rules are binding on all public officers. Henceforth, the entire Public Service Rules; the provisions of the Code of Conduct for Public Officers; codes of professional conduct and practice of private and public sector agents and practitioners; the Laws and Regulations of the Federal Republic of Nigeria; State and Local Government laws and regulations shall be a supplementary part of the National Ethics and Integrity Policy.

#### **4.7.2 Objectives of the Value of Professionalism:**

The exercise of office with professionalism will achieve the following:

- Excellence in the performance of service by Nigerians and everyone doing business with Nigeria;
- Commitment to the highest standards of the performance of service in personal life and in professional practice and conduct;
- Shunning of mediocrity in the exercise of professional conduct and practice and in the provision of service;
- Willingness to go beyond the call of duty to ensure excellence according to the established standards for professions, regardless of personal cost;
- Greater accountability on the part of public officers and other professionals
- Ensuring existence of effective and efficient feedback mechanisms from stakeholders to receive complaints with effective and transparent consequence management systems that enhance the confidence of the public.

#### **4.7.3 Practical Application of the Value of Professionalism:**

All professional bodies of the private and public sectors in Nigeria shall uphold and apply the following values in professional conduct and professional practice, as provided for in their various professional creeds and codes of conduct, and as mandated by the Nigerian Constitution and the Laws and Regulations of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Therefore, in their professional conduct and practice, private and public sector professionals shall uphold, adhere to and apply the following norms:

##### **4.7.3.1 Fairness:**

Professionals shall treat every person equally, according to the rules of professional practice and conduct, and according to the Laws of Nigeria, as contained in Federal, State and Local government laws and regulations.

##### **4.7.3.2 Promise-Keeping:**

Professionals shall discharge their conduct, duties and obligations by honoring established agreements.

##### **4.7.3.3 Pursuit of Excellence:**

Professionals shall perform their duties, responsibilities and service commitments according to the requirements of the highest standards of excellence, as provided by professional standards of conduct, practice and service, and according to the demands of the Nigerian Constitution, the Laws and Regulations of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, as well as State and Local Government laws and regulations.

##### **4.7.3.4 Accountability:**

Professionals shall be ready to account for their actions and shall meet the highest standards of disclosure of their work and scrutiny of the public on information disclosed or ought to be disclosed and shall answer to any questions related to professional conduct, practice and service. Professionals shall perform their duties creditably and submit themselves to scrutiny. As a nation, everyone in Nigeria has an overriding responsibility to the public interest. This requires that everyone put aside all personal,

sectional and regional interests. We are accountable for our decisions and actions to one another and we shall be prepared to open ourselves to scrutiny when required. To facilitate and inform this process, we shall be open and transparent in the discharge of our public duties and encourage all others for whom we are responsible to follow our example.

#### **4.7.3.5 Decision-Making:**

In fulfilling official duties and responsibilities, we shall set aside both personal and sectional interests. We shall make decisions in the public interest, with regard to the merits of each case, and without discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity, gender, religion or origin, other than when acting to accomplish the statutory objectives contained in the Nigerian Constitution, in established professional codes of conduct, in Federal, State and Local government laws and regulations.

#### **4.7.3.6 Private Interests:**

We shall perform our official and professional duties and arrange our private affairs in a manner that will bear the closest public scrutiny within the spirit of the laws and codes. In professional practice, conduct and service, we shall not have private interests, other than those interests permitted pursuant to the Code of Conduct for Public Officers, codes of professional practice, and the laws and regulations of Federal, State and Local governments.

#### **4.7.3.7 Public Interest:**

On appointment and assumption of public office, or private office related to service for the public, everyone shall arrange their private affairs in a manner to prevent real, potential or apparent conflicts with the public interest. The public interest shall override any other interest in the performance of duties and pursuit of any action on behalf of the public interest and national well-being. Particularly, in the exercise of official power, authority, duty or function, we shall avoid every opportunity to serve our private interests or those of our friends, relations or other third parties.

#### **4.7.3.8 Conflicting Financial Interests:**

These are financial interests that conflict with an employee's financial duties, including the following:

- i. Disqualifying financial interest – prohibits employee from participating in an official government capacity in a matter in which he has a financial interest or in which his spouse, child, employee or related person has financial interest;
- ii. Prohibited Financial Interest – agencies may prohibit employee from acquiring or retaining certain financial interest

#### **4.7.3.9 Influence:**

As public and private sector professionals, we shall not use our office or position to seek or influence a decision to be made by another party in public or private office on behalf of private interests or of those of our friends and relations.

#### **4.7.3.10 Gifts and Benefits:**

We shall not solicit gifts and gratification of any kind in the exercise of our duties, practice and service. We shall not accept transfers of economic benefit, other than customary hospitality, or other benefits of very nominal value, as permitted by the Code of Conduct for Public Officers, Rules of the Public Service, codes of professional conduct, rules and prohibitions contained in Acts of the anti-corruption agencies, prohibitions contained in the National Anti-Corruption Strategy, Federal, State and Local government laws and regulations, as well as international anti-bribery protocols and conventions.

Government officials must not solicit, offer or accept gifts defined to include anything of market value. This does not include items that clearly are not gifts, such as publicly available discounts and cooperative and commercial loans that are transparently conducted and do not conflict with official duties or confer benefits on the public officer or others close to him or her. Private sector operators undertake to develop and comply with policy which prohibit gifts to public officers under any guise whatsoever.

##### **4.7.3.10.1 Exceptions to 4.7.3.10:**

- i. Gifts motivated by a friendly relationship or personal friendship.
- ii. Free attendance at certain widely patronized gatherings such as conferences and receptions, where the cost of attendance is borne by the sponsor of the event.
- iii. Food, refreshments and entertainment at certain meetings or events while on duty in a foreign country.

##### **4.7.3.10.2 Gifts between Employees: The following are prohibited:**

- i. Gifts solicited by another employee who is an official superior.
- ii. Accepting a gift from a lower-paid employee unless the two employees are personal friends, but not in a subordinate-superior relationship.

##### **4.7.3.10.3 Exceptions to 4.7.3.10.2:**

- I. On occasions employees may accept gifts items aggregating up to three months salary or less per occasion, food, refreshment in the office or personal hospitality at the residence, birthdays and those holidays when gifts are traditionally exchanged.
- ii. On infrequent occasion of personal significance, such as marriage of direct children of blood or burial of spouse or direct blood sibling or parent, and occasions that terminate the superior- sub-ordinate relationships, such as retirement.



- iii. In every such situation as identified under (ii) above the gift in aggregate shall be no more than aggregate of three months salary of the officer

#### **4.7.3.11 Impartiality in Performing Official Duties:**

There may be circumstances in which an employee should not perform official duties in order to avoid taking sides. Such circumstances include the following:

- i. Personal business relationship – employees should obtain specific permission before participating in certain government matters where their impartiality is likely to be questioned, e.g., contracts, grants, investigation and prosecution.

#### **4.7.3.12 Misuse of Public Position:**

- i. Prohibits an employee from using public office for his/her own private gain or for the gain of friends or relations.
- iv. Engaging in personal financial transactions using official networks.
- v. Use of official time other than in the honest effort to perform official duties. This also includes using subordinate officers to perform unofficial activities during official business time.

#### **4.7.3.13 Maintaining Government Integrity:**

Accountability of public officials is deeply ingrained within the Constitutional framework of Nigeria. The political and civic culture of Nigeria is based on the notion that public officials should always perform their duties in the public interest. In the area of recruitment particularly, MDAs must alert relevant agencies especially the Federal Character Commission of their intention to embark on recruitment of staff for the purpose of supervision towards a transparent process. Other integrity agencies like ICPC may be involved in the process to ensure compliance with due process and impartiality.

#### **4.7.3.14 Preferential Treatment:**

In the performance of professional conduct, practice and service, we shall not act outside of our official roles in order to assist private entities or parties when we deal with the government in any form, and where this would result in preferential treatment to any person or corporate body. We shall treat everyone fairly and equally irrespective of national origin. We shall adhere to the principles of citizen and human rights as mandated by the Nigerian Constitution, national and international conventions of human and cultural rights.

#### **4.7.3.15 Insider Information:**

In the performance of our professional conduct, practice and service, we shall not use information that is gained through the execution of our office, and information that is not available to the general public, to advance or seek to further our private interests or those of our friends, relations or interested third parties.

## **SECTION 5: IMPLEMENTATION**

### **5.1 Functional Contexts for the Implementation of the National Ethics and Integrity Policy: This will embrace the different sectors of Nigerian Society including -**

- 5.1.1 Public Sector
- 5.1.2 Private sector
- 5.1.3 Professional bodies
- 5.1.4 Women
- 5.1.5 Youths
- 5.1.6 Civil Society
- 5.1.7 Media
- 5.1.8 Traditional and Cultural Institutions
- 5.1.9 Religious Institutions
- 5.1.10 Educational Institutions
- 5.1.11 Security Sector
- 5.1.12 Political Institutions at the National, State and Local Government levels
- 5.1.13 Grassroots Communities
- 5.1.14 International Communities

### **5.2 Timeline, Implementation, Action Plan and Consequence Management**

The implementation of the National Ethics and Integrity Policy shall be in phases. First, the adoption by government of a framework through this National Ethics and Integrity Policy. Thereafter, initiation of stakeholder engagements to design a National Action Plan and consequence management template. Phasing of implementation shall be as may be agreed by stakeholders and activities shall be devolved to state and local government levels through the cooperation and activities of stakeholders such as political parties, civil society, traditional and religious leaders and institutions, youths, private sector and all other non-state actors. These stakeholders shall be responsible for design of the Action Plan, activities and consequence management template.

Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) and National Orientation Agencies will act as focal agencies for the coordination of these activities including development of a National Action Plan and Consequence Management Template. The action plan will draw from extant laws and policies such as the National Anti-Corruption Strategy and from recommendations of stakeholders.

### **5.3 Sustainability**

Public and private sector entities at federal and state levels will be encouraged to enshrine the National Ethics and Integrity Policy in all sectors of national life and integrate its principles into national and state level policy instruments, as well as reform agendas and plans of public and private sector institutions (particularly instruments for governance, the SDGs, educational, health, infrastructural, community development, national



elections policy, among others. The Policy shall also be reflected in negotiated agreements such as procurement, cultural, creative industry projects, trade and other social-economic agreements, among others.

#### **5.4 Legal Foundation**

The Nigerian Constitution remains the legal foundation for the National Ethics and Integrity Policy. Thus, the principles of this policy shall be adhered to and justiciable.

The National Ethics and Integrity Policy shall be read in conformity with laws and rules of practice contained in professional bodies codes of conduct, statutes of Anti-Corruption Agencies, Federal laws, Public Service Rules and national and international human rights provisions and other documents of governance in society.

The National Assembly may pass legislation to further bring into effect as law any principle contained in this National Ethics and Integrity Policy that is not currently covered by any legislation in Nigeria.

#### **5.5 Enforcement of Sanctions and Penalties in the National Ethics and Integrity Policy:**

Any breach of the principles and values in this National Ethics and Integrity Policy or failure to implement its directives may be sanctioned or prosecuted by law enforcement agencies such as the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission through existing laws that sanction breach of ethical values to which this policy is linked.

The National Ethics and Integrity Policy shall also constitute basis for citizens to seek legal redress through existing laws that guarantee the rights of citizens including the National Human Rights Commission Act, the Public Complaints Commission, the Federal Competition and Consumer Protection Commission Act and any other extant legislation protecting violation of right, principle or core value.

#### **5.6 Periodic Review, Monitoring and Evaluation**

The implementation and impact of this policy shall be subject to half yearly reports and annual monitoring and evaluation to be coordinated by Office of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation in collaboration with the focal agencies viz. the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC), and National Orientation Agency (NOA) as responsible institutions and any other agency of government as may be deemed relevant to implementation of its standards. Monitoring and Evaluation shall be implemented in collaboration with all stakeholders including state and non-state actors.

The policy shall be subject to comprehensive review every four years and may be substituted as deemed fit by government.

## **5.7 Coordination**

The implementation of the National Ethics and Integrity Policy will be coordinated by Office of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation with the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) and the National Orientation Agency (NOA) as focal institutions.

They will be supported by all ministries and agencies of government including but not limited to Head of the Civil Service of the Federation (OHCSF), Federal Ministry of Information and Culture; Federal Ministry of Education; Federal Ministry of Justice, Code of Conduct Bureau, Public Complaints Commission, National Assembly; sub-national institutions at the State and Local Government levels.

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**ABUSE OF POWER:** The act of using one's position of *power/authority to confer any unfair advantage upon oneself, relation or associate.*

**ACCOUNTABILITY:** The obligation of an individual or organization to account for their actions, accept responsibility for them and to declare the results in a transparent manner. It includes taking responsibility and accounting for all entrusted property.

**ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISMS:** The measures, initiatives and practices within administrative processes designed to ensure that the decisions and actions of duty holders are done in the interest of the citizens.

**ATTITUDINAL CHANGE:** The transformation or modification of human attitude. Change is proposed at the end of an assessment of the current situation which is adjudged to be unsatisfactory.

**BUSINESS ETHOS:** This refers to appropriate business policies and practices that seek to address such issues as corporate governance, insider trading, bribery, discrimination, social responsibility and fiduciary responsibilities.

**CITIZEN'S REORIENTATION:** This refers to education and enlightenment of citizens on the need to cultivate positive attitudes and good ethical standards towards national growth and development.

**CIVIL LIBERTIES:** These are freedoms guaranteed to citizens by the Constitution to exercise customary rights, such as of speech or assembly.

**CODES OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT:** An outline of the ethical principles that govern decisions and behaviour at a company, organization or profession. They give general outlines of how members should behave, as well as specific guidance for handling issues like harassment, safety and conflicts of interest.

**COERCION:** The use of force to persuade someone to do something that they are unwilling to do.

**COMPLIANCE:** The act of obeying an order, rule or request.

**CONSTITUENCIES:** A group of people with shared interests or political opinions. The people in a particular area of a country who are represented by an elected official.

**CORE VALUES:** *They* are the fundamental beliefs of a person or organization. These guiding principles dictate behaviour and can help people understand the difference between right and wrong. *Core values* also help companies to determine if they are on the right path and fulfilling their goals by creating an unwavering guide.

**CORRUPTION PREVENTION:** Prevention of corruption is a proactive measure designed to either prevent corruption completely or reduce it substantially. To prevent or reduce something involves securing its non-occurrence. There are three classifications of corruption prevention: Primary prevention, which reduces corruption opportunities; Secondary prevention, which seeks to change people, particularly the high risk individuals; and Tertiary prevention which has to do with the truncation of corrupt practices, in length, seriousness or frequency of occurrence. Prevention is one of the core mandates of ICPC.

**CORRUPTION RISKS:** A Corruption Risk is a condition which indicates, the possibility that in the future corruption could occur. It is the likelihood that corruption will occur and that it can adversely affect the achievement of objectives or goals of an organization or society. Corruption risks can exist at: environmental level (corrupt stakeholders, political/clan/peer pressure, loose legal framework, economic issues etc.); organisational level (ethics infrastructure, tone at the top, standard operating procedures, etc); and Personnel level (corrupt officers).

**ENFORCEMENT:** The act of compelling observance of or compliance with a law, rule or obligation. In anti-corruption work, it implies, to receive and investigate any report of the conspiracy to commit, attempt to commit or the commission of such offence and, in appropriate cases, to prosecute the offenders.

**E-GOVERNMENT PLATFORMS:** These are platforms which aim to provide citizens, businesses and foreigners with easy access to various government services through a one-stop government portal.

**ETHICAL CULTURE:** The concept of organizational *culture* suggests that organizations have identifiable *cultures* of which *ethics* are a part. So, if the organizational culture represents “how we do things around here”, the *ethical culture* represents “how we do things around here”. Companies can be identified as ethical or unethical companies based on their *ethical culture*.

**ETHICS:** This is a system of moral principles. They affect how people make decisions and lead their lives. *Ethics* is concerned with what is good for individuals and society and is also described as moral philosophy. The three primary elements of any ethics code governing the behaviour of public officials can be stated briefly as: act responsibly, avoid conflicts of interest and do no (avoidable) harm.

**ETHICS AND COMPLIANCE SCORECARD:** This is a tool designed by ICPC towards ensuring compliance with ethical conducts in public institutions. It is based on an extensive questionnaire designed to capture data on governance, financial management including procurement, ethical culture, compliance programmes, policy and procedures as well as other aspects of an ethical organization, in a consistent and standardized way.

**FAVOURITISM:** The practice of giving unfair preferential treatment to one person or group at the expense of another. Unfair support shown to one person or group, especially by someone in authority. The favouring of one person or group over others with equal

claims.

**GOVERNANCE:** The action or manner of governing a state, organization; either good or bad. It refers to structures and processes that are designed to ensure accountability, transparency, responsiveness, rule of law, stability, equity and inclusiveness, empowerment and broad-based participation.

**HUMAN DIGNITY:** An individual or group's sense of self-respect and self-worth, physical and psychological integrity and empowerment. "*Human dignity*" is inherent to every human being, inalienable and independent of the state.

**ILLICIT WEALTH:** The *accumulation* of unexplained *wealth* by public officials or private citizens.

**INSIDER INFORMATION:** Important information about a company or an organization that is known only to management or employees of the company or organization and not to the public.

**INTEGRITY:** The quality of being honest and having strong moral principles. Adherence to moral and ethical principles; soundness of moral character. It is doing what is right even when no one is watching. Always doing what is right and good, regardless of the immediate consequences.

**INTEGRITY POLICY:** A set of guidelines and principles designed to guide behavior and to entrench integrity in the processes and procedures of governance in the country. It is a set of guidelines or rules that seek to influence attitudinal change among citizens and to improve integrity, transparency and accountability.

**INTEGRITY PROFILE:** The measure of productivity, trustworthiness, dependability and incorruptibility of an individual, organization or country.

**JUSTICE:** A just behaviour or treatment, exhibited by fairness, fair-play and equity.

**MISCONDUCT:** Unacceptable or improper behaviour, especially by an employee or professional person. It is mismanagement, especially culpable neglect of duties.

**MUTUAL ACCOUNTABILITY:** It is a process by which two (or multiple) partners agree to be held responsible for the commitments that they have voluntarily made to each other. *Mutual accountability* for results is at the centre of the shared agenda, with clearly *defined* commitments on both sides.

**MUTUAL SURVIVAL:** Here, mutual survival refers to the goal of the different sections and various ethnic nationalities in the country of working together to survive. This effort however is never in the form of collusive agreement against the public interest.

**NATIONAL COHESION:** The understanding and cooperation between the various sections of the country.

**NATIONAL ETHICS:** This refers to the ethical stance of a country. It can have an effect on the country's rate of development. Countries that are seen as "corrupt", such as Nigeria, still have many poorly developed areas, whilst countries where government is more transparent, such as Sweden and the Netherlands are highly developed.

**NATIONAL PRIORITY:** This refers to the key issue of interest which the nation seeks to achieve as against sectional or individual issue of interest.

**NATIONAL VALUES:** *National Values* can be defined as a representation of the paramount value upheld throughout the common cultural experience of the nation.

**NATIONAL VALUES CURRICULUM (NVC):** A Curriculum developed by the ICPC to inculcate ethical values into pupils at the basic education level.

**PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY:** The state or fact of being responsible, answerable or accountable for something within one's power, control or management.

**POLICY:** A *policy* is a deliberate system of principles to guide decisions and achieve rational outcomes. It is a set of guidelines or rules that determine a course of action.

**PROFESSIONALISM:** The skill and high standards of behaviour expected of a professional person. Professionalism is a component of the concept of work ethics, which describes how a person comes to work and conducts himself on the job. A person can exemplify professionalism on the job by being timely and punctual, taking responsibility and being accountable. It also entails being structured and well organized.

**PUBLIC INTEREST:** The welfare of the general public (in contrast to the selfish interest of a person, group or firm) in which the whole society has a stake which warrants recognition, promotion and protection by the government and its agencies.

**REPRESENTATION:** The action of speaking or acting on behalf of someone. The state, fact or right of being represented by delegates having a voice in legislation or government.

**SECTIONAL INTERESTS:** *Interests* or aims that are *sectional* are limited to a particular group within an organization, society or country and do not consider other groups.

**SOCIAL COHESION:** It is the willingness of members of a society to cooperate with each other in order to survive and prosper. It refers to the extent of connectedness and solidarity among groups in society. It identifies two main dimensions: the sense of belonging of a community and the relationships among members within the community itself.

**STANDING ORDERS:** They are administrative orders issued by the ICPC Chairman, in conformity with the provisions of the general control, training, duties and responsibilities of officers of the Commission and for such other matters as may be necessary or expedient for the good administration of the Commission and to ensure the

efficient and effective functioning of the Commission.

**STATUTORY RESPONSIBILITY:** The basic duties which an organization was established to carry out. It is the obligation of an organizations' management or officers imposed by corporate legislation. For example, ICPC's statutory obligation is to fight corruption through enforcement, prevention and education.

**TRANSPARENCY:** The quality of being honest, open and clear in all dealings whether private or official.

**UNETHICAL BEHAVIOUR:** This is any activity by a member of an organization that does not conform to the standards set by the culture of the organization. It includes coming to work late, absenteeism, truancy and fraud.

**VALUES:** Values are tangible and intangible convictions an individual considers of intrinsic worth. Values are based upon beliefs and attitudes. They involve what is desirable, rather than what is right and correct.

**WATCHDOG:** To monitor the activities of government.





