



With the support of:



OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES IN THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY IN ELECTIONS

*EXPERIENCES FROM
WEST AND SOUTHERN AFRICA*

*9 - 11 April 2018
Transcorp Hilton Hotel
Abuja - Nigeria*



Funded by the EU Programme in "Support to Democratic Governance in Nigeria" (EU-SDGN)

INTRODUCTION

The Programme in Support to Democratic Governance in Nigeria (EU-SDGN) is funded by the European Union with the aim of contributing to the reinforcement of democracy in Nigeria through peaceful, credible, fair and transparent electoral process and building of strong, effective and legitimate democratic institutions.

It is being implemented from 2017 to 2022, accompanying the Nigerian 2016-2019 electoral cycle and anchored on the promotion of the rule of law, governance and democracy as enunciated in the National Indicative Programme (NIP) of the 11th EDF of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the recommendations of the European Union Election Observation Mission (EUEOM) on the 2015 General Elections.



EU Ambassador to Nigeria and ECOWAS, Mr. Ketil Karlsen at the official launch of the EUSDGN project on 1st February 2018

The EU-SDGN Project is composed of five components, namely:

- **Component 1:** Support to the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) implemented by the European Centre for Electoral Support (ECES) for an amount of €13 million with additional five percent contribution from ECES core funds. ECES serves as the Secretariat of the EU-SDGN Project.
- **Component 2:** Support to the National Assembly implemented by the Policy and Legal Advocacy Centre (PLAC) and Youth Initiative for Advocacy, Growth and Advancement (YIAGA) for an amount of €3 million.
- **Component 3:** Support to Political Parties implemented by the Political Party Leadership and Policy Development Centre (PPLDC) of the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS), Kuru for an amount of €2.7 million.
- **Component 4:** Support to Media implemented by the Institute for Media and Society (IMS) and the International Press Centre (IPC) for an amount of €2.6 million.
- **Component 5:** Support to Civil Society Organisations implemented by the BBC Media Action, CLEEN Foundation, Westminster Foundation for Democracy and the Albino Foundation for an amount of €3 million.



Chairman of the Independent National Electoral Commission, Prof. Mahmood Yakubu at the official launch of the EUSDGN project on 1st February 2018

The Component 1 of EU-SDGN Project implemented by ECES seeks to improve the quality of electoral administration in Nigeria through the achievement of the following specific objectives:

- Strengthen the strategic planning, policy framework and operational systems of INEC.
- Enhance the capacity of INEC for efficient internal communication and engagement with stakeholders.
- Support INEC's periodic voter registration system to facilitate a largely

transparent register of voters.

- Strengthen INEC's oversight of political parties.
- Foster INEC's and political parties' capacities in Alternative Electoral Dispute Resolution.
- Enhance the institutional capacity of the Forum of State Independent Electoral Commissions of Nigeria's (FOSEICON) and the State Independent Electoral Commissions (SIECs) and bolster their collaboration with stakeholders.

The Independent National Electoral Commission led by Professor Mahmood Yakubu, who is also the current President of the ECOWAS Network of Electoral Management Bodies of West Africa (ECONEC) in collaboration with ECONEC and Electoral Commission Forum of the Southern African Development Community (ECF-SADC) with the support of the EU-SDGN Project managed by ECES is organising a conference focusing on *Opportunities and Challenges in the Use of Technology in Elections: Experiences from West and Southern Africa*.

RATIONALE

While the basic principles of elections have largely remain the same, the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in election management has witnessed an upsurge in the last two decades. The increasing reliance by Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs) on new technology for improving the credibility of the electoral process and enhancing the integrity of electoral outcomes has become pivotal in contemporary elections around the world.

Such new technology solutions are commonly deployed in the areas of biometric voter registration and accreditation, electronic verification and authentication of voters, issuance of

smart voters' card, as well as in the use of Geographic Information Systems for delineation of voting boundaries and geo-referencing of existing and/or newly created polling stations, establishment of sophisticated databases of register of voters and development of electronic voting machines and mobile applications for the electronic collation and transmission of election results.



Biometric Verification of a voter using the Smart Card Reader in Nigeria

Technology is a tool and not an end in itself. The degree to which technology is deployed in an electoral process in a

given country at a given time is perhaps directly related to the perceived level of trust and independence enjoyed by the Electoral Management Body. It is this level of trust and independence that in the end determine the acceptance of electoral outcome by the various stakeholders and the general public.

There is no dichotomy between “traditional” elections and “technologically advanced” elections. The myriad of nuances in use (or non-use) of technologies by any country is mostly determined by its economic, political and socio-cultural context. Nevertheless, it is generally acknowledged that the use of technology should:

- Take a holistic view of technology – Technology is just a tool and therefore not an end in itself. It is important to carefully consider the electoral context in which technology is used.
- Consider the impact of introducing new technologies – An evaluation is needed to assess impacts of the change on all stakeholders. Once the system is adopted, the transition phase needs to be carefully managed to ensure problems do not occur and all functions are effectively carried out.
- Maintain transparency and ensure ethical behaviour while adopting new technology;
- Consider the security issues related to the new technology - Unauthorised persons must be prevented from accessing, altering or downloading sensitive electoral data.
- Test the accuracy of results produced by the use of technology– There must be ways to test and verify that data are recorded properly and that the technological systems are trustworthy.
- Ensure the legal ownership of the system output, as well as the system itself by ensuring that the use of the technology is consistent with extant electoral laws.

Paradoxically, it is the EMBs of least/less developing countries and/or developing and transitional democracies that are most enthused to the use and deployment of technology in elections. This is perhaps due to the “technological leapfrog” being witnessed in the telecommunications sector.



Direct Data Capture Machine system for Voter Registration in Nigeria

Whereas, such use and deployment of technology for election purposes by EMBs with long history of conducting democratic elections in many established democracies is quite limited and in some cases somewhat restrictive.

Considering the growing adoption of technology worldwide, including by EMBs in Sub Sahara Africa in the last decades, it is necessary to reflect and take stock of the impact and effect of use and deployment of technology in elections.

The experiences and lessons learned show that while technology offers great possibilities for strengthening the transparency, credibility and integrity of elections, its introduction and use must be based on well-defined policies and appropriate implementation. Such policies would have to be designed with appropriate safeguards and governed by appropriate legislations to promote the opportunities and address the challenges. Otherwise, the use and deployment of technological applications in elections can lead to exponential increase of the cost of elections and even erosion of public confidence in electoral processes, contrary to what the use of technology is supposed to bring to the electoral process.

OBJECTIVES & THEMATIC AREAS

The overall objective of this conference is to build and enhance the capacity of participants in the choice and usage of ICT in elections for strengthening the credibility, integrity and transparency of electoral processes in ECOWAS and SADC countries.

The specific objectives are to:

- Review recent trends in the use of election technologies and assess its impact on electoral processes in the last three decades;
- Provide a platform for EMBs in ECOWAS and SADC countries to share experiences on the introduction and use of ICTs in elections;
- Identify strategies to support EMBs in adopting sustainable new technologies in elections;
- Review emerging trends and potential risks of technologies in elections and;
- Reflect and adapt to the possible advances in electoral technology in the next decade.

The workshop will bring together EMB members from ECOWAS and SADC countries, as well as other EMBs that will be invited at the request of INEC and ECONEC. Other participants will include election management and electoral assistance experts, representatives of international organisations and the diplomatic community present in Nigeria and election technology suppliers and service providers.

The workshop will be held over three (3) days (9 - 11 April) with presentations and discussions in plenary and breakout sessions. Each session, will be chaired by a moderator and composed of a panel of experts with both theoretical knowledge and practical experiences. Thereafter, there will be plenary discussions in which participants are invited to share their experiences. The panel discussions will cover the following thematic areas:

- Use of Technology in Elections: Overview of recent trends, Lessons Learnt, Issues and Challenges
- Use of Technology in Civil/Voter Registration: Opportunities and Matters Arising
- Use of Technology in the Conduct of Elections: Voting, Result Collation and Transmission
- Use of Technology in Elections: Constitutional and Legal Frameworks in ECF-SADC Region
- Use of Technology in Election Administration, Planning, Procurement, Staff Recruitment, Training and Monitoring
- Use of Technology, Public Outreach, Enlightenment and Election Observation
- Use of Technology in promoting Inclusivity in the Electoral Process (Women, Youth, PWD, IDP and the Diaspora)
- Technology and the Cost of Elections: Experiences from ECF-SADC Region
- Use of Technology: Info Access and Training
- The Future of Electoral Technology

ORGANIZERS

Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC)



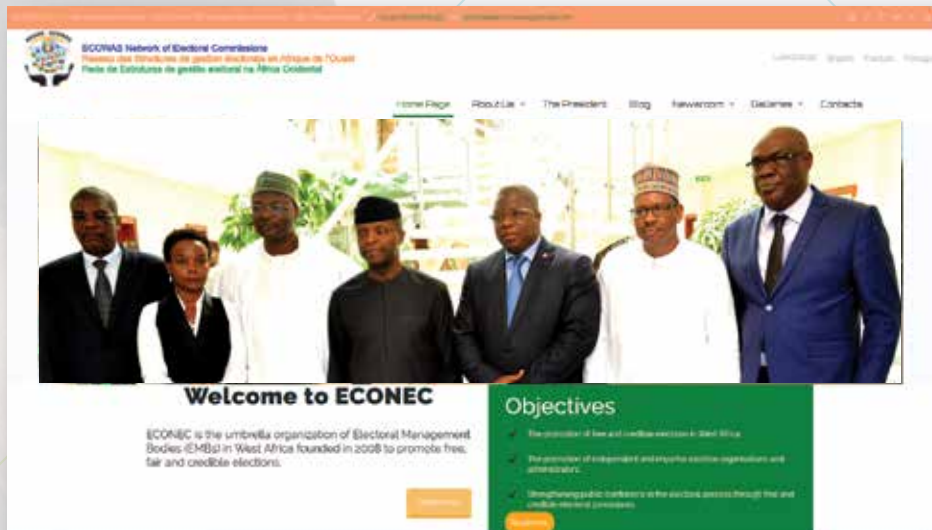
www.inecnigeria.org

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) was established by the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The functions of INEC as contained in Section 15, Part 1 of the Third Schedule of the 1999 Constitution (As Amended) and Section 2 of the Electoral Act 2010 (As Amended) include the following:

- Organise, undertake and supervise all elections to the offices of the President and Vice-President, the Governor and Deputy Governor of a State, and to the membership of the Senate, the House of Representatives and the House of Assembly of each state of the federation;
- Register political parties in accordance with the provisions of the constitution and Act of the National Assembly;
- Monitor the organization and operation of the political parties, including their finances; conventions, congresses and party primaries.
- Arrange for the annual examination and auditing of the funds and accounts of political parties, and publish a report on such examination and audit for public information;
- Arrange and conduct the registration of persons qualified to vote and prepare, maintain and revise the register of voters for the purpose of any election under this constitution;
- Monitor political campaigns and provide rules and regulations which shall govern the political parties;
- Conduct voter and civic education;
- Promote knowledge of sound democratic election processes; and
- Conduct any referendum required to be conducted pursuant to the provision of the 1999 Constitution or any other law or Act of the National Assembly.

The mission of INEC is to serve as an independent and effective EMB committed to the conduct of free, fair and credible elections for sustainable democracy in Nigeria, while its vision is to be one of the best Election Management Bodies (EMB) in the world that meets the aspirations of the Nigerian people.

ECOWAS Network of Electoral Commissions (ECONEC)



www.econec-resao.org

The ECOWAS Network of Electoral Commissions is the umbrella organisation of Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs) in West Africa comprising of Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo.

The ECOWAS Network of Electoral Commissions (ECONEC, RESAO in French) was created in February 2008 with the main goal of promoting credible elections and advancing democracy in the ECOWAS region. The Network seeks to foster cooperation between EMBs and promote experience sharing, peer learning and peer review through training workshops, seminars, conferences, research and publications. It supports the ECOWAS Commission in the pursuit and realisation of the mandate of promoting regional integration, strengthening the electoral processes, deepening of democracy and advancement of good governance practices in West Africa premised on provisions of the 1999 ECOWAS Protocol relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security and the 2001 Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance.

Objectives:

- a) The promotion of free and credible elections in West Africa;
- b) The promotion of independent and impartial election organisations and administrators;
- c) Strengthening public confidence in the electoral process through free and credible electoral procedures;
- d) The development of professional election officials with integrity, with a strong sense of public service and a commitment to democracy;
- e) To bring predictability to the framework for elections;
- f) Commitment to the promotion and consolidation of democratic culture to create a conducive environment for the peaceful organization of elections;
- g) The sharing of experiences, information, technology and election documents;
- h) Cooperation for the improvement of electoral laws and practices;
- i) Gradual harmonization of electoral laws and practices, as appropriate, capitalizing on good practice in electoral matters;
- j) Rationalization and pooling of resources to reduce the cost of conducting elections;
- k) Improving the working conditions of its members in the fulfillment of their mandate.

PERMANENT SECRETARIAT

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IN COLLABORATION WITH

The Electoral Commissions Forum of SADC countries (ECF-SADC)



www.ecfsadc.org

The Electoral Commissions Forum of Southern Africa Development Countries (ECF-SADC) is an independent organisation comprising of Election Management Bodies (EMBs) of Angola, Botswana, DRC, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Seychelles, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, Zanzibar and Zimbabwe.

The ECF-SADC was established July 1998 and has played an important role in improving the management of elections and building the capacity of election management bodies in the SADC countries to fulfill their mandate. Programmes and activities of the Forum include electoral observation missions in all SADC countries, provision of electoral expertise and technical support in support of the democratic electoral process by working closely with specific election management bodies in preparation for the elections, compilation of a database of electoral experts available as a resource to electoral management bodies and development of principles and guidelines of democratic electoral practice into norms, standards and training courses on electoral management.

Objectives:

- Encourage the establishment of independent and impartial Electoral Commissions in the region;
- Encourage the development and promotion of a democratic culture and an environment conducive to the holding of credible and transparent elections;
- Encourage the development of electoral laws that adhere to regionally and internationally accepted principles of election management;
- Promote conducive relationships between Electoral Commissions and stakeholders through open and transparent electoral practices;
- Support and encourage the development of voter and civic education programmes.
- Facilitate access to and sharing of experiences, research and technology as well as technological information between and among Member Commissions;
- Support and encourage capacity building programmes of Electoral Commissions to ensure effective discharge of their mandate
- Develop guidelines for alternative dispute resolution mechanisms;
- Establish relations with other organisations with similar objectives; and
- Perform other functions that are conducive or supportive to the afore-going and in the furtherance of its objectives.

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WITH THE SUPPORT OF:

European Centre for Electoral Support (ECES)



www.eces.eu - www.democracy-support.eu/nigeria

ECES is a not-for-profit private foundation headquartered in Brussels with a global remit. ECES promotes sustainable democratic development through the provision of advisory services, operational support and management of large projects in the electoral and democracy assistance field. It works with all electoral stakeholders, including electoral management bodies, civil society organisations involved in voter education and election observation, political parties, parliaments, media, security forces, religious groups and legal institutions confronted with electoral disputes resolution.

ECES has implemented activities in 35 countries in support of electoral processes in many African and Middle Eastern countries. It is mostly funded by the European Union and EU member states with some funding from about 20 other donor organisations. ECES is a member of the European Partnership for Democracy (EPD) with a seat as a member of the Board of Directors. As the most important network of European civil and political society organisations working on democracy assistance, EPD is the first Community of Practice on democracy assistance operating at the EU level advocating for a stronger presence of democracy support on the EU agenda.

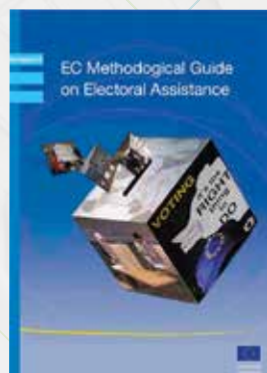
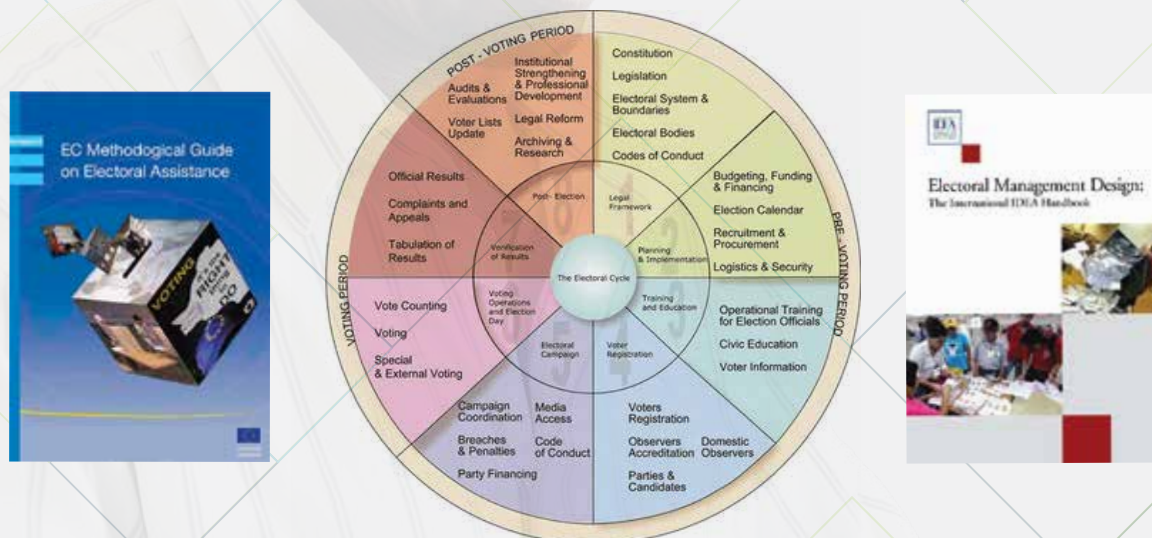
ECES in collaboration with EPD members developed the strategy, A European Response to Electoral Cycle Support – EURECS, which is an innovative delivery mechanism to implement electoral and democracy assistance activities that are consistent with European values and EU policies and targets deriving from recommendations of EU election observation missions. EURECS adopts an inclusive approach towards a wide range of electoral stakeholders in order to ensure comprehensive and sustainable actions and it is built to help prevent, mitigate and manage electoral related conflicts.

ECES collaborates with the International Electoral Accreditation Body (IEAB) and Organisation of American States to support electoral management bodies worldwide to promote transparency and quality of their management systems via the electoral standards set in the context of the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO). It also collaborates with the Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies (SSSA) in Pisa to deliver "On-line Master on Electoral Policy and Administration (MEPA)" for electoral professionals, practitioners and other interested electoral stakeholders.

CONTINUOUS E-LEARNING EXPERIENCE

In preparation for this conference and considering the technical and complex nature of the thematic areas to be discussed, it is offered and recommended for all participants and/or to their staff and colleagues that will not participate to this conference, to enroll and complete the module on "Elections and Technology" of the only available On-Line "Master on Electoral Policy and Administration (MEPA)". This will allow to deepen the knowledge on this subject for participants and have a knowledge dissemination tool for staff and colleagues to use. The Master is being delivered by the Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies in collaboration with International IDEA and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR).

MEPA provides comprehensive advanced learning on electoral processes for mid/upper level election professionals via 19 modules based on the concept of the "Electoral Cycle" as published in the Methodological Guide on Electoral Assistance of the European Commission and the Handbook of Electoral Management Design of International IDEA.



offered by:

in cooperation with
UNITAR and International IDEA

MEPA
Online Master in
Electoral Policy & Administration

SANT'ANNA SCHOOL OF ADVANCED STUDIES
PISA

unitar
United Nations Institute for Training and Research

INTERNATIONAL IDEA
INSTITUTE FOR
DEMOCRACY AND
ELECTORAL
ASSISTANCE

ECES has signed a partnership agreement with the Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies that among other things would allow EMBs personnel from countries where ECES is implementing projects, to enroll and attend the entire MEPA or individual modules.

The degree awarded is the "First Level Master's Diploma in Electoral Policy and Administration". However a certificate of completion and the respective academic credits will be awarded on concluding individual modules. This will also be the case with the "Elections & Technology" module offered as preparation and follow up for the concept of this conference. Find below the list of the 19 modules and an excerpt of the content on the "Elections & Technology" module including learning objectives and key subtopics that will certainly facilitate and enhance the discussions during the three day conference in Abuja while providing a platform of reference after the conference.

MEPA ELECTION AND TECHNOLOGY MODULE

The learning objective of the course is geared towards acquiring knowledge of the conceptual frameworks to define election technologies, identify stakeholders and describe types of applications and understand the criteria that guide the assessment, selection and implementation of election technologies. Students should be able to:

- Identify technology that could be appropriate for use in a given country context;
- Analyse the likely practical, political and cost implications (and potential benefits and risks) of adopting a particular technology, in both the short and long terms;
- Provide well-reasoned and informed advice to the public and policy makers on the available options; and
- Participate in the design, implementation, management and monitoring of systems.

This course combines both conceptual and practical approaches to understanding election technology applications and the impact and challenges of managing these technologies in different political environments.

Key subtopics for this course are:

- Why technology matters;
- Descriptive definitions of election technologies—determinant, influential, administration;
- Functional definitions of election technologies—education, identification, registration, balloting and tabulation, dissemination, delimitation;
- Understanding the technological development life cycle, including ongoing support requirements;
- Election technology legal framework;
- Election technology stakeholders—state, commercial, public;
- New technology assessment methodology—objectives, appropriateness, transparency, cost-benefit, acceptability;
- Approaches to outsourcing and contracting—benefits and risks;
- Vendor relations;
- Overview of voter identification/registration technologies;
- Overview of electronic voting technologies;
- Overview of Internet voting;
- Main areas in which things can go wrong and lessons learned; and
- Future challenges and opportunities.

19 MODULES OF MEPA

- Elections and Voting as Instruments of Governance
- Electoral Legal and Regulatory Frameworks
- Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs)
- Electoral Systems and Managing Representation
- Understanding and Managing Boundary Delimitation
- Political Parties, Campaigns, and Political Finance
- Electoral Planning and Budgeting
- Voter Registration and Identification Systems
- Electoral Operations
- Marginalized Electorates and Special Voting Programs
- Elections and Technology
- Civic and Voter Education
- Media and Elections
- Electoral Integrity and Malpractice
- Electoral Security and Conflict Prevention
- Electoral Justice Systems
- Electoral Observation, Evaluation, and Validation
- Policy Advice and Electoral Reform
- (Optional) Direct Democracy

For more information:

www.santannapisa.it/it/formazione/master-electoral-policy-and-administration

Organizers:



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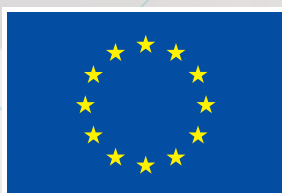


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