



INDEPENDENT NATIONAL  
ELECTORAL COMMISSION

# ELECTION PROJECT PLAN

## FOR THE 2023 GENERAL ELECTION



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ELECTION PROJECT PLAN FOR THE 2023 GENERAL ELECTION

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## Acronyms and Abbreviations

ADR	-	Alternative Dispute Resolution
AEO	-	Assistant Electoral Officer
APO	-	Assistant Presiding Officer
AU	-	African Union
BaSED	-	Basic Security in Election Duties
BPR	-	Business Process Re-Engineering
BVAS	-	Bimodal Voter Accreditation System
CBN	-	Central Bank of Nigeria
CERC	-	Constitution and Election Reform Committee
COVID - 19	-	Coronavirus Disease 2019
CVR	-	Continuous Voters Registration
DDCM	-	Direct Data Capture Machine
DRO	-	Dispute Resolution Officers
EADR	-	Electoral Alternative Dispute Resolution
EC	-	European Commission
EDL	-	Election Day Logistics
EDP	-	Election Day Procurement
EDS	-	Election Day Support
EDT	-	Election Day Training
EMB	-	Election Management Body
EMS	-	Election Management System
EMSC	-	Election Monitoring and Support Centre
EO	-	Electoral Officer
EOPS	-	Electoral Operations
EOSC	-	Electoral Operations Support Centre
EPM	-	Elections and Party Monitoring
EPP	-	Election Project Plan
EPPC	-	Election Project Plan Committee
ERM	-	Election Risks Management
ERSP	-	Election Risks and Security Programme
ESM	-	Election (Day) Staff Management
EVMAT	-	Election Violence Mitigation and Advocacy Tool
FCT	-	Federal Capital Territory
G&I	-	Gender and Inclusivity Department

HS	-	Health Services
HQ	-	Headquarters
ICCC	-	INEC Citizens Contact Centre
ICCES	-	Interagency Consultative Committee on Election Security
ICT	-	Information and Communications Technology
IC&P	-	International Co-operation and Protocol
I-IDEA	-	International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistant
IFES	-	International Foundation for Electoral Systems
INEC	-	Independent National Electoral Commission
INEC-SANS	-	INEC Security Advance Notification System
IVED	-	INEC Voter Registration Device
IReV	-	INEC Result Viewing Portal
KPI	-	Key Performance Indicators
LEAD	-	Leadership and Conflict Management Skills for Electoral Stakeholders
LGA	-	Local Government Area
LSCC	-	Legal Services & Clearance Committee
LD&C	-	Legal Drafting and Compliance Department
L&D	-	Litigation and Prosecution Department
M&E	-	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDA	-	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
NARTO	-	National Association of Road Transport Workers
NRV	-	National Register of Voters
NUTRW	-	National Union of Road Transport Workers
OPC	-	Operations Committee
PBA	-	Principal Business Area
PPC	-	Procurement Planning Committee
PPMC	-	Political Parties Management Committee
P&M	-	Planning and Monitoring
PPCM	-	Political Parties and Candidates Management
PU	-	Polling Unit
PWD	-	Person with Disability
PVC	-	Permanent Voters Card
RA	-	Registration Area
RAC	-	Registration Area Centre
R&D	-	Research and Documentation
REC	-	Resident Electoral Commissioner

RoV	-	Register of Voters
SA	-	Security Adviser
SCR	-	Smart Card Reader
SIEC	-	State Independent Electoral Commissions
SP	-	Strategic Plan
SPA	-	Strategic Programme of Action
SPIP	-	Strategic Plan Implementation Programme
SPO	-	Supervisory Presiding Officer
SSEC	-	Senior Staff Establishment Committee
TCEPP	-	Technical Committee on Election Project Plan
TEI	-	The Electoral Institute
TNA	-	Training Needs Assessment
UNDP	-	United Nations Development Programme
VEP	-	Voter Education, Publicity, Gender & Civil Society
VR	-	Voter Registry

## Foreword

Since the 2011 General Election, the reliance on new knowledge and experiences gathered from the conduct of previous elections; enhancing electoral integrity and improving voter experience through innovations; and institutionalizing the culture of planning have guided the management and conduct of elections in Nigeria. These key elements have guided the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) through three general and several off-cycle and bye elections. Consequently, our elections have become better, electoral outcomes less contentious, and voter experience of the electoral system increasingly more participatory, less stressful, and more inclusive.

The 2023 Election Project Plan (EPP) is the third Plan being implemented by the Commission since the first edition in 2012. The Plan draws from the lessons learnt during the course of implementing the 2019 EPP, the conduct of the 2019 General Election and the 178 recommendations from the 2019 post-election reviews. Deriving from these, the 2023 Plan focused on five key objectives identified by the Commission as critical to the delivery of free, fair, credible, and inclusive elections. These include (i) the electoral legal framework; (ii) continuous improvement of the operational logistics for the conduct of elections; (iii) addressing human and organizational challenges in the conduct of elections; (iv) focus on adequate and timely funding of electoral activities; and (v) improving internal and external communication. These are in consonance with the broad objectives of the Commission's 2022-2026 Strategic Plan (SP) and Strategic Plan Implementation Programme (SPIP). Thus, unlike previous Plans, there is greater synergy between the 2022-2026 SP/SPIP and the 2023 EPP.

With the release of the Timetable and Schedule of Activities for the 2023 General Election by the Commission on 26th of February 2022, the Presidential and National Assembly election will hold on the 25th of February 2023, followed by the Governorship and State Assembly elections two weeks later, on the 11th of March 2023. This being the case, the 2023 EPP specifies all the activities and tasks that need to be implemented before the election. Similarly, the Plan clearly articulates the monitoring, evaluation as well as other support mechanisms necessary for the successful conduct of the election.

The Plan provides electoral stakeholders the opportunity to assess the Commission's progress in the implementation of the identified activities and tasks towards the 2023 General Election, further adding to our continuous effort to enhance transparency and integrity of the electoral process.

I thank the Election Project Plan Committee (EPPC) for its dedication in the production of this Plan. I am particularly pleased that the Commission has, with this Plan, began to wholly rely on in-house expertise in the development and production of its electoral plans and programmes. It is my hope that this trend would be deepened in our effort to build a more professional and accountable Election Management Body.

I would also like to thank the development partners that have contributed in supporting the publication of the Plan.

**Professor Mahmood Yakubu  
Chairman**

## Acknowledgements

The successful production of the 2023 Election Project Plan (2023 EPP) is the accomplishment of a collective task by the Independent National Electoral Commission under the distinguished leadership the Hon. Chairman, Professor Mahmood Yakubu. However, since individual contributions vary, special appreciation must be given to the Chairman and members of the Commission who approved the constitution of the 33-member Election Project Plan Committee (EPPC) and provided the necessary financial and logistics support.

Credit must also go to the EPPC which was inaugurated in June 2021 with National Commissioner, AVM Ahmad Tijjani Mu'azu (rtd.) as Chairman and to its four sub-committees, viz, Review, Data Gathering, Budget & Finance, and Report Drafting led by National Commissioners Barr. Festus Okoye, Professor Okechukwu Ibeantu, Dr. Adekunle Ogunmola and Malam Mohammed Haruna, respectively, who spared no effort in carrying out their responsibilities culminating in the timely completion of the 2023 EPP. The contributions of the various Departments and Directorates of the Commission and their Focal Persons who worked tirelessly to meet set deadlines for the data collection and processing within limited timeframe is commendable and appreciated. To this end, special mention must also be made of the Director of Planning and Monitoring and his corps of dedicated staff that provided excellent support to the EPPC. We must also appreciate the efforts of the new National Commissioners, Prof. Kunle Ajayi, Prof. Sani M. Adam, Prof. Muhammad Sani Kallah and Dr. Baba Bila for anchoring the last leg of the relay race and breasting the tape without dropping the baton.

Special appreciation must be given to the Honourable Chairman's Technical Team for their incisive contributions during the compilation, thorough proofreading of the zero draft and meticulous production of the typeset and printed copy of the EPP. Last but not the least, we must say a big thank you to those very important workers who kept the tea, biscuits, nuts and bananas flowing during the long meetings: you provided last-gasp energy that got the job done.

Finally, the Commission acknowledges the support of the European Centre for Electoral Support (ECES) in facilitating the work of the EPPC and the publication of the EPP document.

**Professor Abdullahi A. Zuru  
Chairman, Planning, Monitoring and Strategy Committee**

## Executive Summary

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) established the practice of regular and systematized planning for the conduct of elections in Nigeria in 2012. Since then, the Commission has developed and implemented two election project plans that governed the conduct of the 2015 and 2019 general elections. In furtherance of the Commission's commitment to the conduct of free, fair, credible and inclusive elections in Nigeria, the 2023 Election Project Plan has been developed as a comprehensive and in-depth project plan for the conduct of the 2023 General Election.

The 2023 EPP was developed by a 33-member Election Project Planning Committee inaugurated on 10 June 2021 with the mandate to undertake a review of the 2019 EPP, develop the 2023 EPP and the required framework for its periodic monitoring and evaluation. In developing the plan, the Committee was guided by the Commission's 2017-2021 Strategic Plan (SP) and Strategic Programme of Action (SPA) and the 2022 - 2026 Strategic Plan and Strategic Plan Implementation Programme (SPIP). Furthermore, the Committee interrogated the issues and challenges associated with the planning, operation, conduct and management of the 2019 general election and considered the 178 recommendations in the post-election review report for enhancing the quality and delivery of future elections.

The 2023 EPP provides the Commission and other electoral stakeholders with the template for the execution of roles, activities and timelines for the planning and conduct of the 2023 general election. This is with the objective of achieving the required administrative and operational efficiency and cost optimization in the delivery of the election into executive and legislative positions. The 2023 general election comprising of the Presidential and Governorship election in 28 states of the Federation, as well as election to the National Assembly and the State Houses of Assembly is expected to be contested by at least 18 political parties. Furthermore, the Plan is designed to cater for about 100 million registered voters who are expected to cast their votes in the Commission's 176,846 polling units across the 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory.

The 2023 EPP is presented in nine chapters. The background to the plan as well as the narrative on the establishment, mandate and work of the EPPC in the formulation of the plan is provided in chapter one. The review of the 2019 EPP, including the objectives, performance and identified implementation challenges in the pre-election, election and post-election periods was discussed in Chapter two. The challenges in the implementation of the 2019 EPP which ranged from the procurement of election materials, the electoral legal framework, recruitment

and training of ad-hoc staff, election security and funding, to issues relating to operational and logistics delivery and inadequate human capital was focused upon in chapter three. The chapter also drew appropriate lessons from the comprehensive assessment of planning and monitoring tools, the operationalisation of the Election Monitoring and Support Centre (EMSC) and the analysis of the nine Principal Business Areas (PBAs) in the implementation of the 2019 EPP.

The details of the 2023 EPP, including its objectives, philosophy and guiding principles, central assumptions, the legal/ operation framework, principal activities, as well as the principal business areas are provided in chapter four. In chapter five, the report focused on 2023 EPP implementation processes, including the identification of critical factors for the successful implementation of the plan, the specific roles and responsibilities of the key task owners, the deployment of appropriate electoral technology, as well as the required institutional capacity and role of stakeholders in the successful delivery of the plan.

Against the background of the current security situation in the country, chapter six analysed the nature of the security environment and the possible threats and risks inherent in the electoral process while implementing the plan. The chapter also proposed the mechanisms and contingency plans for mitigating such threats and risks, including the role of the Inter-Agency Consultative Committee on Election Security (ICCES) and recourse to the use of conflict management and advocacy tools, especially the use of Election Alternative Dispute Resolution (EADR) mechanism and made key recommendations on how to deepen the integrity of the electoral process.

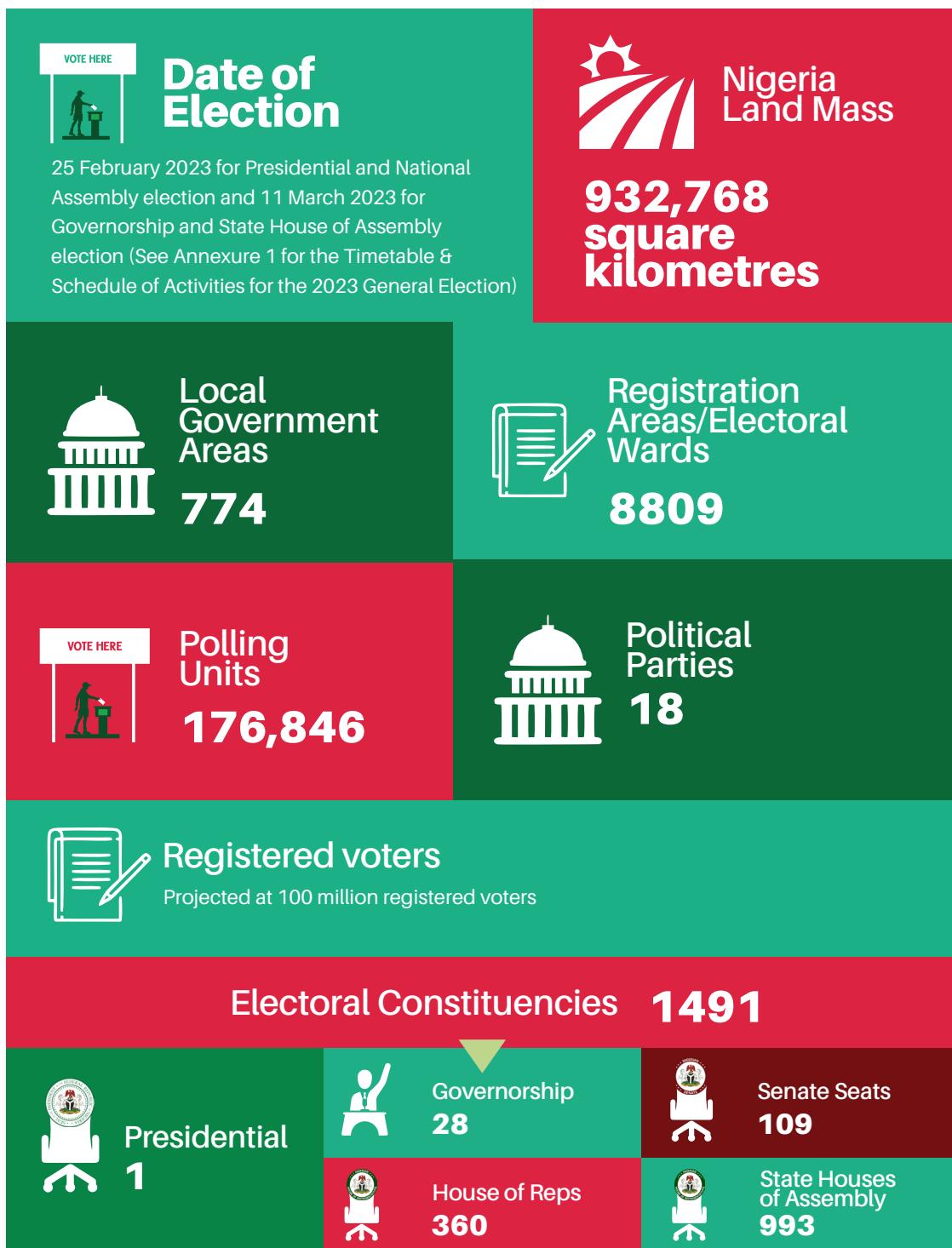
Chapter seven presents the plan's projected budget of N305,001,824,846:49k (Three hundred and five billion, one million, eight hundred and twenty-four thousand, eight hundred and forty-six naira and forty-nine kobo) for the conduct of the 2023 general election. The cost of the election which is expected to be provided by the Federal Government of Nigeria as a sovereign responsibility was arrived at after a thorough review of the budget proposals of the various departments and directorates and due consideration of the fundamental principle that elections must be efficient and cost effective to deliver better value for money. Based on a projected voting population of 100 million registered voters, the estimated average cost per voter for the 2023 general election is \$5.39. This is an improvement over the actual cost of \$9.62 and \$7.38 per voter for the 2015 and 2019 general elections respectively and less than the US7.70 per voter for the 2020 Ghanaian general election.

The monitoring and evaluation strategy for the implementation of the 2023 EPP by the Directorate of Planning and Monitoring was presented in chapter eight. These strategies include periodic evaluation and a mid-term review of the implementation status of activities, timeframe and performance, upgrading the Directorate of Planning and Monitoring and enhancing its capacity to monitor the implementation of the plan.

Finally, critical recommendations for the successful implementation of the Plan for the conduct of the Presidential and National Assembly election scheduled for 25 February 2023 and the Governorship and State House of Assembly elections scheduled for 11 March 2023 are made in chapter nine. The key recommendations are as follows:

1. Adherence by all stakeholders to the electoral legal framework and timeline for electoral activities.
2. Development of subsidiary legislation for the conduct of elections, including regulations, guidelines and manuals in consonance with the provisions of the Electoral Act 2022.
3. Timely submission of the election budget to ensure expeditious consideration, approval and release of election funds for the procurement of election materials and services.
4. Constant surveillance of the impact of COVID -19 pandemic and other emergencies on electoral activities and implementation of appropriate mitigating measures to protect the health and safety of electoral officials, voters, observers and other stakeholders.
5. Continuous monitoring of the inventory and storage of election materials and equipment to ensure that they are in adequate quantity and suitable quality.
6. Timely activation of the EMSC performance management dashboard for constant monitoring of the state of preparedness for the 2023 general election
7. Provision of regular training and capacity building opportunities for Commission officials and staff members to facilitate change management and knowledge acquisition.
8. Enhancing internal and external communication to improve workflow between Headquarters and Field Offices and to promote synergy, coordination and cooperation in the Commission's engagement with stakeholders in the implementation of the plan.

## 2023 General Election Fact Sheet





# Chapter One

## Introduction

## 1.1 Background

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) established the practice of regular and systematized planning for the conduct of elections in Nigeria in 2012. Since then, the development of the Election Project Plan (EPP) has been institutionalised by the Commission to govern the implementation and conduct of general and off-cycle governorship elections. Such Election Project Plan are developed within the context of the Commission's subsisting Strategic Plan (SP) and Strategic Programme of Action (SPA) and guided by review of the implementation of the previous election plan. Consequently, the 2015 and 2019 EPP Plans, which formed the basis for the management of the 2015 and 2019 general elections, were based on the Commission's 2012 - 2016 and 2017 - 2021 Strategic Plans and Strategic Programme of Actions respectively. Furthermore, both Plans benefitted from the review and lessons learnt from the implementation of previous plans and conduct of preceding elections. The overall objective of this strategy is to learn from past mistakes to ensure that the succeeding election would be better planned, managed and conducted in furtherance of the Commission's long-standing commitment to the conduct of free, fair and credible elections in Nigeria.

The Commission in developing the 2023 EPP, which is based on the elapsed 2017-2021 Strategic Plan (SP) and Strategic Programme of Action (SPA) and the 2022 - 2026 Strategic Plan and Strategic Plan Implementation Programme (SPIP) took into consideration the issues and challenges encountered in the 2019 general election. This is with

specific reference to the Commission's internal interrogation of the planning, operation, conduct and management of the election<sup>1</sup> as well as the external post-election review with relevant stakeholders<sup>2</sup>. At the end of both processes, in addition to the 178 recommendations on 14 broad electoral operational and related areas in the post-election review report, several key actionable measures were identified to enhance the quality and delivery of future elections.

Similarly, the review of the 2019 EPP and the formulation of the 2023 EPP constitutes a single process, feeding into each other and integral to the overall planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for the 2023 general election scheduled for 25 February 2023. Unlike the 2019 EPP that did not have the benefit of a comprehensive review of the 2015 EPP, the 2023 EPP was developed against the background of not only a comprehensive review of the 2019 EPP, but also a broader and better understanding of the dynamics of the advances made in electoral management and the challenges the Commission faced in the 2015-2019 Electoral Cycle. This was why, efforts were made to squarely situate and substantively integrate the Commission's 2023 EPP into the broader 2022 - 2026 SP and SPIP. Indeed, this was essentially why, the development of the 2023 EPP had to await the conclusion of the 2022-2026 SP and SPIP.

Following from the 2015 EPP, the 2019 Plan introduced several innovations that were critical in the planning, management and conduct of the

<sup>1</sup>Independent National Electoral Commission (2020) Report of the 2019 General Election

<sup>2</sup>Independent National Electoral Commission (2020), Review of the 2019 General Election: Report of the Commission's Retreats and Stakeholder Engagements, Abuja.

**Following from the 2015 EPP, the 2019 Plan introduced several innovations that were critical in the planning, management and conduct of the general election and other elections in the period under review**

general election and other elections in the period under review. Reinforced by the decision of the Commission to fix a permanent date for general elections on the third Saturday of February of every general election year, these innovations considerably enhanced election management, enabling a longer and more stable planning period as well as greater certainty in the conduct of general elections. This had far-reaching positive planning implications not only for the Commission, but also for all stakeholders in the electoral process, particularly political parties, civil society organizations and security agencies.

Similarly, the 2019 Plan brought the Commission's three key monitoring tools - the EMS, EOSC and ERM - into a single monitoring system under the Election Monitoring and Support Centre (EMSC) that provided the Commission with 360 degrees view of the entire election planning, implementation, monitoring and support process. This was an important right step towards ensuring greater coordination, effectiveness

and efficiency in electoral planning, implementation, monitoring and support. Driven by three key activation/monitoring timelines or zones - the green, amber and red - the 2019 EPP was able to track key electoral activities and events across the 9 Principal Business Areas (PBAs) of the EMSC. Finally, the 2019 Plan produced an activity-based Electoral Calendar, Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), a Gantt Chart and a harmonised EMSC Checklist. Details of the structure and operations of the EMSC are discussed in chapter three.

Still, the implementation of the 2019 EPP encountered several challenges from the impact arising from the delays and eventual non-enactment of proposed amendments to the electoral legal framework, numerous pre-election litigations especially on outcome of party primaries and candidate nomination processes that adversely affected internal planning and procurement timelines, logistic bottlenecks compounded by country-wide infrastructural deficits as well as security threats. These are more fully amplified in chapter two

The planning, conduct and management of the 2019 general election clearly shows the centrality of the EPP in providing much needed direction, focus, and critical implementation paths for the successful conduct of elections. It has enabled the Commission to successfully implement key electoral activities, monitor and evaluate implementation, identify and manage risks/challenges, provide real-time support to field officers, and generally conduct free, fair, and credible elections. By developing the 2023 EPP, the Commission once again demonstrates its continued commitment to a knowledge-driven management of the electoral process as well as the professionalization and institutionalization of election management in Nigeria.

*The planning, conduct and management of the 2019 general election clearly show the centrality of the EPP in providing much needed direction, focus, and critical implementation paths for the successful conduct of major elections. It has enabled the Commission to successfully implement key electoral activities, monitor and evaluate implementation, identify and manage risks/challenges, provide real-time support to field officers, and generally conduct free, fair, and credible elections*

## 1.2 The 2023 Election Project Planning Committee (EPPC)

The Commission has since 2015, institutionalised election project planning in the conduct of the general and off-cycle and end-of-tenure Governorship elections. In fulfilling its mandate as spelt out in its mission and vision, and as part of its continuing efforts towards the conduct of free, fair, credible and inclusive elections, the Commission

constituted and inaugurated an Election Project Plan Committee (EPPC) on the 10 June 2021 with the following membership and terms of reference.

### 1.2.1 Membership

The 2023 Election Project Planning Committee membership is drawn from the Commission, the Technical Team of the Honourable Chairman, Directing Staff and other support staff across Departments, Directorates and Units. The membership of the EPPC is as follows:

1. AVM Ahmad Tijjani Mu'azu rtd.	National Commissioner	Chairman
2. Prof. Okechukwu Ibeantu	National Commissioner	Member
3. Malam Muhammed Kudu Haruna	National Commissioner	Member
4. Dr. Adekunle Ogunmola	National Commissioner	Member
5. Mrs. May Agbamuche-Mbu	National Commissioner	Member
6. Barr. Festus Okoye	National Commissioner	Member
7. Dr. Sa'ad Umar Idris	DG, TEI	Member
8. Prof. Bolade Eyinla	CTA to the Chairman	Member
9. Prof. Muhammad J. Kuna	SA to the Chairman	Member
10. Mr. Rotimi Oyekanmi	CPS to the Chairman	Member
11. A. T. Yusuf	Director EOPs	Member
12. Mrs. O. O. Babalola	Director LDC	Member
13. Aminu K. Idris	Director EPM	Member
14. Engr. Chidi Nwafor	Director ICT	Member

15. Engr. Iro Gambo	Director VR	Member
16. Mr. Kenneth Ukeagu	Director Procurement	Member
17. Mr. Iortsor Leonard	Director EWT	Member
18. Dr. Binta Mohammed	Director Training	Member
19. Mr. Nicholas Dazang <sup>3</sup>	Director VEP	Member
20. Mr. Tony Abarowi	Director F & A	Member
21. Mr. Aminu Haliru	Director Audit	Member
22. Mrs. Augusta Ogakwu	Director IGA	Member
23. Nathan Owhor	Director Stores	Member
24. Mr. Ayodele Victor Aluko <sup>4</sup>	Director VEP	Member
25. Mr. Tanimu M. Inuwa	Director L&P	Member
26. Mrs. Blessing Obidegwu	Director G&I	Member
27. Dr. G. N. Ajoku	Director Health Services	Member
28. Mrs. Maryam Iya Musa	Director Commission Sec-	Member
29. Dr. Ibrahim Sani	Director TEI R&D	Member
30. Mr. Abdulhamid Buba <sup>5</sup>	Director HRM	Member
31. Mr. Nikah Thabbal Lakumna <sup>6</sup>	Director Administration	Member
32. Kemi Oyeyemi	Ag. Director IC&P	Member
33. Engr. Paul Omokore	Director P&M	Member/ Secretary

It should be noted that the Committee was reconstituted to include the underlisted National Commissioners following the end of tenure of National Commissioners listed 1-5 above:

- i. Prof. Abdullahi A. Zuru - Chairman
- ii. Prof. Kunle Ajayi
- iii. Prof. Sani M. Adam
- iv. Prof. Muhammad Sani Kallah
- v. Dr. Baba Bila

<sup>3</sup>Retired in August 2021

<sup>4</sup>Originally Director Administration and became Director VEP in September 2021

<sup>5</sup>Retired in 2021

<sup>6</sup>Retired in October 2021

## 1.2.2 Terms of Reference

The Committee had the following Terms of Reference: -

- a. To undertake a comprehensive review of the implementation of the 2019 EPP and produce a report focusing on:
  - i. Evaluation of strategic issues emanating from the implementation of the 2019 EPP activities.
  - ii. Assessment of the impact of 2019 EPP on 2019 general election.
  - iii. Identification of threats, weaknesses, gaps, unfinished businesses, opportunities, and innovations within the context of current electoral realities and assess their effects on the performance of the Commission.
- b. To develop the Commission's Election Project Plan for the 2023 general election.
- c. To develop a framework for quarterly progress reports on the implementation of the EPP up to Election Day.
- d. To conclude the exercise within a period of 40 days; and
- e. To co-opt any staff of the Commission that the Committee deems necessary to achieve the Terms of Reference in a-d above.

## 1.3 Methodology of the Election Project Plan Committee

The Committee's work was organized around plenary and Sub-Committee sessions. Four Sub-Committees were established and charged with specific tasks as indicated in Table 1. While the Sub-Committees met on a regular basis, plenary sessions convened once a week to consider and review interim reports, assess general progress and set out new tasks where necessary.

The Committee co-opted other staff members and appointed focal persons (Table 2) assigned with the responsibility of gathering and submitting relevant information based on a standardised template on the main activities, sub-activities and financial requirements from the 23 Departments and Directorates of the Commission. While the Sub-Committee on Data Gathering and that of Finance and Budget engaged the Focal Persons to critique the data collected, sought clarifications, and suggested improvements, the Review Sub-Committee undertook a comprehensive analysis of the 2019 EPP, examining the formulation, content, implementation, and monitoring mechanisms of the Plan while the task of producing a zero draft of the report was assigned to the Report Writing Sub-Committee. However, at a plenary meeting of the EPPC on the 1st of September, the decision was taken to merge the Review and Report Writing Sub-Committees. The information gathered from all the Sub-Committees was harmonized into a single report that came to constitute the 2023 EPP comprising of five key elements: -

- i. A narrative document on the Plan itself, including a general review of the performance of the 2019 Plan;
- ii. An activity-based Electoral Calendar for the 2023 general election;
- iii. A Gantt Chart for the 2023 EPP;
- iv. Indicative Budgetary and Cost Analysis; and
- v. An Implementation and Monitoring Strategy.

**Table 1: Sub-Committees of the 2023 EPPC**

S/N	Sub-Committee	Name	Recorders	Task
1	Review	1. Barr. Festus Okoye (Convener) 2. Prof. M. J. Kuna 3. Mr. Rotimi Oyekanmi 4. Mrs. Augusta Ogakwu 5. Mrs. O.O Babalola 6. Mr. Paul Omokore 7. Dr. Ibrahim Sani	1. Victoria Etta-Messi 2. Bimbo Oladunjoye 3. Ama I. Agwu 4. Yakubu Mazila 5. Nkiruka Onyemechalu-Mokogwu	Undertake a comprehensive review of the 2019 EPP as an implementation guide under which the 2019 GE was conducted, assess the extent of its implementation, its recorded successes, challenges encountered, lessons learnt from and recommendations to aid proper planning and implementation of the 2023 EPP.
2	Data Gathering	1. Prof. Okechukwu Ibeanu (Convener) 2. Mr. Abdulhamid Buba 3. Aminu Idris 4. Mrs. Maryam Iya Musa 5. Dr. Ajoku G.N 6. Mr. Taminu M. Inuwa 7. Mrs. Blessing Obidegwu	1. Dr. Lawrence Bayode 2. M. A. Fufure 3. Joe-stans Toryem 4. Amina Garba	Collect all necessary information from Departments, Units, State and LGA offices as applicable and liaise with the field offices when necessary
3	Finance/Budget	1. Dr. Adekunle Ogunmola (Convener) 2. Mr. A. T. Yusuf 3. Engr. Chidi Nwafor 4. Mr. Anthony Abarowei 5. Mr. Kenneth Ukeagu 6. Engr. Iro Gambo 7. Mr. Iortsor Leonard 8. Mr. Aminu Haliru	1. Shittu Hakeem 2. Julius Ayeni 3. Habila Punvwet 4. Ijeoma Kalu Ina	Finalize the two-year budget for the election and develop a framework for monitoring the performance of the budget

4	Report Drafting	1.Mr. Mohammed Haruna (Convener) 2.Mrs. May Agbamuche-Mbu 3.Prof. Bolade Eyiinla 4.Dr. Sa'ad Umar Idris 5.Mr. Nicholas Dazang 6.Mr. Ayo Victor Aluko 7.Mr. Nathan Owhor 8. Dr. Binta Kassim	1.Helen Ogundana 2.Nkechi Abu 3.Terungwa Awuhe 4. Jennifer Ikechukwu	Produce the zero draft of the plan, develop a framework of quarterly progress report on implementation of the EPP and seek development partners support for the EPP
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Table 2: Departmental Focal Persons

S/N	Focal Persons	Department/Directorate
1	Odangwu Christiana Chukwuma	ADMIN
2	Anne Aderigbigbe	EOPs
3	Eletu Abdulazeez	IA
4	Sharon Chioma Chima	Stores
5	Bashir M Abubakar	L&P
6	Ikechukwu Ezeala	G&I
7	Emeka Nwazunku Jonas	EWT
8	Grace Onuche	IGA
9	Otu Fidelia Udumma	VR
10	Tosin Yakeen	R&D
11	Ojedokun Chinyere	H/S
12	Mukhtar Muhammad Binji	Training
13	Adamu Mohammed Usman	HRM
14	Nene Salami	Commission Secretariat
15	Anthonia Nnenna Makwe	LD&C
16	Jabb Jacob	IC&P
17	Maryam M. Habib	P&M
18	Nwanzunku Jonas Emeka	EWT
19	Ebenezer Eniola Oladapo	VEP
20	Patience Idiong	EPM
21	Shittu Hakeem	F&A
22	Adams Kagara	Procurement
23	Tonia Idemudia	ICT
24	Kelechi Madu	Security

## 1.4. Structure of the Report

The 2023 EPP has nine chapters. The first chapter provides a background to the Plan, briefly reviewing the establishment of the EPPC and the plan formulation process. Chapter two provides a more detailed review the 2019 Plan, outlining the Plan objectives, the performance of the Plan as well as the challenges encountered in its implementation. Chapter three reviews the 2019 EPP planning tools, the operationalization of the Election Monitoring and Support Centre (EMSC) and the analysis of the Principal Business Areas (PBAs). Chapter four focuses on Plan implementation processes, including a discussion of critical success factors, specification of the roles and responsibilities of task owners, the projected role of technology in the 2023 general election, the required institutional capacity for the delivery of the Plan as well as the role of stakeholders. Chapter five present details of the 2023 Plan, including Plan objectives, philosophy and guiding

principles, central assumptions of the Plan, the legal/operational framework, principal activities of the Plan, as well as its Principal Business Areas. Given the current security situation in the country, Chapter six focuses on the nature of electoral risks that face the electoral process in the current Electoral Cycle, mechanisms for the mitigation of identified threats, contingency plans for the mitigation of such threats, the role of the Inter-Agency Consultative Committee on Election Security, the role of conflict management mechanisms and how to deepen the integrity of the electoral process. Chapter seven presents a projected budget for the 2023 general election and identified the sources of funds. Chapter eight draws up the monitoring and evaluation strategy for the implementation of the 2023 EPP, including periodic reviews of implementation status and the need for building the capacity of the Directorate of Planning and Monitoring to implement the Plan. Finally, Chapter nine makes critical recommendations for the successful implementation of the Plan.



# Chapter Two

**Review of the 2019  
Election Project Plan**

## 2.1 Background

The 2019 EPP was approved in May 2017 as the principal working document for the implementation of the 2019 general election. The Plan identified 1,179 broad activity areas spanning the entire range of electoral activities sequenced in order of occurrence. It also identified the necessary implementation resources, established timelines, assigned responsibilities and made far-reaching recommendations to ensure the successful conduct of the election. The recommendations categorised into medium and lower levels were also sequenced in line with the broad activities. In addition, the Plan recommended several policy-level actions across the Commission involving preparatory activities such as the clearance of storage facilities, sourcing of electoral staff, review of the Commission's regulations, manuals and handbooks, renovation of critical infrastructure, increased stakeholder engagement and expansion of voter education and public enlightenment. The implementation of the plan began almost immediately after the Commission's approval.

In preparation for the 2023 general election, the Commission undertook a mid-term review of the performance of the 2019 EPP and formulated a 2022-2026 SP and SPIP to serve as the basis for the management and conduct of the election. The review of the 2019 EPP was inclusive, drawing membership from across the Commission as well as representation from Departments and Directorates. In general, the content of the Plan itself was comprehensive, encompassing all the high, medium, and lower-level activities that the Commission needed to undertake for the planning, conduct and management of the 2019 general election in the pre-

election, election, and post-election phases. Similarly, the implementation of the Plan was impressive, although activities scheduled in the post-election phase were adversely affected by the disruption caused by the advent of the COVID-19 global pandemic as indicated in Section 2.3 below. Finally, the performance of the monitoring mechanism established by the Plan for the general and other off-cycle elections seem to justify the Commission's decision to integrate the EMS, ERM and EOSC into a single monitoring and support mechanism as the EMSC in spite to subsisting barriers towards full integration. It needs to be noted though, that the Centre was critical in monitoring the implementation status of the EPP, just as it provided an avenue for quick intervention and support to field officers as and when due.

*On balance, the EMSC has become a critical planning, monitoring, early warning and support tool in the conduct and management of the elections. The challenges observed in the operation of the EMSC require the urgent attention of the Commission to make it a better monitoring and support mechanism for the 2023 general election as indicated in Chapter Three*

## 2.2 Objectives of the 2019 EPP

The main thrust of the Plan was to provide the Commission with a roadmap for the planning, management and conduct of all electoral activities related to the 2019 general election. Acutely aware of

some of the challenges the Commission encountered in the planning and conduct of the 2015 general election, the new Plan was designed to provide a realistic and informed framework for addressing some of these challenges. One of the key distinguishing features of the Plan was the effort to address the persistent internal administrative and departmental fencing and territoriality in the planning, monitoring, management and conduct of electoral activities. Its insistence on a Commission-wide Election Project Plan process with clearly defined and coordinated activities from all Departments, Directorates and Units which led to greater collaboration was a significant aspect of the Plan's strength and therefore, its monitoring and implementation. The 2019 Plan identified six core objectives for the successful conduct of the general election via:

- i. Harmonizing the needs and activities of all Departments/Directorates into a unified, coordinated, and implementable plan for the conduct of the 2019 general election.
- ii. Organizing the 2019 general election in line with the highest professional standards.
- iii. Delivering a cost-efficient, but also a qualitatively better general election than previous general elections.
- iv. Reducing to the barest minimum and addressing observed delays and bottlenecks in the implementation of previous Election Project Plans.
- v. Carrying along all stakeholders and creating a level playing field for all political parties and candidates in the conduct of the 2019 general election; and

- vi. Ensuring that Commission staff are accountable and act responsibly in the conduct and management of the 2019 general election.

The review indicates that these objectives were achieved to a very large extent with reference to the concerns about inter-and intra-departmental coordination, observance of global best practices and professionalism, cost-effectiveness, stakeholder engagement and accountability. This was clearly and appreciably demonstrated in the successful conduct of the 2019 general election.

## 2.3 Performance of the 2019 EPP

The Commission adopted and utilized the 2017-2021 SP/SPA as a pragmatic roadmap and an action-oriented plan to provide direction for the entire Electoral Cycle, including the planning and conduct of the 2019 general and other off-cycle and end-of-tenure governorship elections. However, while the SP/SPA defined the very broad goals of the Commission within a five-year period, the EPP selected a set of specific activities within the broad goals of the SP/SPA categorized into:

- i. pre-election;
- ii. election and;
- iii. post-election phases with direct bearing on the general election.

These activities were then disaggregated and rendered into a set of implementable, time-bound and owner-identifiable tasks whose execution would be closely monitored and supported. The Plan also created a mechanism for the implementation and monitoring of the identified activities and tasks. As a bundle of specific activities directly related to the general election, the EPP was integral to the Strategic Plan (SP) and Strategic Programme of Action (SPA).

In analysing the performance of the 2019 EPP, it is necessary to briefly review the performance of the 2017 - 2021 SP/SPA. While the implementation of the 2017 - 2021 SP indicates appreciable progress in comparison with the 2012 - 2016 SP, overall implementation stood at less than 40%. Of the 47 Key Actions and 650 Key Activities of the 2017 - 2021 Plan,

246 (37.8%) were fully implemented, 117 (18%) partially implemented, 236 (36.3%) not implemented and 51 (7.8%) were on-going as of April 2021. There is little doubt that the COVID-19 Pandemic that became quite serious from March 2020 when the Commission had to suspend all regular and non-essential activities nationwide had a significant and far-reaching impact on the implementation of both the SP/SPA and the EPP. However, it needs to be

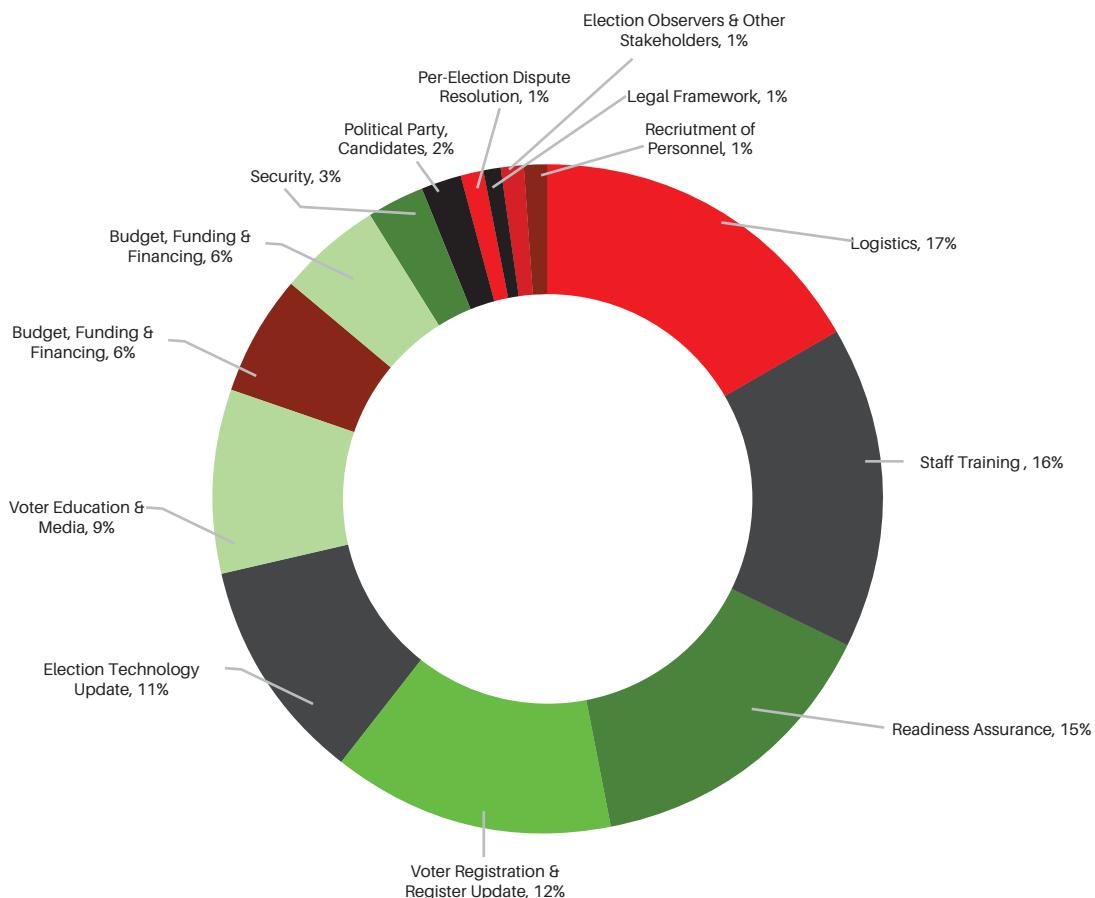
noted that in the case of the EPP, most of the activities in the pre-election and election phases for the 2019 general election were implemented. The Pandemic's greatest impact was on the EPP's post-election activities, which were scheduled for implementation as from March 2020.

### 2.3.1 Pre-election Activities

Overall, the 2019 EPP has 14 broad activity areas (See Figure 1) with 1,179 medium- and thousands of lower-level tasks, clearly indicating what every Department, Directorate and Unit were expected to implement towards the 2019 general election. These activities/tasks were derived directly from the 2017-2021 SP/SPA as indicated in Table 3.

Table 3: Details of High-Level and Sub-Activities in the 2019 EPP

S/N	Activity Category	Activity Areas	Medium Level Activities
A	Legal Framework	3	6
B	Electoral Boundaries & Delimitation	16	6
C	Recruitment of Personnel	1	6
D	Logistics	30	182
E	Security	11	30
F	Staff Training	30	181
G	Voter Registration & Register Update	43	151
H	Election Observers & Other Stakeholders	4	9
I	Political Party, Candidates	5	20
J	Voter Education & Media	27	96
K	Budget, Funding & Financing	27	71
L	Per-Election Dispute Resolution	6	13
M	Readiness Assurance	26	166
N	Election Technology Update	2	11
		231	948

**Figure 1: Broad Activity Areas**

*In preparation for the 2023 general election, the Commission undertook a mid-term review of the performance of the 2019 EPP and formulated a 2022- 2026 SP and SPIP to serve as the basis for the management and conduct of the election. The review of the 2019 EPP was inclusive, drawing membership from across the Commission as well as representation from Departments and Directorates. In general, the content of the Plan itself was comprehensive, encompassing all the high, medium, and lower-level activities that the Commission needed to undertake for the planning, conduct and management of the 2019 general election in the pre-election, election, and post-election phases*

While COVID-19 Pandemic adversely affected the latter part of the planning cycle, the analysis of the 2019 EPP focuses largely on the pre-election and election periods, since these were not seriously impacted by the Pandemic. Consequently, the 2023 Plan identifies the strengths and challenges related to the Plan implementation in these two

critical time periods. In discussing the pre-election and election periods, it is important to highlight some background factors that played a significant role in the Plan's implementation in both periods.

## i. Electoral Legal Framework

One of the most critical pre-election objectives of the 2019 Plan, the amendment of the electoral legal framework, did not materialize up till the time of the election. While the lack of an amended legal framework may not have very visible adverse effects on the conduct of the general election; it did have significant planning repercussions. For one thing, it stalled the early review of the Commission's regulations, guidelines and manuals. For another, the Commission's hope that the candidate nomination process would be better streamlined with the amendment of some provisions relating thereto did not happen. Consequently, the problems bedeviling the candidate nomination process observed in the 2015 general election were also very much a part of 2019, a fact quite evident in the number of pre-election litigations. Thus, of the over 1,689 litigations and court cases recorded in 2019, 890 or 53% were pre-election cases dealing with candidates' nomination process. In consequence, a lot of the Commission's time-bound activities directly related to the conduct of the general election, such as the production of election and balloting instruments were also similarly delayed. Finally, the uncertainty surrounding the passage of a new legal framework further complicated the planning, management, and logistics of the printing, sorting and deployment of election materials. With 23,111 candidates and 91 registered parties for the general election, and with conflicting court orders from courts of coordinate jurisdiction on party primaries and the nomination processes, it was extremely difficult to organize the procurement and processing of election materials in good time. In some cases, as for example in Zamfara and Rivers States, the Commission had to print two sets each of balloting instruments to accommodate any possible outcome of Court judgements.

## ii. Continuous Voter Registration (CVR)

In response to the challenges encountered by the Commission during previous voter registration exercises, enhancing the credibility of the Voter Register, ensuring that new or unregistered voters were registered and creating opportunities for improved voter experience of the electoral process assumed primary significance. Consequently, the Commission began the conduct of the continuous voter registration (CVR) as originally envisaged in the Electoral Act with the commencement of a nationwide CVR exercise on 27 April 2017 in line with Section 10 (1) of the 2010 Electoral Act (as amended). The exercise, which also provided old and newly registered voters to collect their PVCs over a period of 17 months, was conducted in five phases across 672 registration centres. At the end of the exercise on 31 August 2018, a total of 14,283,734 new voters were registered which in addition to the already existing 69,720,350 registrants on the Register of Voters for the 2015 general election brought the number of registered voters to 84,004,084 for the 2019 general election. At the time the collection of PVCs was suspended in February 2019, a cumulative total of 72,775,502 PVCs or 86.63% were collected, while 11,228,582 or 13.37% remained uncollected. The CVR and PVC collection exercise posed significant challenges in terms of the capacity of the Commission to devolve both activities to the lowest level, which is the polling unit due to constraints of funds, with the attendant consequences.

## iii. Electoral Technologies

The adoption of the SCR as an integral part of a biometric verification and authentication system for both the PVC and the voter has to an appreciable extent, reduced opportunities for

and incidents of electoral fraud and irregularities. This has undoubtedly positively impacted on the integrity of elections in Nigeria. However, while the deployment of technology has positively impacted on the conduct of elections, the low level of voter accreditation, especially fingerprint authentication, remained of significant concern to the Commission. It was in response to these concerns that the Commission decided to further strengthen and upgrade the functionality of the SCR to enable it address observed challenges in voter accreditation process. The upgrade, which included a wider fingerprint window, and more storage, transmission and geo-location capabilities, improved its efficiency, speed thereby deepening voter confidence by significantly addressing concerns about SCR functionality in the field. Furthermore, the Commission replaced lost or damaged SCRs with new ones to ensure its deployment to all PUs, VPs and VPS.

#### iv. Electoral Logistics

Electoral logistics for the 2019 general election were better planned and organized than for any previous general election in the history of the Commission. Logistics preparations for the 2019 general election began early in the electoral cycle with meetings of officers in charge of electoral operations across the Commission. The meetings assessed the condition of re-usable electoral materials, ascertained the condition of storage facilities, established the functionality of equipment and created baselines for required election materials and personnel for the election. The meetings were followed by the procurement and deployment of non-sensitive election materials including about 62,700 red and black-lid ballot boxes for the Presidential and Senatorial elections

and 200,000 green-lid ballot boxes for the Federal Constituency election. The Commission also established various Committees, including an Inter-Ministerial Logistics Committee to facilitate the deployment of both non-sensitive and sensitive election materials. The Commission's Graphic Design Centre (GDC) played a crucial role in the design and production of sensitive election materials, identification cards for monitors, supervisors, party agents, observers and journalists. The receipt and distribution of sensitive materials was organised from four (4) designated International Airports. The materials were first received at the CBN and then subsequently deployed to State and LGA offices.

#### v. Voter Education and Publicity

One of the most extensive voter education programmes aimed at mobilizing the entire voting population, including marginalized and vulnerable voting communities such as women, youth and PWDs was rolled out in the 2019 EPP. Accordingly, the Commission's Gender, Disability, Youths and IDP Voting Policies were reviewed in the light of field experiences as well as in consultation with the relevant stakeholders. Publicity for the elections required press briefings, press releases and the placement of advertisements and announcements by the Commission in various print, broadcast, and social media outlets. Furthermore, the Commission with the support of Development Partners organised trainings and workshops for staff nationwide on election reporting, fake news reporting, misinformation, and disinformation as well as on how to manage information on the social media platforms. In this effort, the INEC Citizens Contact Centre (ICCC) played a critical

role in organising various campaigns, using infographics, telephony, and social media handles for daily and on the spot engagement with citizens. In addition, various public enlightenment, radio and TV programmes were conducted to address issues and concerns relating to election preparations and to publicise the Commission's policies and plans in the build-up to the election. There were also sensitisation tours to selected organizations and regulatory bodies such as the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (NIPR), the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA), Nigeria Press Council (NPC), and the National Broadcasting

**Publicity for the elections required press briefings, press releases and the placement of advertisements and announcements by the Commission in various print, broadcast, and social media outlets**

Commission (NBC) to familiarize them with the Commission's plans for the 2019 general election. Accreditation of Media organisations and Journalists and distribution of tags and media kits to the over 160 local and international media organisations were undertaken by the Publicity Division of VEP. In all, the Commission's effort to continuously promote and expand inclusivity and

peaceful elections gained a lot of traction from these activities. Nevertheless, there is still room for improvement, as voter turnout during the election stood at about 35%. While voter education alone is unlikely to be the sole determinant of voter turnout, it is still important to develop new and more innovative ways to expand inclusivity and voter participation as the Commission plans for the 2023 general election.

**vi. Recruitment, Training, and Deployment of Electoral Staff**

The recruitment, training, and deployment of about one million electoral staff for the conduct of the Presidential and National Assembly, Governorship and State Houses of Assembly, as well as the FCT Area Council elections was one of the biggest undertakings by the Commission to date. More specifically, 846,851 officials were trained and deployed for the elections, of which 2,322 (or 0.27%) were staff of the Commission. Most of the election personnel were Supervisory Presiding Officers (14,104 or 1.66%), Presiding and Assistant Presiding Officers (780,789 or 92.1%) Collation Officers (13,274 or 1.56%). In addition, 11,514 (or 1.3%) security personnel under the auspices of ICCES were trained and deployed to secure the elections. Although the training and deployment were successfully conducted, the late production of training materials and the short training period challenged the performance of personnel in the field

**vii. Engagement with Stakeholders**

Regular engagement with stakeholders on key policy issues and programmes on the management of the electoral process was a key priority of the

Commission in the 2019 EPP. Thus, the Commission held regular quarterly consultative meetings with political parties, civil society organizations, the media as well as security organizations under the auspices of the Inter-Agency Consultative Committee on Election Security (ICCES) in the 2015 - 2019 electoral cycle. In addition, relevant Ministries, Departments and Agencies of government whose work had direct bearing on the work of the Commission were also engaged. These meetings and engagements provided the Commission the opportunity to share its plans and programmes while at the same, creating a platform for canvassing and exchanging ideas between critical election stakeholders.

### viii. Candidate Management

The organization, management, and receipt of nomination of candidates from the 91 political parties was fairly well organised. The development of a processing centre at the International Conference Centre for the submission of nominations considerably reduced the rowdiness and attendant challenges often associated with the process. Conversely, the conduct of the Party primaries was an entirely different issue as indicated in chapter three as the schedules for such primaries were observed largely in the breach. In many cases, notices for such meetings were given late and in at least two cases, were not given at all. The outcome of these primaries resulted in long and acrimonious intra- and inter-party conflicts that considerably slowed down preparations for the election. Nevertheless, the handling of the 2019 general election candidate nomination process was much better than in preceding general elections.

### ix. Election Security

Focus on the management of direct threats to the conduct of elections has always been a key concern for the Commission. Experiences have shown that the complexity of the entire electoral operation requires a broader and holistic risk identification, assessment and management strategies. Drawing from the experiences of 2015 as well as security challenges emanating from the off-season governorship and re-run elections since then, the 2019 election security strategy was more encompassing with the use of the Commission's ERM/EVMAT and EMSC platforms in identifying, and tracking observed and emergent security challenges throughout the Electoral Cycle. Sadly, election related violence still resulted in the loss 13 lives in the South-South, three in the South- East and the Southwest respectively and five lives each both in the North Central and Northeast Zones. Three ad-hoc staff was reported missing during the election in the Northwest but were later found. Given the new dimensions of security challenges facing the country, it is important to pay attention to the nature, dynamics and possible impact of different security challenges witnessed across the geo-political zones, and to begin to fashion fit-for-purpose election security strategies for the 2023 general election. The development of a new business area on Election Security in the 2023 EPP is therefore an important step towards the implementation of a broader and more focused security management mechanism for elections.

#### 2.3.2 Election Period

Despite the implementation of the range of electoral activities espoused in the 2019 EPP, the 2019 general election was postponed by one week with the

Presidential and the National Assembly election re-scheduled from the 16 to the 23 of February 2019 and the Governorship, State Houses of Assembly and the FCT Area Council elections rescheduled from 2 to 9 March 2019. The details of the management of the entire electoral process and the conduct of the elections have been discussed in the Report of the 2019 general election.

### 2.3.3 Post-election Period

While the actual election was mostly concluded on 9 March 2019, the implementation of the 2019 EPP continued till March 2020. Within this one-year window, the Commission concluded the retrieval and storage of election materials from the field across the country to its various stores; undertook and concluded a comprehensive post-election review and produced the post-election and general election reports. Furthermore, the Commission conducted 30 Court-ordered re-run elections between 30

November 2019 and 25 January 2020 before the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic slowed down implementation of the EPP and forced the suspension of all electoral activities in March 2020. Upon the resumption of activities in July 2020, the Commission embarked on the review of the 2017 - 2021 SP/SPA and the development of the 2022 - 2026 SP/SPIP and the 2023 EPP. A total of 35 bye-elections and three off-cycle governorship elections (Edo, Ondo and Anambra) were also conducted in this period.

## 2.4 Challenges in the Implementation of the 2019 EPP

The 2019 general election is undoubtedly the biggest and most daunting election exercise ever undertaken by the Commission since its establishment in 1998. The challenges encountered by the Commission in the implementation of the 2019 EPP are therefore varied, complex and interwoven. Based on the factors highlighted in 2.3 above and the implementation challenges there is need to address several issues in the 2023 EPP. First is the issue of procurement of election materials. Before the 2019 general election, individual Departments and Directorates handled procurement of election materials in accordance with the Commission's approval. However, in the run up to the 2019 general election, it became imperative to re-organize and centralise the entire procurement process. Consequently, the Commission created the Procurement Department as a central procuring entity, which developed a procurement plan and timeline, based on the minimum stipulated period for the completion of procurement process in the Public Procurement Act 2007.

**The development of a new business area on Election Security in the 2023 EPP is therefore an important step towards the implementation of a broader and more focused security management mechanism for elections**

### 2.4.1 The Procurement of Election Materials

The late commencement and completion of the procurement processes for both sensitive and non-sensitive election materials is attributable to the late appropriation of the election budget resulting in delayed disbursement of funds. Although the procurement process commenced from 2017, contracts could neither be awarded or where they were, funds were not available to mobilise contractors, vendors, and suppliers. Given the novelty of centralized procurement at the time, the Commission became overwhelmed by delivery of the large supply of required election materials to its central, holding, and zonal stores, which lacked the storage capacity for the materials procured. The inability of the Stores to meet the challenge of effective and timeous distribution of materials was amplified by the lack of adequate infrastructure, including air lifting capacity, ground handling facilities at airports and the challenges associated with road haulage.

The shifting of the dates and venues of party primaries and unending litigations resulting from the candidate nomination process impacted negatively on the Commission's timely production of highly customized and time-bound sensitive election materials. It was impossible for the Commission to finalise the design, production and distribution of ballots papers and result sheets for the elections while Court judgements, orders and pronouncements were pending on several election-related cases. The Commission was therefore confronted with the possibility of the unlawful exclusion of political parties and candidates from the election, as well as the question of the eligibility of certain political parties and candidates

to contest for elections in specific constituencies. In fact, in some instances Court judgements were delivered a few days to the election. In the specific cases of Zamfara and Rivers States, the Commission, at huge expense resorted to the production of two sets of all sensitive election materials anticipatory to decision of the Courts on the eligibility of the All-Progressive Congress (APC) to contest the Governorship, National Assembly and State Assembly elections in both States.

### 2.4.2 Electoral Legal Framework

When the Commission in 2017 approved the 2019 EPP, there were levels of uncertainty on the outcome of proposed amendments to the Electoral Act 2010 (as amended). The Commission had to rely on the existing legislation in developing the 2017 - 2021 SP/SPA. While the passage and enactment of amended electoral legal framework was beyond INEC, the situation nevertheless negatively impacted effective planning and mandate delivery. So also, were the numerous cases of conflicting judgements from Courts of coordinate jurisdictions on the same or similar issue being litigated.

There was no question that the registration of political parties and the monitoring of their operations including the candidate nomination process flowed from the electoral legal framework. The review of the 2017-2021 SP/SPA revealed that some of the political parties lacked adequate knowledge of the extant legal requirements for the nomination of candidates and in some cases outrightly breached the provisions of the Constitution, the Electoral Act, INEC's Guidelines and Regulations and even their own Constitutions and Guidelines.

While some of the parties sponsored candidates that did not emerge from valid primaries, resulting in litigation in which INEC is always a nominal defendant, many others kept poor records of their statutory books stretching the resources of INEC in undertaking its oversight role on campaign finance regulations.

While the Commission has an important role to play in the prosecution of electoral offenders, it lacks the power of arrest and investigation of such offenders, which resides with the Police. Oftentimes, the Investigating Police Officers (IPOs) are transferred out of jurisdiction or assigned other duties. This is apart from the challenge of late transmission of case files to the Commission by the Police and securing the attendance of dispersed ad-hoc electoral staff as witnesses during trial.

### **2.4.3 Operational/Logistic Challenges**

The elaborate logistical requirements with reference to the transportation of election materials are perhaps the most daunting challenge in the implementation of 2019 EPP. To address this challenge, the Commission entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the leadership of the National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW) and the National Association of Road Transport Owners (NARTO). However, the non-enforcement of the full provisions of the MoUs in the contractual arrangement between the INEC State/FCT offices and the State and LGA Chapters of NURTW and NARTO in some jurisdictions led to delays in the movement of electoral officials and materials, especially on Election Day. Furthermore, in some cases, factionalisation among the transport stakeholders and poor knowledge of

implementation guidelines of the MoUs contributed to the logistical quagmire. The situation was further compounded by the problem of access to difficult terrains that continue to impede timely deployment to the rural and riverine areas before, during and after electoral exercises and similar issues identified in the reports of the Commission.<sup>6</sup>

### **2.4.4 Recruitment and Training of Ad-hoc Staff**

Electoral staff recruitment, training, deployment, and remuneration of ad-hoc staff remain problematic and recurring throughout the period of the 2019 EPP. The number of ad-hoc staff required for the conduct of electoral exercises in a general election is quite huge, leaving the Commission constantly dependent on other agencies. The shortlist of such persons is often not presented timeously resulting in inadequate and ineffective training. Such training often takes place in non-conducive classroom environment without adequate teaching kits and aids. Consequently, some deployed ad-hoc staff exhibit poor technical and process skills in managing the electoral process. The inability of the Electoral Institute to operationalize its e-library services and establish its database management system to support effective delivery of e-training of electoral staff remain major issues.

### **2.4.5 Election Security**

Election security continues to present unique challenges beyond the control of the Commission. This is not limited to physical security of the premises, materials, personnel, candidates, voters, observers, and media but to the overall electoral process. While the Commission's ICCES continue to function as an advisory body on

<sup>6</sup>Review of the 2017-2021 Strategic Plan and Strategic Plan of Action; Review of the 2019 General Election: Report of the Commission's Retreats and Stakeholder Engagements and Report of the 2019 General Election.

election security, the actual command and control of security agents during elections is with the Nigeria Police Force as the lead agency. While ICCES functions optimally at the national level, there is need to strengthen and enhance its performance at State and LGA levels to manage violence and other incidents before, during and after elections. Some of the challenges militating against effective election security deployment during the general election include the inability of the security agencies to deploy the full complement of security personnel, inadequate training, lack of required logistics for movement of security personnel, late payment of approved allowances and partial compliance with the rules of engagement and code of conduct for security personnel on electoral duty. Lastly, inadequate basic training and knowledge of fire prevention and control measures among staff and stakeholders, as well as the lack of effective deployment of fire-fighting equipment under the Plan hampered quick response to fire outbreaks both at Headquarters and some State/FCT and LGA offices.

#### 2.4.6 Human Capital and Organisational Challenges

Collaboration, team building, and cooperation remain a major challenge to efforts to achieve optimal organizational results across the Departments, Directorates and field offices. This could be seen in some activities not being undertaken or were undertaken by lead Departments without the input of other collaborating Departments.

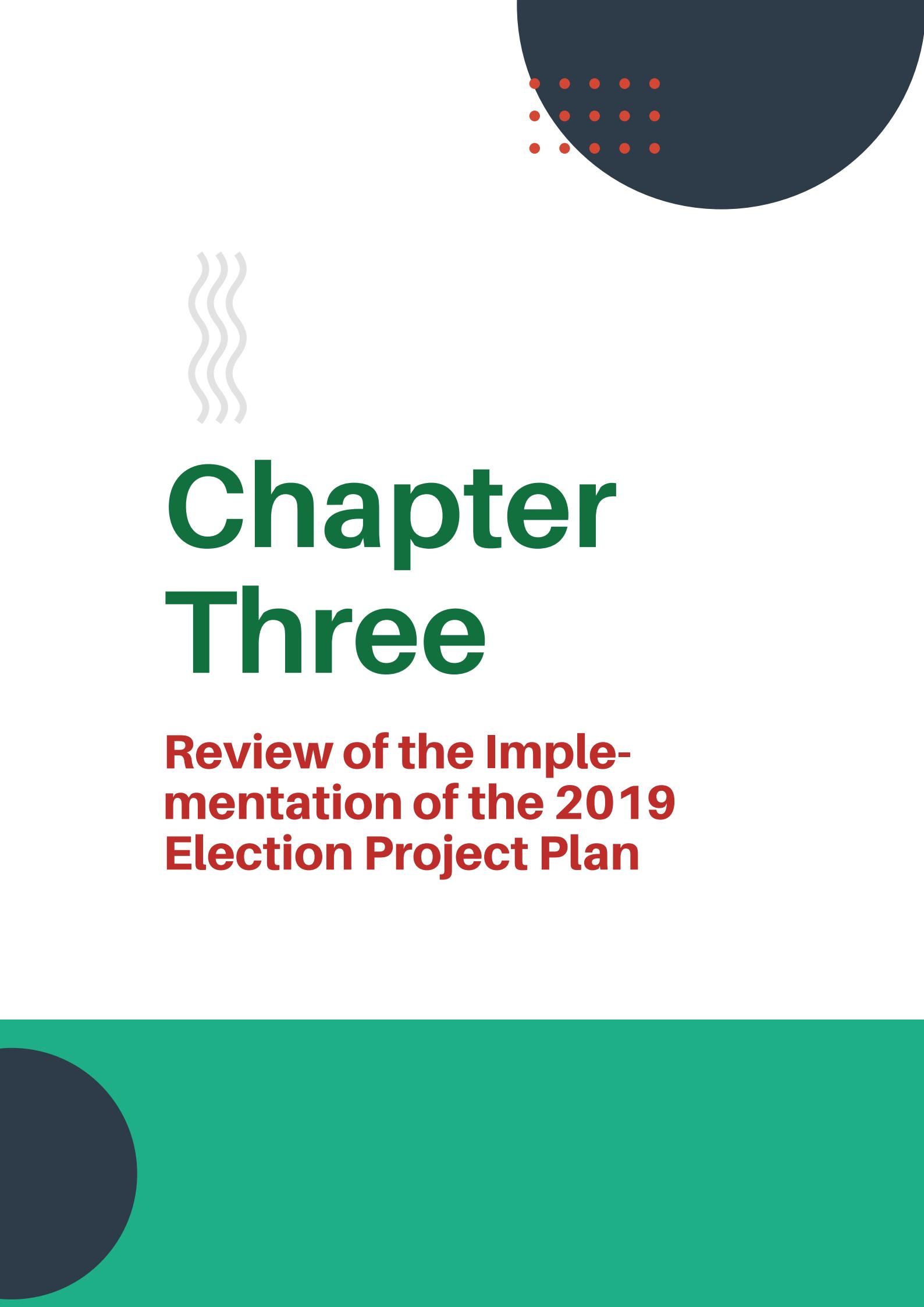
Compliance monitoring and evaluation

of planned activities remain a major challenge throughout the Plan implementation period. The key performance indicators (KPIs) developed along with the Plan and annexed to it, which provided the template for quarterly tracking of the output from the activities being undertaken was not utilised by the activity managers.

#### 2.4.7 Funding and Financing Electoral Activities

The Commission's annual budget continues to operate on the "Envelope" template provided by the Budget Office through budget call circulars. The approach could encounter delays during appropriation process and render the Commission unable to fund some of its key activities on demand. Many unperformed activities were attributed either to lack of funding approval or to delays in the releases of funds.

**The approach could encounter delays during appropriation process and render the Commission unable to fund some of its key activities on demand**



# **Chapter Three**

**Review of the Imple-  
mentation of the 2019  
Election Project Plan**

## 3.1 Background

In the 2019 EPP, the Commission detailed a series of coordinated activities, timelines, and responsibilities sequenced in sets of broad tasks grouped into nine Principal Business Areas (PBAs) to ensure a focused and programmatic management and implementation of the 2019 general election. These PBAs included: - i. Election Day Logistics (EDL); ii. Election Day Training (EDT); iii. Election Day Staff Management (ESM); iv. Election Day Support (EDS); v. Political Party and Candidate Management (PPCM); vi. Continuous Voter Registration (CVR); Election Day Procurement (EDP); viii. Voter and Publicity (VEP); and ix. Complaints and Dispute Management (CDM). While these will be discussed in the following pages, it is worth noting that the Plan also developed a detailed implementation process, identified key risk factors, and suggested risk management mechanisms to mitigate known and emergent challenges. Thus, the Plan formed the backbone not just of the 2019 general election, but also for the conduct of all the off-season Governorship and bye-elections before and since 2019.

## 3.2 Election Project Planning and Monitoring Tools for the 2019 General Election

Since 2011, the Commission has increasingly relied on specific tools to monitor, track and implement election-day processes almost in real-time. Such tools enabled the Commission to have visuals of the progress of the implementation of field events through a dashboard, in addition to the verbal and documentary reports from field officers. The effort to visualize field

events more clearly began with the monitoring and tracking of incidents during the 2011 Voter Registration exercise through the newly created mechanism of the Situation Room. Since then, the role and monitoring capacity of the Situation Room has vastly improved with the creation of the INEC Citizen Contact Centre, the provision of internet connectivity and dashboards, telephony services, social media handles, the Commission's own field officers as well as linkages with Civil Society monitoring and reporting hubs such as Reclaim Naija, Enough is Enough (EiE) and ReVoda. Information on incidents stream from all these sources into the Situation Room where the entire Commission reviewed and intervened to resolve reported ongoing challenges in the field.

The expansion in the scale of electoral operations in terms of the number of personnel, locations of deployments, and activities as well as the challenges encountered by the Commission in the planning and conduct of the 2011 general election necessitated not only more specialized planning, monitoring, and support tools, but also a closer, 'visual and real-time' view of field events and activities as an election unfolded. Between 2012 and 2014, the Commission developed five additional, more systematized planning, implementation and monitoring mechanisms meant to support the conduct of the 2015 general election and other subsequent elections. These included: i. A mechanism for the regular planning of the Commission's activities in each Electoral Cycle in the form of 4-year strategic plans/ strategic programmes of action; ii. An Election Project Plan for general, bye-, and off-cycle governorship elections (EPP); iii. An Election Management System (EMS) and later, Election Monitoring and Support Centre (EMSC); iv. An Election Risk Management Tool (ERM) / Election Violence Mitigating and Advocacy Tool

(EVMAT); and; v. An Elections Operations and Support Centre (EOSC). These mechanisms have become standard operational tools for the planning, implementation, monitoring and support for elections across Electoral

Cycles in the Commission since 2012. These were central in the planning, conduct and monitoring of the 2015 and 2019 general elections and every other election.

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In line with the practice of the Commission since the 2011 general election, it undertook a comprehensive review of the 2015 general election and all the implementation mechanisms deployed in that election. The 2015 Post-Election Review clearly indicated the need to create a broader and more harmonized framework and platform for the planning, monitoring, implementation, and conduct of electoral activities as well as the provision of early warning and support system for field services and personnel during elections. One of the most critical planning tools for the 2019 general election was the 2017 - 2021 SP/SPA. The SP/SPA outlined in detail the range of Commission's activities for the entire 2015 - 2019 Electoral Cycle up to 2021. Identified by lead and collaborating Departments and Directorates and sequenced in the order of Implementation, these

activities formed the core of the planning and workflow process of the Commission on election-related activities. The 2019 EPP essentially derived all the activities directly related to the 2019 general election from the broader SP/SPA and sequenced them in the order of their occurrence, identified task owners, assigned responsibilities, created timelines, and established implementation, monitoring mechanisms.

Second, arising from the recommendations of the post-election reviews and the Report of the 2015 general election, the 2019 EPPC recommended the creation of an integrated implementation, monitoring and support system that would bring together the EMS, ERM and EOSC as the Election Monitoring and Support Centre

**The 2019 EPP essentially derived all the activities directly related to the 2019 general election from the broader SP/SPA and sequenced them in the order of their occurrence, identified task owners, assigned responsibilities, created timelines, and established implementation, monitoring mechanisms**

(EMSC). The EMSC constituted the Commission's 'hub' for the monitoring and implementation of the EPP and at the same time, a platform for real-time field support to electoral operations. Conscious that an integrated election monitoring tool could make for better efficiency and coordination of the planning and implementation, an EMSC Secretariat was established at the Headquarters and in all State and FCT Offices. An operational/implementation framework, Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), harmonised EMSC checklist from the three integrated monitoring tools with 362 indicators, a Mobile App, reporting schedules, as well as a central EMSC monitoring dashboard was also put in place to provide an effective framework for monitoring, tracking and support services for the general election.

To understand the EMSC framework, structure, and operation, it is important to highlight its key components, the EMS, ERM and the EOSC. The Election

Management System (EMS) was established in response to some of the recommendations of the various post 2011 general election reviews which advised the Commission to identify, map and sequence the range of activities and tasks required for the conduct of an election so that it can be moved from reactive, 'knee-jerk' approaches to electoral planning to more a proactive, institutionalized mechanisms and exercise greater control over the management and conduct of elections within an Electoral Cycle. As earlier stated, the EMS identified, mapped, and sequenced critical election activities into seven (7) key areas that had historically posed challenges to electoral planning. This is with the objective of creating clear monitoring, implementation, and support services to workflow diagrams for each area to move the Commission out of its largely 'reactive,' 'knee-jerk' responses to the provision of electoral services to more systematized 'proactive,' modes. A move that is consistent with the Commission's objective of restructuring, reorganising and redesigning its business processes to better deliver electoral services.

The ERM and Election Violence Mitigating and Advocacy Tool (EVMAT) were designed to enhance the Commission' capacity to identify, analyse and suggest preventive or mitigating measures in mitigating electoral risk and facilitating quick intervention and support system to deal with security threats to the electoral process. Both tools were developed in the wake of the 2011 post-election violence and the heightened state of insecurity in the North-eastern part of the country and deployed in 2014 to support the Commission in identifying possible triggers for election-related violence and to monitor electoral risks in preparation for the 2015 general election and other elections.

Finally, the EOSC provides information and intervention support to field officers on key election activities 24 hours before an election and up to the declaration of election results. The Operational Centre maintained surveillance, monitored compliance, identified threats, and delivering focused interventions and interacted with field officers to respond to emergent field activities at registration area camps (RACs), and the polling units during accreditation, voting and close of polls (AV&C) and at result collation and declaration centres.

These three planning, monitoring, implementation and support tools were integrated into the EMSC for the conduct of the 2019 general election.

### 3.3 Review of the 2019 Election Project Planning and Monitoring Tools

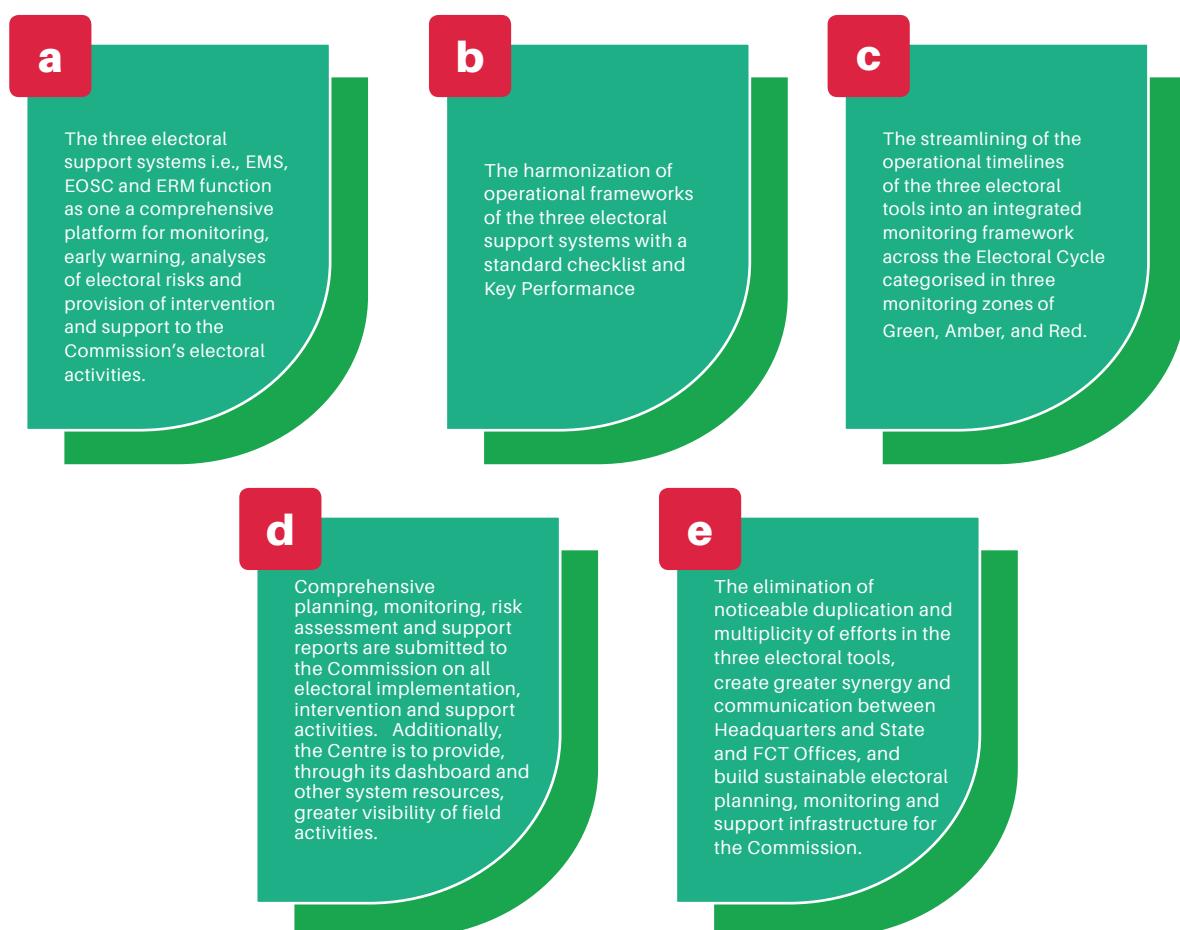
In assessing the efficiency and effectiveness of the EMSC for driving the implementation of the 2019 EPP and the general election, it is important to note that the undercurrent of territoriality and ring-fencing between Departments still haunted its operational effectiveness. Although this situation reduced markedly from 2015, it still lingered in the way the three desk officers operated

in the State and FCT Offices. Instead of serving as critical focal persons for the implementation of the EPP as operationalized in the EMSC's 362 Key Performance Indicators, the desk officers at the directive of their Departmental Heads sometimes acted as lone rangers hindering the integrative and optimal functioning of the EMSC. This situation was more evident in the operation of the EOSC than with the EMS and ERM. Thus, rather than operate with a unity of purpose for the delivery of free, fair, and credible elections, the three monitoring tools worked at cross purposes, each maintaining its own distinct monitoring checklist and dashboard. Consequently, the harmonisation of the primary operational data obtained from the fields and the creation of institutional memory became a major barrier to the implementation of the EPP. As the Commission prepares for the 2023 general election, it is critical to ensure the seamless integration of the election management tool given the growing complexity of the entire electoral eco-system. Furthermore, the increasing deployment of electoral technology and the growing confidence in the electoral processes and outcomes requires greater coordination, efficiency and effectiveness in the planning, implementation, monitoring and support that the EMSC provides.

*Thus, rather than operate with a unity of purpose for the delivery of free, fair, and credible elections, the three monitoring tools worked at cross purposes, each maintaining its own distinct monitoring checklist and dashboard. Consequently, the lack of synergy, the harmonisation of the primary operational data obtained from the fields and the creation of institutional memory became major barriers to the implementation of the EPP. As the Commission prepares for the 2023 general election, it is critical to ensure the seamless integration of the election management tool given the growing complexity of the entire electoral eco-system. Furthermore, the increasing deployment of electoral technology and the growing confidence in the electoral processes and outcomes requires greater coordination, efficiency and effectiveness in the planning, implementation, monitoring and support to electoral planning that the EMSC provides*

Despite these challenges, the planning tools presented the Commission with the opportunity to have greater control over the entire electoral process. From logistics and operational matters, through to the conduct of the CVR, the monitoring of political party activities, engagement with stakeholders, to the use of EADR as a mechanism for conflict resolution, crucial field data and assessments were provided, which enabled the Commission to track the implementation of the EPP and have a broad view of the overall implementation status of all electoral activities. It is for this reason that a closer attention needs to be given to the operations of the EMSC by the Commission as it prepares for the 2023 general election and future debts.

The EMSC was mandated to ensure that:



### 3.4 Operationalization of the Elections Monitoring and Support Centre

The rationale for the establishment of the EMSC is to create a dynamic and integrated planning, implementation, monitoring and support framework capable of providing the Commission a 360-degree view of the entire election process. The integration of three monitoring and support tools that sometimes worked at cross-purposes was based on the recommendation of the 2019 Election Project Planning Committee. Consequently, the EMSC was established with a permanent secretariat under the Planning and Monitoring Directorate and secretariats in the State and FCT Offices.

### **3.4.1 The EMSC Operational Framework**

The EMSC effectively monitors the implementation of the electoral activities outlined in the 2019 EPP by providing data on:-

- i. Compliance with the scheduled activities for the general election and related activities;
- ii. Election readiness statuses of departments and units tasked with specified activities;
- iii. Performance evaluation of the nature and levels of implementation;
- iv. Threats/risks analyses; and
- v. Real-time support to field activities.

The EMSC monitored these activities across the Commission's three administrative and operational levels viz: the HQ, State Offices (36+FCT) and the Local Government Areas (774 LGAs) through a defined operational framework. The outlined scope of the EMSC requires an operational structure with national coverage and a platform that strings its operations together to realize its objectives. The operational structure comprises of an administrative structure, the principal business areas (PBAs), operational timelines as well as activities and platform resources.

#### **3.4.1.1 The Admininstrative Structure**

While the Commission is responsible for the overall policy coordination, the Planning, Monitoring, and Strategy Committee (PMSC) oversees the day-to-day management of the EMSC. Formulated policies, directives and

plans are implemented on the approval of the Commission. The activities of the Principal Business Areas (PBAs) across its operational levels and timelines are coordinated by PMSC supported by 12 Data Administrators (two for each geopolitical zone) at the HQ and 111 Desk Officers (three per State and the FCT) at the State/FCT EMSC Secretariats. Under the supervision of the Resident Electoral Commissioners (RECs) and in collaboration with the Administrative Secretaries (AS), Heads of Department/ Unit and Electoral Officers, these Desk Officers source and upload approved data and reports from their respective States through the EMSC dashboard to the EMSC Secretariat. These Desk Officers are therefore a critical link in the EMSC chain between the LGAs and State Offices on the one hand, and the States and HQ on the other.

#### **3.4.1.2 The Principal Business Areas**

The 2011 post-election reviews identified several challenges in the conduct and management of the general election that the Commission needed to address to improve the conduct of future elections. These challenges included logistics, the management of ad-hoc electoral staff, training of electoral staff, the management of political parties and candidates, voter registration processes as well as the procurement of goods and services. The Commission organized these challenges into separate categories each with a series of interrelated high, medium, and low-level activities, which needed to be implemented for any election to be conducted. Each set of activities were then grouped into one of the broad identified challenges to constitute the seven (7) Principal Business Areas (PBAs) as follows: (i) Election Day Logistics (EDL); (ii) Election Staff Management (ESM); (iii) Election Day

Training (EDT); (iv) Political Party and Candidate Management (PPCM); (v) Continuous Voter Registration (CVR); (vi) Election Day Procurement (EDP); and

(vii) Election Day Support (EDS) which is an overarching activity straddling and supervising the implementation of all the other six activities.

Thereafter, thousands of lower-level activities/tasks were identified, mapped, sequenced, and assigned to task owners in line with approved work schedules. These activities were classified into high, medium, and low-level tasks with timelines based on the Electoral Calendar for effective implementation and tracking to ensure that no task falls through cracks.

In the 2019 EPP, two additional PBAs, Voter Education and Publicity and Complaints and Dispute Management were added to bring the number of PBAs to 9. In developing the 2023 EPP, against the background of the Commission's focus on inclusivity and the prevailing security situation in the country, two additional PBAs, Election Security and Gender and Inclusivity would be added bringing the PBAs to 11.

### **3.4.1.3 EMSC Operational Timelines and Activities**

The operational timelines are the schedules within which a set of planned electoral activities should be implemented either as dictated by the legal framework or on the bases of defined EPP operational plans. Pursuant to the implementation of the 2019 EPP, the EMSC sequentially organized the thousands of activities to deliver the election into 30 broad categories with implementation timelines. The EMSC operational timelines were then strategically aligned with the election

timeline to track compliance monitoring,

evaluate performance, assess election readiness and identify threats/risks at various stages in the run-up to the elections.

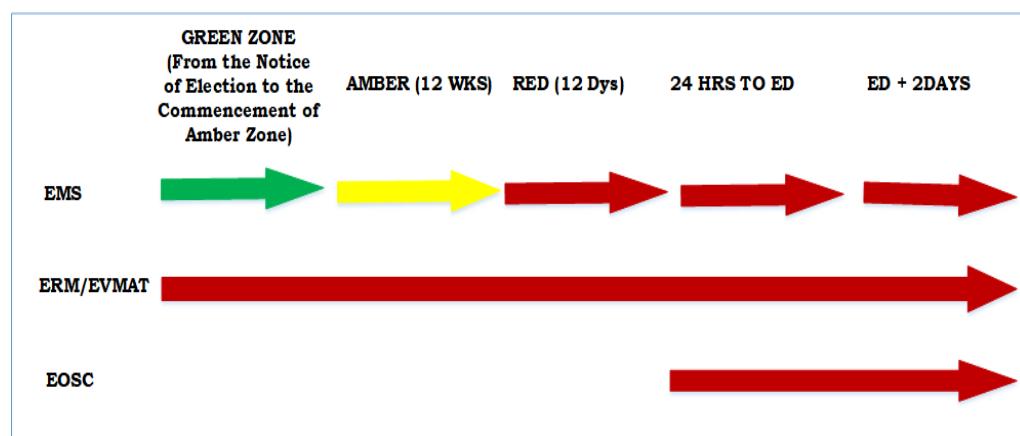
Three timelines, called the Green, Amber and Red Zones were established for the 2019 general elections. While the Green Zone normally commences with the release of the Timetable and Schedule of Activities for an election, the Amber Zone with a timeline of 16 weeks begins 14 weeks before an election and ends two weeks to an election and the 12 days Red Zone consisting of nine days to Election Day, Election Day and two days after the election as illustrated in Figure 2 and 3.

Following the Commission's decision in 2017 to permanently fix the date of a general election on the third Saturday of the month of February of every election year, the span of the Green Zone was expanded to include the necessary post-election planning and preparatory activities and all other activities from the announcement of the timetable and schedule of activities for the election to about 16 -18 weeks before the election. In the Amber Zone period between 18 November 2018 and 3 February 2019, the EMSC assisted the Commission in tracking and monitoring the implementation and establishing the status readiness of the preparative activities undertaken in the Green Zone. In the 12 days period of the Red Zone, the EMSC tracked the implementation status of critical electoral activities for nine days to identify gaps, which could constitute potential threats to the election. The tracking of the status of activities is undertaken on a daily-to-hourly basis in order to mobilize necessary interventions in ensuring that the election plans are on track and are implemented as planned. This is

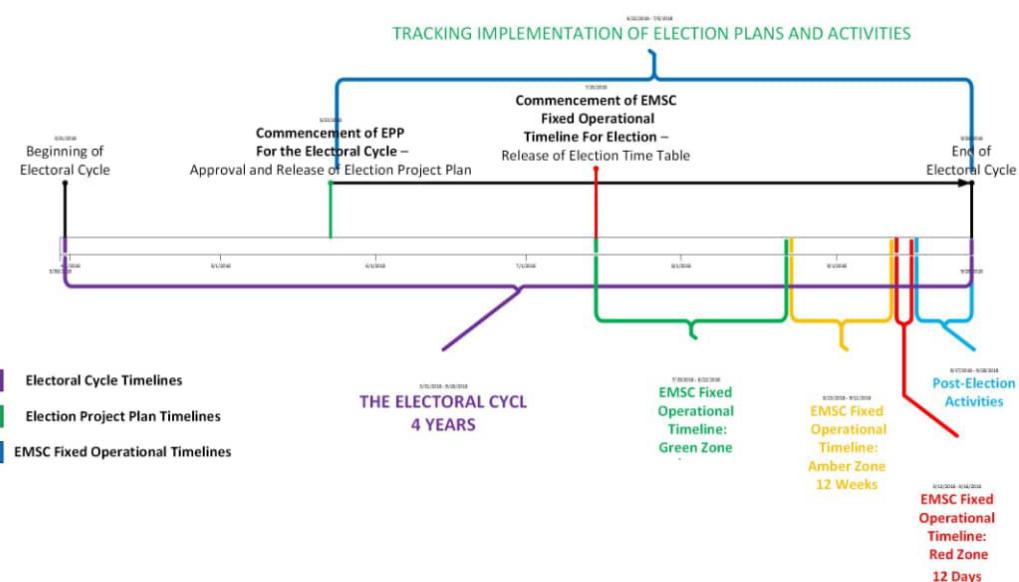
followed by tracking the Election Day activities, which is the climax of the entire planning processes, and preparative activities (starting from the Green to the Amber Zone timelines) for the election and of the immediate post-election activities to ensure completeness of the electoral operational plans and submission of election reports. For the 2019 general election, there were two

phases of the Red Zone periods resulting from the INEC election timetable, which scheduled the Presidential, and National Assembly election for 16 February 2019, and the Governorship and State Houses of Assembly election for 2 March 2019. The first Red Zone phase was therefore from 7 to 18 February, while the second phase was from 21 February to 4 March 2019.

**Figure 2: Activation Timelines for Components Parts of EMSC**



**Figure 3: EMSC Electoral Cycle Operational Timelines**



The range of activities monitored by the EMSC for each of the three Zones is as illustrated in Table 4. These activities are

reviewed from time to time in response to the Commission's operational needs and electoral planning requirements.

**Table 4: EMSC Monitoring Timelines and Activities for each Zone**

S/No	Green Zone	Amber Zone	Red Zone
1.	Post-Election Reviews		
2.	General Election Report		
3.	Development of New Strategic Plan		
4.	Development of New Election Project Plan		
5.	Formulation of New EMSC Workplan		
6.	Delimitation Data	Legal Requirements	Election Funds
7.	Party Primaries	Recruitment of Ad-hoc Staff	Transportation
8.	Campaign & Electioneering	BVAS	Sensitive Materials
9.	Inventory of BVAS	Security	Deployment of Security Personnel
10.	Condition of Storage Facilities	Printing of Voters' Register	RAC Camp Activities
11.		Non-Sensitive Materials	Continuous Accreditation and Voting
12.		Civic Voter Education & Public Enlightenment	Retrieval of Election Materials
13.		RAC Preparation	Collation (RA & LGA)
14.		Collation Centre Preparation	Preparation & Submission of Report
15.		Training of SPOs	
16.		Training of EO/AEOs	
17.		Training of PO/APOs	
18.		PVC Collection	
19.		Condition of Stores (LGA)	
20.		Batching of Electoral Materials	
21.		Complaints & Dispute Management	

#### 3.4.1.4 EMSC Platform Resources

The EMSC's platform resources consist of several tools designed to support all category of users for data collection, reporting and access to information. It consists of all deployed

equipment, which include a checklist, forms, reporting formats/templates, internet, computers, dashboard, and communication channels etc. As a critical component of the overall framework, it provides the handles and interfaces across its scope and

operational footprints, stringing together processes, activities, tools, and personnel, thereby providing the necessary communication channels and flow of data, information, and reports across the administrative/operational levels throughout the entire electoral timelines. Designed as an enterprise solution to support task supervisors, managers and owners to collect relevant data for tracking the implementation of activities for the various electoral constituencies, it is a data-driven system dependent on the level of data uploaded to the platform.

### 3.5 Analysis of the Principal Business Areas in the Implementation of the 2019 Election Project Plan

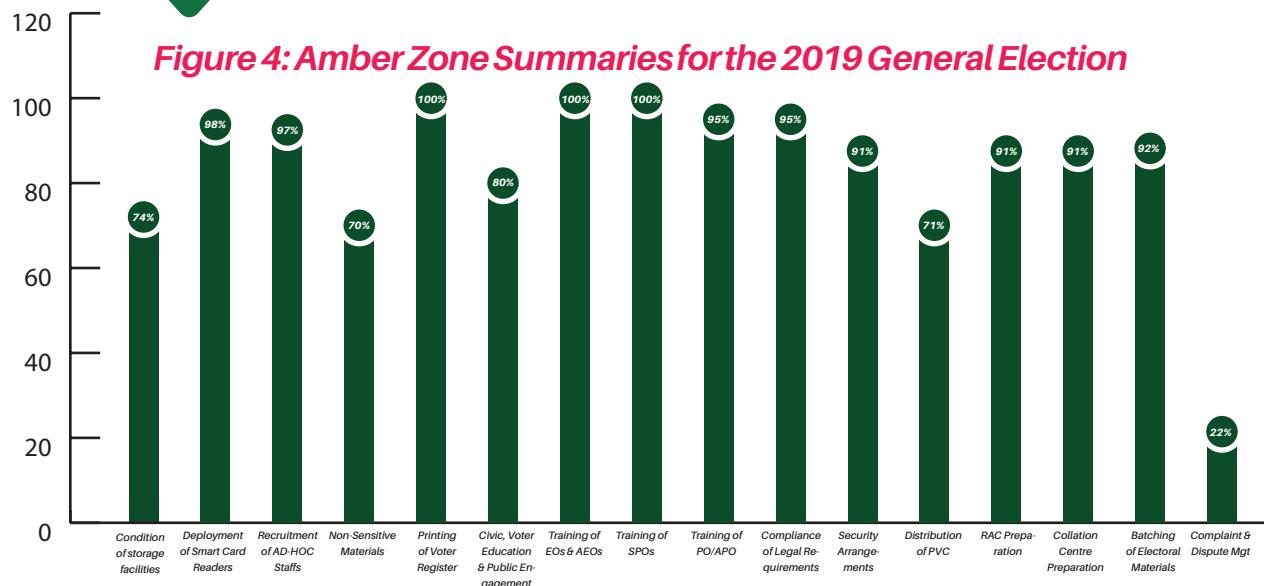
The nine Principal Business Areas of the Plan were critical in identifying, sequencing, tracking, and monitoring

the implementation of key activities and programmes for elections. It is crucial to evaluate the performance of these nine Principal Business Areas to establish the challenges and lessons learnt from the 2019 EPP in the planning and preparation of the 2023 EPP.

#### 3.5.1 Election Day Logistics (EDL)

Election day logistics focuses on the range of activities to be implemented for the timely deployment and retrieval of personnel and materials across electoral locations nationwide. Based on the activities monitored by the EMSC on the eve of the 2019 general election, implementation status ranged between 70 - 92% as shown in Figure 3. Activities such as the preparation of storage facilities as well as the receipt, storage, batching and deployment of election materials across the chain to the 119,973 PUs, and the preparation of RACs and Collation centres were all monitored by the EMSC.

*While performance across these activities was satisfactory in the run up to the elections, they could have been better if situation reports were turned in as and when due. Other factors that affected the logistics of the election included inadequate infrastructure for the support of huge logistic operations, transportation challenges insufficient operational vehicles, nonchalant attitudes, dereliction of duties especially in reverse logistics and absence of security personnel to escort election officials to the RAs, PUs and collation centres*



### **3.5.2 Election Staff Management (ESM)**

The recruitment, management, remuneration and disciplining of nearly one million ad-hoc electoral officials is a major challenge. The recruitment of ad-hoc staff for the election was done through an online portal, INECPRES that enabled the Commission to identify, track, manage, and communicate with most of these electoral officials in the field. The EMSC tracking process established that 97% of required ad-hoc staff for the election were recruited and trained as shown in Figure 4 above. However, in a few cases, these trained ad-hoc staff were substituted for sundry reasons and replaced by untrained persons with a negative impact on performance on Election Day.

### **3.5.3 Election Day Training (EDT)**

Tracking of training activities for EOIs, AEOs to SPOs, APOs and security personnel were conducted nationwide without any major hitches with an implementation score of between 95 and 100%. However, the late production of training materials resulted in the late commencement of training and inadequate training materials. Furthermore, the trainings took place when many schools were still in session, which meant that classrooms were unavailable until late afternoons thereby limiting the training period with adverse consequences.

### **3.5.4 Political Party and Candidates' Management (PPCM)**

With 91 political parties, the monitoring of party primaries and nomination process of 22,265 candidates for the executive

and legislative elections as well as 974 candidates for the FCT Chairmanship and Councillorship election was not an easy task. Overall, the Commission monitored 803 party primaries for the nomination of candidates for the Governorship election and 908, 948 and 947 party primaries for Senatorial, Federal and State Constituency elections respectively, which were conducted mostly through the indirect method. While 88 political parties gave notices for the conduct of their primaries, two parties, Congress of Patriots (COP) and Modern Democratic Party (MDP) failed to give any notice whatsoever. Even those that gave notices, many shifted the date, time and venue of these primaries several times. Following some of the challenges associated with the submission of nominations at the International Conference Centre for the 2019 general election, the Commission subsequently created a portal for the online submission of nominations which has considerably eliminated several of the bottlenecks and hastened the entire nomination submission process. Going towards 2023, the process needs to be enhanced to make it even easier for political parties to upload and submit the details of their nominated candidates through the Portal.

### **3.5.5 Continuous Voter Registration (CVR)**

Details of the conduct of the CVR for the 2019 general election are well documented in the Commission's Reports and need not be rehearsed here. The tracking of the CVR process covered all the activities from the enrolment of new registrants, replacement of lost or damaged cards, transfer of voters upon request, conduct of display for claims and objection to the collection of PVCs. These activities were successfully carried out despite the challenges relating to the

cost, registration timeframe, slowness of registration devices, last minute rushes to register, as well as issues with the collection of PVCs.

### 3.5.6 Election Day Procurement (EDP)

Election Day Procurement, which enables the Commission track procurement of required electoral goods and services has worked fairly well since it was established as a business area for the 2015 general election. Unfortunately, the procurement process for the 2019 general election was adversely affected by unrealised expectation of a new legal framework, conflicting judgements from courts of coordinate jurisdictions arising from party primaries and the late release of funds. These issues impacted on the timely procurement and delivery of sensitive election materials and ultimately led to the postponement of the election by one week.

### 3.5.7 Election Day Support (EDS)

Election Day Support is the culmination of the activities emanating from five fast-tracked business areas. Its actualisation depends on whether the finances, transportation, workspace, communications, staffing, materials, security, information dissemination, and logistics requirements are adequate and delivered on scheduled. The late implementation of some of these activities impeded the early procurement of sensitive and non-sensitive election materials and impacted negatively on Election Day Support activities as shown in Table 5 as well as in Figures 5 and 6

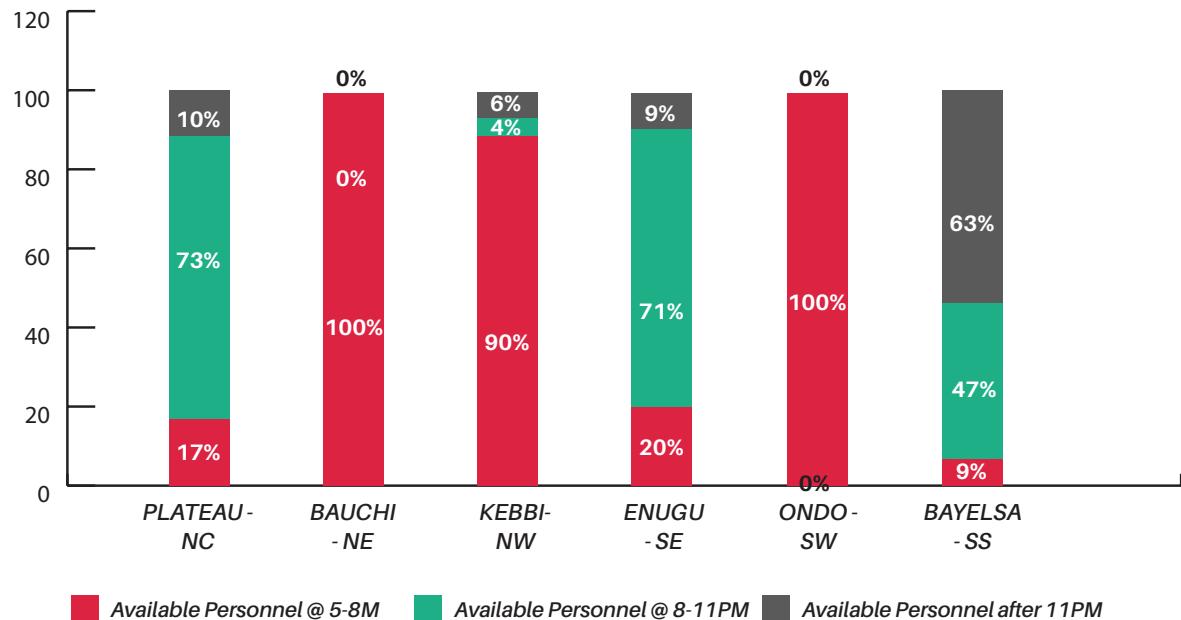
### 3.5.8 Voter Education and Publicity (VEP)

The EMSC monitored the voter education and publicity activities for the election from Headquarters to the State and FCT Offices. Despite the best of efforts, conducting voter education and public enlightenment remains a challenge due to inadequate funds, poor network access and epileptic or non-existent power supply in the hinterlands, difficult terrains and poor road network. The inability to effectively disseminate voter education and sensitisation messages through various channels and platforms could result in voter apathy, lack of understanding of the voting process, and high incidence of spoilt ballots during elections. Although there was noticeable improvement in the participation of women, PwDs and other vulnerable groups in the 2019 general election, the channels of voter education and public enlightenment on the electoral process in collaboration with relevant stakeholders must be expanded and strengthened to promote greater inclusivity.

### 3.5.9 Complaints and Dispute Management (CDM)

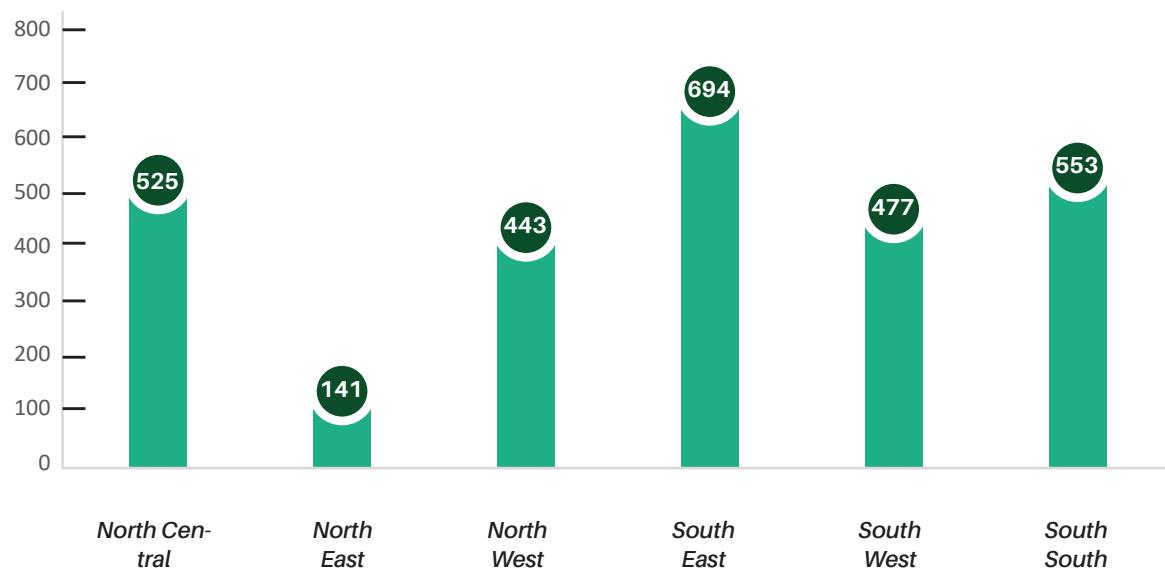
The business area deals with workplace disputes within INEC and intra-party pre-election, election and post-election disputes and conflicts and particularly with disputes around candidate nomination, which often ends up in litigations that adversely impact on the Commission's preparations for elections. It emphasises the use of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) for managing electoral disputes.

**Figure 5: RAC Activation in Selected States Across the Geopolitical Zones for the 2019 General Election**



**Figure 6: Risk and Threat Analyses by Geopolitical Zone**

ELECTION MONITORING AND SUPPORT CENTRE ANALYSIS ON DISTRIBUTION OF THREATS & RISKS REPORTED INCIDENCES ON GEO-POLITICAL ZONES DURING THE 2019 GENERAL ELECTION  
EMSC TIMELINES: GREEN, AMBER & RED ZONES



**Table 5: Accreditation and Voting in Selected States by Geopolitical Zone**

Number of Polling Units	States/Geo-Political Zone	EMSC Timelines	% PUs Opened 8am	% PUs Opened 8am - 10am	% PUs Opened After 10am	% PUs Yet to Open As of 2pm	% Of Pus Closed at 2pm
2,613	PLATEAU - NC	1st Red Zone	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%
2,613		2nd Red Zone	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%
4074	BAUCHI - NE	1st Red Zone	93%	6%	1%	0%	0%
4074		2nd Red Zone	50%	49%	0%	1%	0%
2398	KEBBI- NW	1st Red Zone	77%	23%	0%	0%	67%
2398		2nd Red Zone	4%	96%	0%	0%	3%
2958	ENUGU - SE	1st Red Zone	27%	71%	2%	0%	0%
2958		2nd Red Zone	32%	66%	2%	0%	27%
3009	ONDO - SW	1st Red Zone	100%	0%	0%	0%	100%
3009		2nd Red Zone	99%	1%	0%	0%	100%
1804	BAYELSA - SS	1st Red Zone	0%	1%	94%	5%	52%
1804		2nd Red Zone	65%	23%	8%	4%	76%



# Chapter Four

**The 2023 Election Project  
Plan**

## 4.1 Background

The principal functions of the Independent National Electoral Commission as set out in Section 15, Part 1 of the Third Schedule of the 1999 Constitution (As Amended) and Section 2 of the Electoral Act 2022 include the following:

- i. 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;
- ii. Register political parties in accordance with the provisions of the constitution and Act of the National Assembly.
- iii. Monitor the organization and operation of the political parties, including their finances, conventions, congresses and party primaries.
- iv. 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;
- v. 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;
- vi. Monitor political campaigns and provide rules and regulations which shall govern the political parties;
- vii. Conduct voter and civic education;
- viii. Promote knowledge of sound

- ix. democratic election processes; and
- x. Conduct any referendum pursuant to the provision of the 1999 Constitution or any other law or Act of the National Assembly, including recall.

Consequently, the organization and supervision of general elections is a core function of the Commission. Since 1999, the Commission, by law, has conducted five general elections in 2003, 2007, 2011, 2015, and 2019 each with its own peculiarities and challenges. The one lesson learnt from the varied outcomes of these elections that has become the litmus test for evaluating the performance of successive Commissions is the need for adequate planning and preparations. Given the quantum of personnel and materials required for general elections in a country as large and complex as Nigeria, the importance of proper planning ahead of general elections cannot be overemphasised. Indeed, inability to put in place a detailed project planning and implementation ahead of a general election can be catastrophic.

It was for this reason that in the aftermath of the 2019 general election, the Commission received several commendations for the far-reaching improvements recorded in the organization of the polls, despite the challenges of time, planning and resources that confronted it. The Commission was also cognizant of the need for timely and adequate planning towards future general elections, considering that there were several areas requiring improvements. Consequently, preparations for the 2023 general election commenced in earnest with the assumption that the election will be better conducted.

As part of the development of the 2023 EPP, the Commission undertook a review of the 2019 EPP in implementing the 1,495 activities and sub-activities in this plan categorized into 1,303 pre-election,

80 election and 112 post-election activities, a number of key challenges were identified and categorized into five thematic areas as follows:

## 1. Electoral Legal Framework

- i. Delayed Amendments to Substantive Legislation.
- ii. Electoral Dispute Adjudication.
- iii. Political Party Registration, Regulation and Candidate Nomination Processes.
- iv. Prosecution of Electoral Offenders.

## 2. Operational Challenges

- i. Logistics Planning and Support
- ii. Infrastructural Support
- iii. Election Security
- iv. Compliance Monitoring
- iii. Electoral Staff Management

## 3. Human Capital and Organizational Challenges

- i. Documentation, Processes and Procedures
- ii. Training and Capacity Building
- ii. Existing Generational Gap in Workforce
- iv. Staff Welfare

## 4. Funding and Financing Electoral Activities

- i. Appropriation and Cash Releases
- ii. Procurement Planning and Approval
- iii. Budget Performance
- Processes

## 5. Communication

- i. Internal Communication
- ii. External Communication

The Commission firmly believes that the efficient organisation of the election within a political and socio - economic environment characterised by complex intra- and inter- party relations will further boost the confidence of Nigerians in the democratic process.

## 4.2 Objectives of the 2023 Plan

The overarching objective of this Plan is to conduct a free, fair, credible, peaceful and inclusive general election for Nigeria in 2023 with a generally acceptable outcome that will inspire the confidence of Nigerians and all stakeholders. The specific objectives are:

- i. To harmonize the activities and needs of all Departments/ Directorates of the Commission into an implementable plan for the 2023 elections.
- ii. To organize the 2023 elections in line with the highest global professional standards.
- iii. To deliver cost-efficient but high-quality general election in 2023.
- iv. To ensure that all stakeholders are carried along and create a level playing field for all candidates and political parties in administering the 2023 general election.
- v. To ensure accountability and responsibility of all INEC staff in the conduct of the 2023 general election

## 4.3 Philosophy and Rationale

The Vision of INEC as reiterated in its Strategic Plan 2022 - 2026 is: "To be one of the best election management

bodies in the world that meets the aspirations of the Nigerian people". The Strategic Plan also enunciates the mission of the Commission, "To serve as an independent and effective EMB committed to the conduct of free, fair and credible elections for sustainable democracy in Nigeria". In line with the vision and mission, seven principles broadly inform this Election Project Plan. They are:

- i. **Efficiency:** The Commission shall conduct the 2023 general election in the most efficient and professional manner, based on global best practices.
- ii. **Cost effectiveness:** The Commission shall ensure that the overall cost of elections is progressively reduced, while not sacrificing quality.
- iii. **Independence:** The Commission shall eschew undue external interference and/or influence in the conduct of the 2023 general election.
- iv. **Timeliness:** The Commission shall ensure that delays in implementation of this plan and overall administration of the 2023 election are reduced to the barest minimum.
- v. **Openness:** In conducting the 2023 general election, the Commission shall be transparent and take all stakeholders into confidence.
- vi. **Equity:** The Commission shall be equitable in dealing with all stakeholders and strive to create a level playing field for all contestants.
- vii. **Accountability:** The Commission shall account to Nigerians for all its actions in organizing the 2023

general election and accept full responsibility for those actions.

## 4.4 Central Assumptions

The 2023 Election Project Plan is anchored on 15 cardinal assumptions as follows:

- i. **Timing:** A central assumption of this plan is that the 2023 general election will take place as scheduled on 25 February and 11 March 2023 giving the Commission just about one year to implement the EPP, learn lessons and make necessary adjustments in time. With the enactment of the Electoral Act 2022, it is important to quickly develop the subsidiary legislations in form of guidelines, regulations and manuals to govern the election.
- ii. **Adequate Finance (appropriation and releases):** The plan assumes that there will be adequate financial allocations for the 2023 general election. This is not just about appropriation, but also about adequate and timely release of funds to the Commission and access to required foreign exchange component of the budget for offshore procurements of essential electoral materials.
- iii. **Socio-political Stability:** A cardinal factor for the successful implementation of this plan, and indeed for conducting the elections is a stable and peaceful socio-political environment. Apart from the precarious security situation in the Northeast of the country and its attended negative consequences, there are several other challenges including banditry, separatist agitations, farmers-herders and inter-communal tensions and conflicts across the country. Indications are that if not adequately addressed, these situations may heighten as the 2023 general election approaches. Without a stable and peaceful socio-political environment, it will be difficult to actualise this plan.
- iv. **Support of Development Partners and Stakeholders:** The work of the Commission has benefitted immensely from the support of development partners. During the 2019 election, no less than five key development partners supported the work of the Commission. Although in relative terms the support received from them is only a small fraction of what government invested in the elections, the goodwill and the timely allocation of resources, especially in the aftermath of the six weeks postponement helped the Commission immensely. In addition, the support of other critical stakeholders such as the media, civil society organisations, especially those involved in election observation, security agencies and political parties are invaluable. We assume that support of these stakeholders will remain substantial in the build-up to the 2023 general election and beyond.
- v. **Public Order and Security:** Maintenance of public order and security of life and properties remains a very important part of election management in Nigeria. During elections, the demand side of public security expands tremendously, and the assumption is that the supply side will match that expansion. The work of ICCES remains crucial in ensuring public order and for securing an electioneering environment to make it conducive for the peaceful conduct of the 2023 general election. It is

important to secure INEC personnel and materials, as well as voters, candidates and important national assets.

**vi. Cohesion and unanimity of purpose within the Commission:** Internal cohesion against extraneous and external attempts at undermining and discrediting the Commission will heighten as elections draw near. It is important for the Commission to maintain a sense of common unity and purpose for the full attainment of this plan. The focused implementation of the plan is required to build public trust and confidence in the capacity of the Commission to deliver free, fair and credible elections. A critical assumption is that effective communication and coordination would be deployed towards a focused implementation of the EPP.

**vii. Adequate Training and Capacity Building for Staff:** Continual institutional capacity resulting in adequately trained and knowledgeable staff is a desideratum to successful execution of any election plan. Our assumption is that there will be adequate capacity building programmes to prepare both the regular and ad-hoc staff for their electoral duties through training, knowledge sharing and peer learning.

**viii. Availability and Adequacy of Appropriate Technology:** The deployment of technology has become an important and progressively indispensable instrument in the conduct of contemporary elections. Many of the credible elections with acceptable electoral outcomes are now necessarily technology-assisted (not necessarily technology-driven).

We assume that adequate, relevant and affordable technology will be available to support this election plan.

**ix. Timely Procurement:** Elections are time bound and a central assumption of this plan is that the procurement process, which can be tortuous and time consuming will commence, proceed and deliver in a timely manner. In this regard, we assume that the upgrading by the Commission of the Procurement Directorate to a full Department and the introduction of the harmonised procurement procedure in compliance with the provisions of the Public Procurement Act 2007 and other extant regulations will facilitate a coordinated and timely procurement of election materials.

**x. Effectiveness of Committees of the Commission:** The actualization of this plan depends on the workings of several committees of the Commission including Standing Committees, Procurement Committees, etc. This plan assumes that these Committees will meet as scheduled or as required to facilitate the implementation of this plan.

**xi. Attitudinal Change:** Substantial parts of this plan entail changing "the way we do things". For instance, the numerous dependencies characteristic of the activity-based approach adopted by this plan calls for cooperation and coordination among Departments and Directorates through regular information sharing, strict adherence to timelines, etc. Changing longstanding approaches to work calls for proper attitudinal change as part of implementing this EPP

*Substantial parts of this plan entail changing “the way we do things”. For instance, the numerous dependencies characteristic of the activity-based approach adopted by this plan calls for cooperation and coordination among Departments and Directorates through regular information sharing, strict adherence to timelines, etc. Changing longstanding approaches to work calls for proper attitudinal change as part of implementing this EPP*

Similarly, the territoriality noticed in the operation of the EMSC needs to be firmly addressed.

**xii. Supportive Legal System:** The legal system could either hinder or facilitate election management. Court orders could slow down or even fetter the implementation of this Plan. An important assumption is therefore that the legal system will remain supportive of the work of the Commission during the plan period. The enactment of the Electoral Act 2022 is a very encouraging sign.

**xiii. Adequate Run Time:** A plan is as good as its implementation and adequate run time is of the essence in the successful implementation of a time-bound plan such as an EPP. Consequently, a major assumption for the success of this plan is that there will be ample time to fully implement it. We believe that an early commencement of implementation is very important, and it is hoped that the plan will run for at least 12 months to the election.

However, this is without prejudice to those pre-election activities in the plan for which implementation must commence immediately.

**xiv. Ownership:** It is important that after this plan is adopted, the Commission works to broaden its ownership across the various segments of the Commission, particularly in the field offices, as well as the public. Notwithstanding that the plan draws from the 2022 -2026 strategic plan and programme of action formulated through a broad-based consultative process and the wide involvement of Departments/ Directorates, as well as field officers countrywide, it is important to ensure that the plan is widely disseminated and accepted across the Commission as the framework for the conduct of the 2023 general election. At the same time, an important assumption of this plan is its ownership by stakeholders and the general citizenry. If the elections are for citizens, they should ab initio understand the contents of the election plan. Consequently, the approved plan should be widely disseminated to carry the public along in order to engender necessary goodwill and support for the Commission to successfully implement the plan

**xv. Effective Planning, Monitoring Mechanism and Evaluation Framework:** The successful management of this plan depends on the extent to which the officials concerned carry out the tasks and responsibilities. Detailed framework and templates for effective planning, monitoring and evaluation of the Plan, agreed and subscribed to by the implementing Departments and Directorates is required to ensure the efficient, effective and timely delivery of assigned tasks and

responsibilities in the plan. This is where the EMSC assumes critical significance

## 4.5 Legal Framework and Principal Activities

INEC derives its powers to conduct elections and other electoral activities from the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 (As Amended) and the Electoral Act 2010 (As Amended). The Commission also has power to issue guidelines, manuals and regulations for the conduct of electoral activities pursuant to the provision of the Electoral Act 2010. This Election Project Plan is circumscribed by timelines delimited by the Constitution and Electoral Act. These legal timelines are enumerated in Table 6.

These include but not limited to:

- i. Elections shall be conducted periodically at intervals of four years not earlier than 150 days nor later than 30 days before the end of term of a holder of office.
- ii. Commission shall conduct register of voters, which shall stop no later than 60 days before the date of election.
- iii. The Commission shall publish the register of voters for an election not less than 30 days before the date of election.

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- iv. Political Parties must submit list of candidates not less than 60 days before an election.
- v. The Commission shall publish the candidates for election not less than 30 days before the date of election.
- vi. Commission shall make the announcement of polls not less than 150 days before an election.

There are 33 Key Election Activities and 416 sub-activities in this plan categorized into 376 pre-election, 12 election and 28 post-election activities. The lead and collaborating Departments/ Directorates, as well as the start dates, deadlines, durations and dependencies are identified and specified for each of the activities.

**Table 6: Major Legal Timelines Guiding the EPP**

S/N	Activity	Time frame	Legislation
1	Tenure of offices of President, Vice President, Governor, Deputy Governor, Membership of National and State Assemblies (Tenure of office)	4 years	Section 135(2), 142(2), 180(2), 187(2), 64 and 105 of the Constitution respectively
2	Date of elections:	Not earlier than 150 days nor later than 30 days before expiration of term	S. 132 (2) Constitution
	(a) President/Vice President		S. 178 (2) Constitution
	(b) Governor/Deputy Governor		S. 76(2) Constitution
	(C) Senate/ House of Representatives		S. 116 (2) Constitution
	(d) Member House of Assembly		Section 76 (2) and 116 (2) Constitution
	(e) Bye elections to fill vacancy in Legislature	Not later than 30 days after vacancy occur	
3	Registration of Voters/ Continuous Voter Registration	At all times but must stop not later than 90 days before an election	Section 9 (6) of the Electoral Act 2022
4	Notification on registered Voters: Political Parties to be notified of all Voters registered each year	Within 60 days after each year	Section 10 (3) of the Electoral Act 2022 (as amended)
5	Inclusion of supplementary list in National Register and Notification of official Register of Voters	As soon as claims and objections have been dealt with or period appointed by the Commission for making claims and objections has expired	Section 10 (6) of the Electoral Act 2022
6	Inclusion of supplementary list in National Register and Notification of official Register of Voters	Period of 7 days not later than 90 days to the general election	Section 19 of the Electoral Act 2022
7	Publication of Register for election after integration of supplementary list of Voters	60 days before a general election	Section 20 of the Electoral Act 2022
8	Registration of Political Parties	Within 90 days of receipt of application	Section 75 of the Electoral Act 2022
9	Merger of Political Parties	Within 60 days of receipt of application	Section 81 (4) of the Electoral Act 2022
	(a) Submission of request for merger	9 months before a general election	Section 81 (2) of the Electoral Act 2022
	(b) Commission to consider and decide on the request	Within 60 days of receipt of request	Section 81 (4) of the Electoral Act 2022

## 4.6 Principal Business Areas for the 2023 EPP

The development and implementation of the EMS from 2012 through to the 2015, 2019 General and other off-season elections have clearly demonstrated the significance of the PBAs in the planning, management, conduct, tracking and the provision of support for electoral activities. In the 2015 general election, there were only 7 PBAs. These included EDL, ESM, EDT, PPM, CVR, EDP and

EDS. These PBAs covered a substantial range of electoral activities that had to be implemented before a General, and to a lesser extent, other elections. Following the 2015 post-election reviews, responding to Commission's critical challenges in the implementation of elections, and in tandem with the architecture of the EMS, new PBAs were to be developed and added to the EMS after each Electoral Cycle in the run-up to the next general election. Thus, two additional PBAs – Voter Education and Publicity (VEP) and Complaints and Disputes Management (CDM) were added, bringing the PBAs for the 2019 general election to nine.

In the same way, two additional PBAs are now imperative. Arising from the lessons learnt, the recommendations of the 2019 post-election reviews as well as certain

developments in the wider political and electoral processes, it has become necessary to develop business areas on security and on gender and inclusivity. The concern with a specific business area on security is important given how, since 2019, election security has become increasingly a major concern. More specifically, election security has taken a wider dimension than the Commission had hitherto treated it; while focus has been largely on direct internal threats to electoral personnel and materials in the planning and conduct elections, threats have now become more generalized to the Commission's facilities and infrastructure outside of election periods. This calls for a broader and closer focus on election security as a critical element in securing the Commission's facilities as well as in the overall planning, management and conduct of elections. This PBA, when fully developed, would track and monitor threats/risks across the Electoral Cycle. Election Day Inclusivity Measures (EDI) involves the expansion of voter access to PUs especially areas with difficult topography, crisis prone regions, the IDP camps, correctional facilities etc. as well as the provision and deployment of all necessary assistive aids such as the Assistive Tactile voting Guide and the magnifying glasses for the visually impaired, people living with Albinism and other forms of disability.



# Chapter Five

**Implementation Process  
for the 2023 Election  
Project Plan**

## 5.1 Introduction

Implementation is the process that turns strategies and plans into actions in order to accomplish strategic objectives and goals. Implementing an Election Project Plan is as important, or even more important, than the strategy. A trend in Nigerian public institutions and agencies is channelling of financial and human resources to put together good plans and procedures, which unfortunately, are often followed by poor implementation. This is attributed to either the lack of required political will and leadership or both. Consequently, the implementation of this cycle of EPP must be intentionally, driven at the highest level of leadership and management in the Commission. For an effective implementation of the Strategic Plan (SP) and Election Project Plan (EPP), the Commission over the years the Commission has been able to build commitment and confidence amongst Departments, Directorates, and Units, through developing a culture that supports attitudinal change. This has essentially eradicated the proclivity of Departments, Directorates, and Units to work in silos, and little regard for coordination, synergy, and unity of purpose. This assertion is based on the common ownership of the Commission's Strategic Plan and Strategic Programme of Action 2017 - 2021 and 2019 EPP, demonstrated by regular consultation, cooperation and synergy amongst Departments, Directorates and Units, as well as between Headquarters, State, Zonal and LGA offices of the Commission.

## 5.2 Critical Success Factors

Critical Success Factors (CSFs) are specific action areas that the Departments, Directorates and Units must focus on and successfully implement to reach strategic objectives

of the Commission. The Successful execution of these success factors will generate a positive outcome and create meaningful value for the Commission. To a large extent, the cardinal factors for the successful implementation of this plan include the following:

- i. Adherence by all stakeholders to the electoral legal framework and timeline for electoral activities.
- ii. Timely development of subsidiary legislation including regulations, guidelines and manuals.
- iii. Adequacy of funds and stability in the foreign exchange market.
- iv. Socio-political stability.
- v. Engagement with, and support from partners and stakeholders.
- vi. Adequate public security.
- vii. Cohesion and unanimity within INEC premised on effective internal communication.
- viii. Professionally trained and knowledgeable staff in sufficient numbers.
- ix. Availability and adequacy of appropriate technology.
- x. Supportive legal system.
- xi. Adequate feedback and review mechanism based on effective monitoring and evaluation.
- xii. Effective attitudinal change.
- xiii. Adequate run time for the plan.
- xiv. Timely and successful integration of the planning, implementation, monitoring and support tools into a single planning, implementation, monitoring and support platform.
- xv. Broad ownership of the plan by the Commission, stakeholders and the public.

## 5.3 Roles and Responsibilities

**A**

### Departments and Directorates (Headquarters and State Offices)

- i. Providing information for the formulation of EPP, including the preparation of the election budget.
- ii. Developing implementation memoranda.
- iii. Develop necessary plans for the timely procurement of required works, goods and services in line with the Procurement Act, 2007, Financial Regulation, Financial Act 2020 and other extant rules.
- iv. Seeking approval from the Commission through its Standing Committees.
- v. Implementing approved implementation memoranda.
- vi. Providing implementation updates to the Chairman and Commission through the Directorate of Planning and Monitoring.
- vii. Monitoring Departmental/Directorate level Management Dashboard.

**B**

### Directorate of Planning and Monitoring

- i. Monitoring the implementation of the plan.
- ii. Flagging issues and triggering action.
- iii. Reporting the implementation progress to the Chairman and Commission.
- iv. Monitoring the EPP Programme Dashboard.

**C**

### Secretary to the Commission

- i. Directing the activities of Departments and Directorates in the implementation of the EPP.
- ii. Directing and controlling staff during plan implementation on the general direction of the Commission.
- iii. Ensuring adequate record keeping and effective internal and external communication.
- iv. Overseeing and superintending over the plan's procurement processes.
- v. Supporting the Commission on implementation of the plan through the Commission Secretariat.

**D****Resident Electoral Commissioners**

- i. Supervising the day-to-day implementation of the EPP at State and LGA Offices, as determined by the Commission.
- ii. Advising the Chairman and Commission on implementation of the Plan.
- iii. Directing the Administrative Secretaries and other staff members on the implementation of the Plan.
- iv. Reporting to the Commission on progress and challenges of implementation of the plan.
- v. Sustaining continuous and effective engagement with stakeholders.

**E****Standing Committees of the Commission**

- i. Vetting and giving initial approval to implementation memoranda.
- ii. Advising the Commission on implementation of the plan.
- iii. Overseeing and superintending over Departments and Directorates in the implementation of the plan.
- iv. Processing implementation memoranda for Commission's approval.

**F****The Commission**

- i. Approving the draft EPP.
- ii. Approving all implementation memoranda.
- iii. Considering and approving election budgets.
- iv. Monitoring the progress of implementation.

**G****Chairman of the Commission**

- i. Directing on all matters of implementation of the EPP.
- ii. Monitoring the EPP high-level Dashboard.
- iii. Sourcing resources for the implementation of the plan

## 5.4 The Role of Technology

Due to the determination to deepen democracy through the use of technology, the Commission, since 2011, has been deploying technologies to support the Electoral Process in Nigeria. In January 2011, INEC had a fresh enrolment of voters using the Direct Data Capture Machines (DDCMs), the register that emanated from the exercise has been used for three general elections (and all other bye elections) since then. In 2015, the Commission decided to use technology for the authentication of voters who appear at the Polling Units (PUs) to cast their votes on Election Day using the Smart Card Reader (SCR).

*In 2020 the Commission deployed technology that enable the public view election results of all Polling Units (EC8As) on a Portal. The INEC Result Viewing (IReV) Portal makes available electronic copies of the EC8As for the General Public to view. Furthermore, the Commission introduced the candidate nomination portal as well as accreditation portals for political party agents, election observers and the media*

This is in addition to the introduction of a unified technological devise for the registration of eligible voters, the accreditation of voters and the capturing and transmission of polling unit results, as well as the INEC SANS for improved appraisal, mitigation and rapid response to security breaches at INEC offices and facilities nationwide. The continuous deployment of appropriate technology for electoral management is envisaged

by this plan and will be applied within the law based on the following principles:

- i. Application of technology within the provisions of the law: The Commission will continue the use of electronic voter verification and accreditation process premised on a chip-based voter's card and the Smart Card Reader.
- ii. The technology applied is as determined by the Commission: In this regard, the technology to be deployed must be appropriate and relevant to improve the specific aspect of the election to which it is applied.
- iii. The technology is understood and managed by the Commission: This is to ensure that the application of technology to its work must meet the specifications determined by the Commission based on a policy of either developing its own software or depending on open-source software to preclude the technological peonage of vendors.
- iv. The appropriate technology is not necessarily the most expensive: As part of an overall aim of implementing a cost-efficient election, only technology that is competitively priced and sustainable within the Commission will be applied.

## 5.5 Institutional Capacity for the Implementation of the 2023 Plan

INEC has adequate capacity to implement this plan and deliver vastly improved general election in 2023. Therefore, as much as INEC has adequate capacity to conduct its elections, the need to build an institutional framework and memory

that can assist it to seamlessly conduct its most important operation and activities is imperative. Since 2015 to date, the Commission has embarked on a series of institution building activities designed to strengthen its systems and processes through planning and policies that are either completed or are close to completion. These include:

- i. A Strategic Plan and Strategic Plan Implementation Programme 2022 – 2026.
- ii. Recommended improvements to the Constitutional and legal framework based on experience from the 2011, 2015 and 2019 elections, as well as the several stand-alone elections. Recommendations on changes to the Constitution have been submitted to Constitution and Election Reform Committee (CERC) for further action. While recommendations on the changes to the Electoral Act 2010 (as amended) are mostly reflected in the Electoral Act 2022.
- iii. A revised communication policy and strategy to enhance vertical and horizontal communication within the Commission and with State and LGA offices, as well as to improve both internal and external communication and engagement with stakeholders.
- iv. Implementing the reports of Commission's Committees on: (i) the review of polling units and registration areas; (ii) review of electoral constituencies; (iii) review of suppressed constituencies; (iv) review of GIS Laboratory; and (v) review of out-of-country/Diaspora voting each with far reaching recommendations on improvements towards the 2023 general election.
- v. Training and retraining of staff on a continuous basis, especially several BRIDGE and LEAD training workshops.

All these will be important to the successful conduct of the 2023 general election.

## 5.6 Role of Stakeholders

Identification of stakeholders that will support the Commission to successfully implement the 2023 EPP is key; since they will help the Commission meet its strategic objectives by contributing their experience and perspective to the EPP. The identified stakeholders crucial for the implementation of the EPP are: (i) The Electorate; (ii) Political Parties; (iii) Candidates; (iv) The Media; (v) Civil Society Groups/ Professional Associations/Trade Unions; (vi) Development Partners; (vii) The Executive at National and State level; (viii) Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs); (ix) National Assembly; (x) Judiciary; (xi) Domestic and International Elections Observers; (xii) Diplomatic Community; (xiii) Security Agencies; (xiv) Forum of State Independent Electoral Commissions (FOSIECON) (xv) Women, Youths and Persons with Disabilities (PWDs); (xvi) Traditional Rulers and Religious leaders; xvii. Vendors, Contractors, and Service Providers, (xviii) The Commission and its staff.

In implementing the EPP, the INEC must engage and solicit the buy-in, confidence and trust of these stakeholders through regular and periodic consultations and partnerships. Furthermore, regarding engagements with political parties and their candidates, the Commission must act in a transparent and non-partisan manner in the implementation of all activities in this plan. Given that the mandate for the conduct of presidential, national assembly, state assembly and FCT area council elections is solely that of INEC, the Commission, must always be resolute in upholding its independence and autonomy in discharging its duties and responsibilities as defined by law.



# Chapter Six

## **Electoral Risk Management**

## 6.1 Background

The electoral processes, especially in nascent, transitional and now even in established democracies are prone to varied levels of risks in the pre-electoral, electoral and post-electoral period. The ability of the Election Management Body and electoral stakeholders to anticipate, identify, analyse and mitigate real and potential threats, especially during the candidate nomination and campaign periods, on polling day or in the immediate aftermath of voting has direct impact on the credibility of the electoral outcomes.

*The inability to manage electoral risks during the electoral cycle often have negative consequences for the democratic character of elections and may result in democratic reversals by undermining democratic institutions and threatening democratic governance. It is for this reason among others that risk management remains a major element in the process of democratic consolidation*

Within the context of this Election Project Plan, electoral risk refers to the entire gamut of direct and indirect internal and external threats that are detrimental to the successful conduct of the 2023 general election.

Since 2015, the Commission has identified and attempted to mitigate the internal and external threat to the implementation of the Election Project Plan and the conduct of general elections. Among the identified internal

threats are deficit in the knowledge, skills and qualification of implementing staff, inadequate inter-Departmental synergy, cooperation and coordination, as well as lackadaisical attitude of some staff members. Apart from the internal risks, there are several external threats, including efforts at eroding the powers of the Commission to undertake its constitutional and regulatory functions. These include attempts at influencing the composition of the Commission and at undermining the processes for determining electoral outcomes based on legitimate votes cast, lack of internal party democracy, undemocratic conduct of the political class, challenge of election security and the scourge of the COVID -19 Pandemic. Indeed, managing the subtle and blatant external attempts to compromise the integrity of the Commission, contending with the lack of internal party democracy and associated acts of impunity, and securing the electoral environment by professional and non-partisan security personnel on election duties and strict adherence to the COVID -19 health advisories remain major threats in the electoral process.

This plan recognises that the management and mitigation of these internal and external threats are critical to its successful implementation. While the Commission has taken appropriate steps to address some of the internal challenges, dealing with the external threats continue to challenge the electoral process. It is important that the Commission continue to properly manage and mitigate the unresolved and other emerging internal and external threats for the effective and successful implementation of this Plan.

*The ability of the Commission to discharge its constitutional mandate by adhering to high ethical standards, strict observance of the code of conduct, obedience to the rule of law and better engagement with stakeholders, especially in the Interagency Consultative Committee on Election Security (ICCES) and observance of COVID - 19 protocols will go some way to attenuate the challenges of conducting the 2023 general election*

The numerous electoral activities and sub-activities across the nine Principal Business Areas in this Plan are sequenced and complementary. Any disruption in the chain of these activities and sub-activities has both direct or indirect impact and implication for the effective implementation and attainment Plan's major objective. For instance, the timely delivery of sensitive election materials (Ballot Papers and Result Sheets) depends on early commencement of the procurement process, strict adherence

to production and delivery schedules, as well as transportation, storage, and security arrangements. Any delay or disruption in the process constitutes a major risk for the opening of polls on Election Day. For example, late delivery of sensitive election materials resulted in the postponement of Presidential election mid-way into voting in 2011 and the one-week postponement of the 2019 Presidential and National Assembly elections. It is for this reason that all activities and sub-activities in this plan need to be monitored and assessed based on specific milestones to constantly identify potential risks and evolve effective means of mitigating them.

## 6.2 Nature of Electoral Risks towards the 2023 General Election

A thorough assessment of the real and potential threats is necessary to preclude any disputations and disruptions in the electoral activities throughout the electoral cycle. The real and potential treats to the planning, conduct and delivery of the 2023 general election are as listed in Table 7.

**Table 7: Real and Potential Electoral Threats and Risks Towards the 2023 General Election**

S/N	Pre-Election Period	Election Period	Post-Election Period
1	Health impact of COVID 19 Pandemic	Health impact of COVID 19 Pandemic	Health impact of COVID 19 Pandemic
2	Financial implications of COVID 19 Pandemic	Financial implications of COVID 19 Pandemic	Financial implications of COVID 19 Pandemic
3	Physical attack on INEC personnel	Physical attack on INEC and other electoral personnel	Physical attack on INEC and other electoral personnel
4	Kidnapping of INEC personnel for ransom	Kidnapping of INEC and other electoral personnel for ransom	Kidnapping of INEC and electoral personnel for ransom
5	Arson attack on INEC offices and facilities	Arson attack on INEC offices and facilities	Arson attack on INEC offices and facilities
6	Cyber-attacks on INEC website, servers, and databases	Cyber-attacks on INEC website, servers, and databases	Cyber-attacks on INEC website, servers, and databases

7	Intimidation and physical attacks on political opponents	Intimidation and physical attacks on voters and political opponents	Reprisal attacks on voters and political opponents
8	Compromising security personnel on electoral duty	Physical attacks on security personnel on election duties	Physical attacks on security personnel
9	Misuse of security personnel by political office holders	Misuse and illegal deployment of security agencies to carry out unlawful orders	Misuse and illegal deployment of security agencies to carry out unlawful orders
10	Possession and use of illegal weapons and psychotropic substances	Possession and use of illegal weapons and psychotropic substances	Possession and use of illegal weapons and psychotropic substances
11	Snatching and/or destruction of voter registration materials	Snatching and/or destruction of election materials	Snatching and/or destruction of election materials
12	Disruption of party meetings, primaries, conventions, campaigns, and candidate nomination process	Disruption of polling, counting of ballot papers and tabulation of results	Disruption of collation and announcement of results
13	Fake news, misinformation, and blackmail in the media	Fake news, misinformation, and blackmail in the media	Fake news, misinformation, and blackmail in the media
14	Diversion of sensitive election materials and forgery of result sheets	Falsification of results and destruction of result sheets	Destruction of election litigation evidence
15	PVC harvesting by political parties	Vote trading	Reprisal attacks on voters

### 6.3 Mitigation of Risks/ Threats to the Election

The successful implementation of this Election Project Plan and the conduct of the 2023 general election will depend on the ability of the Commission to anticipate these threats and to devise pro-active mitigation measures in managing them in the pre-election, election and post-election period. Given that the nature of some of these threats is fluid and dynamic, their actualisation may unfold rapidly, hence the Commission must constantly scan its operational environment throughout the plan period. Based on the information derived from the periodic assessment of the EMSC election monitoring platform and feedbacks from the INEC media and social media handles, the Commission

must be prepared to review its actions and activities during the plan period. It is recommended that the following measures and strategies be considered and implemented to mitigate the identified internal and external risks and threats:

- i. Development of a comprehensive election security plan in collaboration with members of ICCES based on an assessment of real and perceived threats in the electoral process to engender a conducive and secured electoral environment during the plan period.
- ii. Strengthening the cooperation, coordination, and synergy within ICCES at national, state and LGA level to arrest, investigate and prosecute

- electoral offenders in order to curb impunity.
- iii. Deployment of appropriate measures and strategies to secure and protect INEC's offices, facilities, and equipment nationwide to ensure that the Commission can continue to function and fulfil its mandate in case of any arson attack.
  - iv. Backing up and storage of all sensitive documents and election data in appropriate locations such that the Commission will still be able to have quick access to such documents and data if there is an attack on its offices and facilities.
  - v. Secure INEC's Hypertext Transfer Protocols (HTTP), servers and database against interference from state and non-state actors so that elections can be conducted in case of a cyber-attack on the Commission's ICT facilities. It is important to undertake periodic check to constantly ascertain the "health and security" of these ICT facilities.
  - vi. Continuously adopt and deploy simple, appropriate, cost-effective, and sustainable technologies for the conduct of electoral activities to promote transparency, efficiency and to minimize negative human interventions in the electoral process.
  - vii. Conduct of regular quality assurance and stress tests on deployed technological devices and platforms with reference to their functionality, reliability, and security in effort by the Commission to provide better electoral services to the people.
  - viii. Strengthen training and capacity building programmes for electoral officials to promote efficiency, effectiveness, and performance in the use of electoral technology for the delivery of free, fair, credible, transparent, inclusive, secure and peaceful elections.
  - ix. Adherence to INEC Policy of Conducting Elections within the context of COVID 19 Pandemic to protect the health and safety of electoral officials and all electoral stakeholders.
  - x. Provide insurance cover for all permanent and ad-hoc staff on electoral duties, as well as for the buildings and equipment of the Commission.
  - xi. Design, develop and implement extensive civic and voter education activities targeting all marginalised and vulnerable groups, including women, youth, persons with disability (PWDs), internally displaced persons to promote participation and inclusiveness in the electoral process.
  - xii. Strengthening INEC's alternative dispute resolution mechanism and engaging political parties on the use of Election Alternate Dispute Resolution (EADR) Mechanism in resolving intra and inter party dispute in the pre-election, election, and post-election period.
  - xiii. Review the continued production and storage of customised sensitive election materials in CBN in view of the progressive deployment of electoral technology.
  - xiv. Design and development of a robust election logistics system and engage with relevant service

providers for the timely and effective deployment and retrieval of personnel and materials, especially under dangerous situations.

xv. Production and submission of regular and periodic report by the EMSC across all indicators to enable the Commission to develop quick and appropriate responses to mitigate identified threats and risks.

xvi. Popularise and deploy the Basic Security in Election Duties (BaSED) Training Module developed by TEI and make it accessible to all electoral officials. All staff on election duties should be tested and certificated on the module before they are deployed.

xvii. All INEC activities for the elections should have a risk assessment component before they are approved for implementation. Every memo to the Commission for the implementation of this plan must have a section of brief risk assessment.

Departments and Directorates must produce concise contingency plans with clear START objectives for every election taking into consideration specific risks and threats associated with their activities. The Commission should review and approve each contingency plan for implementation, should the circumstance arise.

## **6.4 Electoral Security: Interagency Consultative Committee on Election Security (ICCES)**

A secure election is at the very core of democracy and the basis of legitimacy

for democratic governance. The role of the Interagency Consultative Committee on Election Security (ICCES), which was established in the run-up to the 2011 general election, remains critical to the management of electoral risk and threats in Nigeria. Consisting of several MDAs and the security agencies and co-chaired by the INEC Chairman and the National Security Adviser, the Committee is mandated to:

- i. Coordinate the design of a comprehensive election security management system for INEC.
- ii. Develop locally focused plans for providing security before, during and after elections.
- iii. Harmonize the training, deployment, and actions of security personnel on election duties.
- iv. Assess existing security threats across the country that have implications for elections and produce a red, amber, and green electoral security map for the country, which will be regularly updated.
- v. Advise INEC on rapid response to security threats around elections, including voter registration.
- vi. Ensure a reduction in transaction costs to INEC of dealing with individual security agencies on issues of elections.
- vii. Evaluate the performance of security agencies on election duties and recommend improvements and sanctions, where necessary.
- viii. Harmonize the election budgets of security agencies and source funding commonly, if possible.

In time, ICCES has developed into an effective and widely accepted framework for managing electoral security. The capacity of the members to work under a common umbrella with INEC in the discharge of its mandate was crucial in securing the 2011, 2015 and 2019 general elections as well as other off-cycle standalone Governorship and other elections. Nevertheless, there is need for improvement in the work of the Committee in training, deployment and common standards of conduct for security personnel deployed on electoral duty. It was in pursuit of this objective that the Committee developed and approved a single, harmonized code of conduct and rules of engagement for all member agencies. It is expected that adherence to the provisions of the code and rules of engagement will enhance the capacity of ICCES to provide maximum protection for all electoral personnel and stakeholders and improve the quality of security for the conduct of electoral activities. Furthermore, ICCES should continue to collaborate and coordinate with the Presidential Task Force on COVID 19 and all health authorities at State and LGA levels in the review and implementation of health advisories and provisions of the INEC Voters Code of Conduct for Elections during the COVID 19 Pandemic for the safe delivery of the 2023 general election and all elections.

## 6.5 Conflict Management and Advocacy

A common source of risk in the management of elections is the inability or failure to properly assess, comprehend and manage conflicts as they arise. In the implementation of this plan, the Commission will be confronted by the challenge of not only managing the electoral process, but also with the twin issues of cohesion and unity of purpose among Commission members as well as

inter-Departmental and inter-personal conflicts within the Commission. Given the “do or die” nature of politics and the proclivity of the political class for wanting to win elections by any possible means, the conduct of elections in Nigeria is prone to conflict and laden with several landmines. The preferred option by politicians for the management of electoral conflict is the recourse to adjudication by Courts spanning the pre-election and election period in which the Commission is directly or vicariously involved. As a result of the progressive improvement in the conduct of elections, there are now fewer cases challenging processes, procedures, and outcome of electoral contests. The focus is now on pre-election matters, which in some cases have threatened to derail the Commission’s preparations for elections. This is with reference to the spate of ex-parte injunctions often issued against the Commission on the nomination of candidate by Courts of coordinate jurisdiction in different parts of the country.

While the Commission will continue to obey all valid orders of Court, it is important that political parties adhere to the provisions of their constitution and the other regulations governing their activities in enhancing internal party democracy. The Commission will also continue to engage with the judiciary and strengthen the capacity and competence of the Alternative Dispute Resolution Directorate as arbitrators in alternative electoral dispute resolution. The capacity of party officials for effective management of their parties playing by the rule, the quick dispensation of electoral justice, especially on pre-election matters and the confidence of the political parties in the use of the Election Alternative Dispute Resolution (EADR) mechanism to settle intra-party conflicts and crisis will remain important factors in the implementation of this plan

and in the run up to the 2023 general election and beyond.

The other source of conflicts capable of impeding the full and successful implementation of this plan relates to the issue of cohesion among Commission members and inter-Departmental and interpersonal conflicts within the Commission. The usual induction and leadership training programmes for new Commission members as well as the various management trainings, experience sharing, and capacity building will be required for the effective implementation of this plan. These training will imbue the Commission and the directing staff with strategic decision-making capacity for conflict management and consensus building based on negotiation, conciliation, mediation and arbitration.

## 6.6 Electoral Integrity

The integrity of members of the Commission and of all electoral staff is the cornerstone that underpins the legitimacy of any EMB and the sole guarantor of its ability to successfully manage and administer any election. No matter how good an election plan may be and irrespective of the competence and efficiency of its officials in the conduct of an election, large segments of the public will always question the outcome of such election if the EMB is perceived to be partisan and the members lacks integrity. The EMB must therefore ensure that its decisions and actions are transparent and open to public scrutiny in order to reduce the threat and risk associated with electoral management. In implementing this plan, it is imperative that the Commission continues to maintain a high degree of integrity in the discharge of its responsibilities and in carrying out all electoral activities. Thus, the Commission will do well to reinforce its commitment to the sanctity

of the vote where every vote is counted and every vote counts. By so doing, the outcome of elections will reflect the true intention of the electorate through their votes which is not circumscribed or encumbered by inability to register, lack of access to polling units or any other unpleasant experiences in exercising their franchise. The prescription that votes are counted, and they count refers to the extent to which the outcomes of elections are seen by all (or at least a majority) to be the true reflections of voting.

Consequently, elections conducted under this plan must not only be free, fair and credible, they must be seen to be so with the outcomes reflecting the true wishes of the electorate. The Commission will therefore need to demonstrate a high sense of integrity and transparency to inspire required level of trust and confidence from electoral stakeholders for the successful implementation of the plan. In order to achieve a high level of integrity in the course of implementing this plan, the Commission should aggressively pursue and implement the following:

- i. Enhance public confidence in the integrity and transparency of the Commission through the proactive provision of electoral information to the public in line with the standard open election data principle. Information of public interest must be disclosed expeditiously and made easily accessible through the Commission's information dissemination channels and platforms.
- ii. Strengthen and expand the scope and reach of the Commission's external communication channels and platforms, especially INEC Citizen Contact Centre (ICCC) and the INEC Half Hour and other voter

sensitisation programmes. The INEC State and FCT Offices should establish help desks with dedicated contact numbers to provide necessary information to citizens on electoral activities.

- iii. Constantly update and upload contents on electoral activities and election data to the INEC website to ensure visibility for the Commission and sharing key documents including manuals, guidelines, and regulations, as well as and information on delimitation, registration, polling locations, election results with stakeholders.
- iv. Regular and periodic engagement with all electoral stakeholders, including officials in the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government, as well as leadership of political parties, civil society organizations, the media and development partners.
- v. Production and dissemination of discussion papers on important electoral matters to inform and sensitise Nigerians and other audiences on the position of the Commission on issues relating to continued expansion of voter access to polling units, delineation and delimitation of electoral constituencies and any other issue that is of concern to the Commission.
- vi. Holding of periodic and regular press conferences in the preceding days before Election Day, on Election Day and immediately after Election Day.
- vii. Strengthen the election observation accreditation system, including inviting observers to visit the Situation Room and Collation Centre for the presidential and governorship elections.
- viii. Popularise the use of the INEC Result Viewing Portal (IREV) to reinforce the transparency and credibility of election results.
- ix. Continue the live broadcast of the collation and declaration of presidential and governorship election results at the national and state levels.



# **Chapter Seven**

## **Election Budget**

## 7.1 Introduction

The conduct of a general election in any country is an expensive undertaking. In the continuous effort to secure multiparty democracy and advance democratic governance, election expenditure is much more than providing money for eligible voters to cast their votes, the counting and tabulation of the votes and declaration of results. The provision of adequate funding for the conduct of free, fair, credible and inclusive elections is an indispensable public investment. It is perhaps the only sure way to guarantee inclusive, stable and participatory democracy, which empowers citizens to hold elected public officials accountable and exercise popular control over public decision making through the ballot box.

According to the Cost of Registration and Elections (CORE) Project that evaluated the methods by which election budgets are established, tracked and funded, the best practice barometer for determining the adequacy of election funding is the use of Average Cost per Registered Voter Index (COVI). The Project's comparison of every stage of the electoral process from registration to casting the ballot reveals that there are significant disparities in the cost of elections between countries. These disparities are influenced by the number of electoral events as well as the conditions, size and state of democracy in the specific country. Arising from the study, it is calculated that the average cost per voter ranges from \$1 to \$3 in established and stable democracies to \$4 to \$8 in transitional democracies and from \$9 and above in post-conflict and some transitional democracies depending on the size of the electorate.<sup>7</sup>

In Nigeria, upholding the conduct of regular, periodic and genuine elections always involves significant public

cost. This is given the immense size of the country, the number of registered voters, number of polling units, the number of electoral constituencies and the enormous personnel and material requirements. For example, with a voting population of 84 million in 2019 general election, Nigeria alone accounts for more than half (53%) of the estimated 157.6 million registered voters in the ECOWAS Region. Similarly, of the estimated 323,709 polling units in the region, 119973 (58%) are in Nigeria. In effect, the task of conducting a general election in Nigeria is more than that for conducting elections in all the other 14 ECOWAS countries combined.

The budget for the 2023 general election is therefore impacted by the massive operational and logistics costs of providing required electoral services to Nigerians. These include voter registration, voter education and

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<sup>7</sup>Rafael López-Pintor & Jeff Fischer (2005) Cost of Registration and Elections (CORE) Project (Washington, DC, IFES)

information, training, procurement of sensitive and non-sensitive election materials, voting operations on Election Day including the deployment and reverse logistics for personnel and materials, collation, transmission and declaration of results and electoral dispute adjudication.

It is therefore important that 2023 election budget is properly contextualized against the background of the electoral contest into the 1489 electoral constituencies nationwide to fill one presidential and 29 gubernatorial positions. The election also involves political contest for the seat for 471 members of the National Assembly (109 Senators and 360 members of the House of Representatives) and 993 members of the State Houses of Assembly. This is in addition to the fact that following the recent expansion of voter access to polling units, the number of polling units in Nigeria increased from 119,973 in 2019 to 176,846 in 2021. It is also evident that going by returns from the on-going Continuous Voter Registration (CVR) exercise, the Commission projects that the number of registered voters in Nigeria will increase from the current 84 million to reach 100 million by the end of the exercise in June 2022.

In working out the budget proposal for the 2023 general election, the Commission was conscious of the country's economic situation and Government's responsibility to provide resources for other public institutions to deliver public goods and services in the area of national defense, public infrastructure, health and education. Consequently, the Commission's budget proposal is premised on maximum efficiency in the utilization of resources for the conduct of the general election according to international standards and best practice. It is important to point out that the INEC budget proposal is

specifically for the implementation of activities of Commission as they relate to the conduct of the 2023 general election and does not cover the activities of the security and other agencies that would be involved in the election.

## 7.2 Election Budget Proposals

Following a thorough consideration and review of the budget proposals submitted by 23 Departments and Directorates of the Commission and going by the fundamental principle that elections must be efficient and cost effective to deliver better value for money, the 2023 EPP Committee proposes the sum of N305,001,824,846:49 (Three hundred and five billion, one million, eight hundred and twenty four thousand, eight hundred and forty-six naira and forty-nine kobo) for the conduct of the 2023 general election. Of this amount, the Commission requires N161,909,804,342:18k (One hundred and sixty-one billion, nine hundred and nine million, eight hundred and four thousand, three hundred and forty-two Naira and eighteen kobo) for electoral operational and administrative costs, N117,126,413,593:18k (One hundred and seventeen billion, one hundred and twenty-six million, four hundred and thirteen thousand, five hundred and ninety-three Naira and eighteen kobo) for electoral technology costs N18,526,538,000 (eighteen billion, five hundred and twenty-six million, five hundred and thirty-eight thousand) for electoral capital costs. The sum of N7,439,068,899:13k (seven billion, four hundred and thirty-nine million, sixty-eight thousand, eight hundred and ninety-nine Naira and thirteen kobo), that is 2.5% of the electoral operational and administrative, electoral technology and electoral capital costs is set aside as contingency for unforeseen

electoral expenses. In nominal terms, this is an increase of 61.37% on the cost of conducting the 2019 elections as shown in Table 8. However, in real terms, the proposed budget for the 2023 general election is comparative to the expenditure on the 2015 and 2019 general elections taking into consideration the increased rate of the consumer price index between 2015, 2019 and 2021, as well as the widening differentials in the foreign exchange rate.<sup>8</sup> The combination of these two factors has direct implication for the domestic procurement of goods and services, as well as for the purchase of off-shore electoral equipment and

materials. Added to this is the cost element of adhering to the public health requirements and protocols occasioned by the COVID 19 pandemic. By and large, if the proposed budget for the 2023 general election is considered based on the Average Cost per Registered Voter Index (COVI), the cost per voter for the election based on a projected voting population of 100 million registered voters is estimated to be US\$5.39 as illustrated in Figure 7. This cost is less than the actual cost of \$9.62 and US\$7.38 per voter for the 2015 and 2019 general election respectively and less than the US\$7.70 per voter for the 2020 general election in Ghana<sup>9</sup>.

**Table 8: Comparative Analysis of the 2019 and Proposed 2023 Election Project Plan Budgets**

S/NO	DEPARTMENT	2019 EPP APPROPRIATION	2023 BUDGET	Variance between 2019 & 2023	%VARIATION BETWEEN 2019 & 2023
	Alternative Dispute Resolution (Merged with Litigation & Prosecution) Alternate Dispute Resolution	125,996,160.00	0.00	(125,996,160.00)	0.00%
1	Administration	0.00	188,189,600.00	188,189,600.00	0.00%
2	Commission Secretariat	285,295,600.00	754,891,478.00	469,595,878.00	164.60
3	Election & Party Monitoring	1,403,792,000.00	774,718,895.49	(629,073,104.51)	-44.81
4	Electoral Operations	116,958,305,034.50	140,436,024,490.62	23,477,719,456.12	20.07
5	Estate, works & Transport	10,151,873,614.00	8,520,492,000.00	(1,631,381,614.00)	-16.07
6	Finance & Account	893,310,865.50	4,366,632,846.07	3,473,321,980.57	388.81
7	Gender & Inclusivity	0.00	269,453,320.00	269,453,320.00	0.00%
8	Health Services	450,000,000.00	1,455,727,000.00	1,005,727,000.00	223.49
9	Human Resources Management	0.00	95,625,000.00	95,625,000.00	0.00%
10	ICT	26,971,018,980.00	114,261,887,643.18	87,290,868,663.18	323.65
11	Internal Audit	187,081,600.00	205,435,200.00	18,353,600.00	9.81
12	International Cooperation & Protocol	70,458,600.00	583,651,750.00	513,193,150.00	728.36
13	Inter Governmental Affairs (Created from Chairman's Office)	0.00	24,255,000.00	24,255,000.00	0.00%

<sup>8</sup>The average exchange rate at the Parallel Market was N165 and N305 to 1US\$ respectively for the 2015 and 2019 General Elections in comparison the current rate of N565 to 1US\$

<sup>9</sup>Speech Delivered by the Chairperson of the Electoral Commission at the Assessment of the 2020 Election, 2 May 2021  
[https://www.ec.gov.gh/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/SPEECH-1.pdf?\\_ga=2.33349053.241609783.1634485042-656434241.1633282177](https://www.ec.gov.gh/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/SPEECH-1.pdf?_ga=2.33349053.241609783.1634485042-656434241.1633282177)

14	Litigation & Prosecution	2,221,999,500.00	5,192,160,425.00	2,970,160,925.00	133.67
15	Legal Drafting & Clearance	0.00	886,218,497.00	886,218,497.00	0.00%
16	Planning & Monitoring	1,107,996,000.00	1,807,828,000.00	699,832,000.00	63.16
17	Procurement	1,341,437,148.00	1,112,587,500.00	(228,849,648.00)	-17.06
18	Security	0.00	390,500,000.00	390,500,000.00	0.00%
19	Stores	0.00	291,528,000.00	291,528,000.00	0.00%
20	TEI (Research & Documentation)	442,750,000.00	466,007,750.00	23,257,750.00	5.25
21	TEI (Training)	7,176,684,460.01	5,942,124,520.00	(1,234,559,940.01)	0.00%
22	Voter Education & Publicity	5,248,393,622.87	2,240,939,700.00	(3,007,453,922.87)	-57.30
23	Voter Registry	9,356,061,040.00	7,295,877,350.00	(2,060,183,690.00)	-22.02
Miscellaneous		4,614,818,168.13	7,439,068,899.13	2,824,250,731.00	61.20
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>189,007,272,393.01</b>	<b>305,001,824,864.49</b>	<b>115,994,552,471.48</b>	<b>61.37</b>

That the Commission was able to progressively reduce the average cost per registered voter despite the increased number of registered voters and the creation of 56,873 new polling units is a demonstration of its commitment to prudent management of resources. Apart from the necessity to comply with the requirements of conducting the 2023 General Election within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Plan envisages the introduction of several new activities and innovations to improve the electoral process. This includes the upgrading of certain infrastructural facilities at the various levels of operation at the Headquarters, State, FCT and LGA offices of the Commission, as well as the deployment of new electoral technology and equipment.

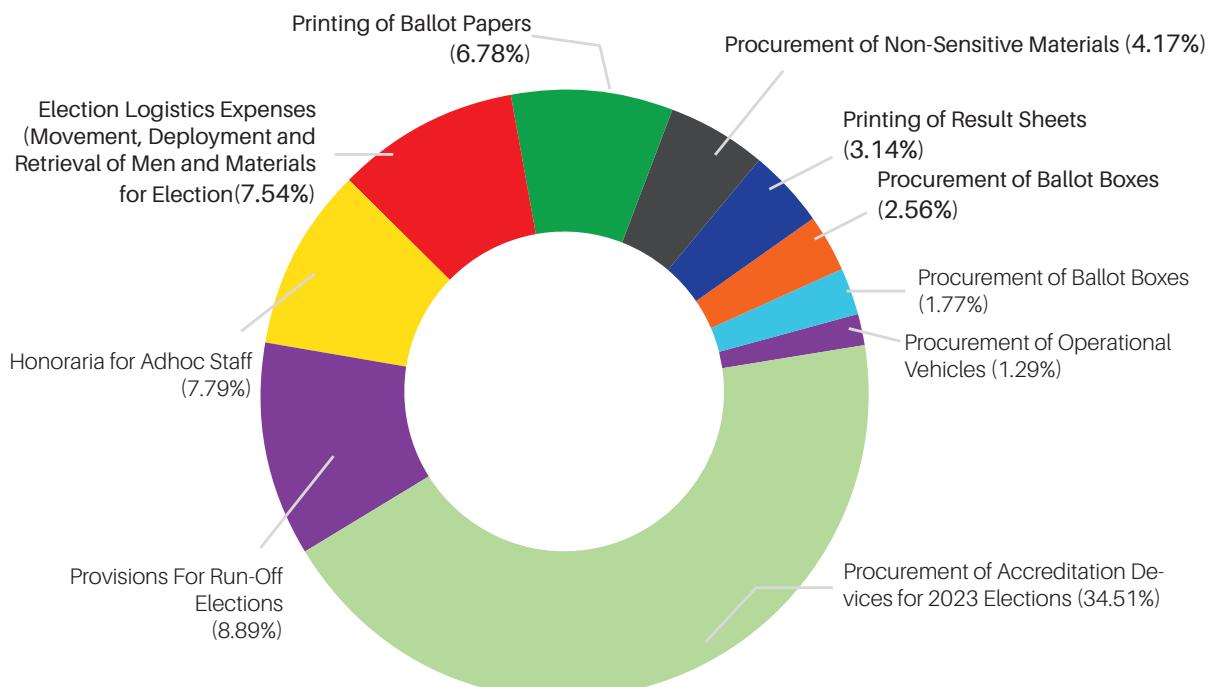
### 7.3 Analyses of the Election Budget

Table 9 shows that 78.44% of the entire budget is accounted for by 10 major electoral activities. The dominant cost item in the election budget is the deployment of electoral technology to improve the integrity and credibility of electoral process. This is with reference to the procurement in foreign currency

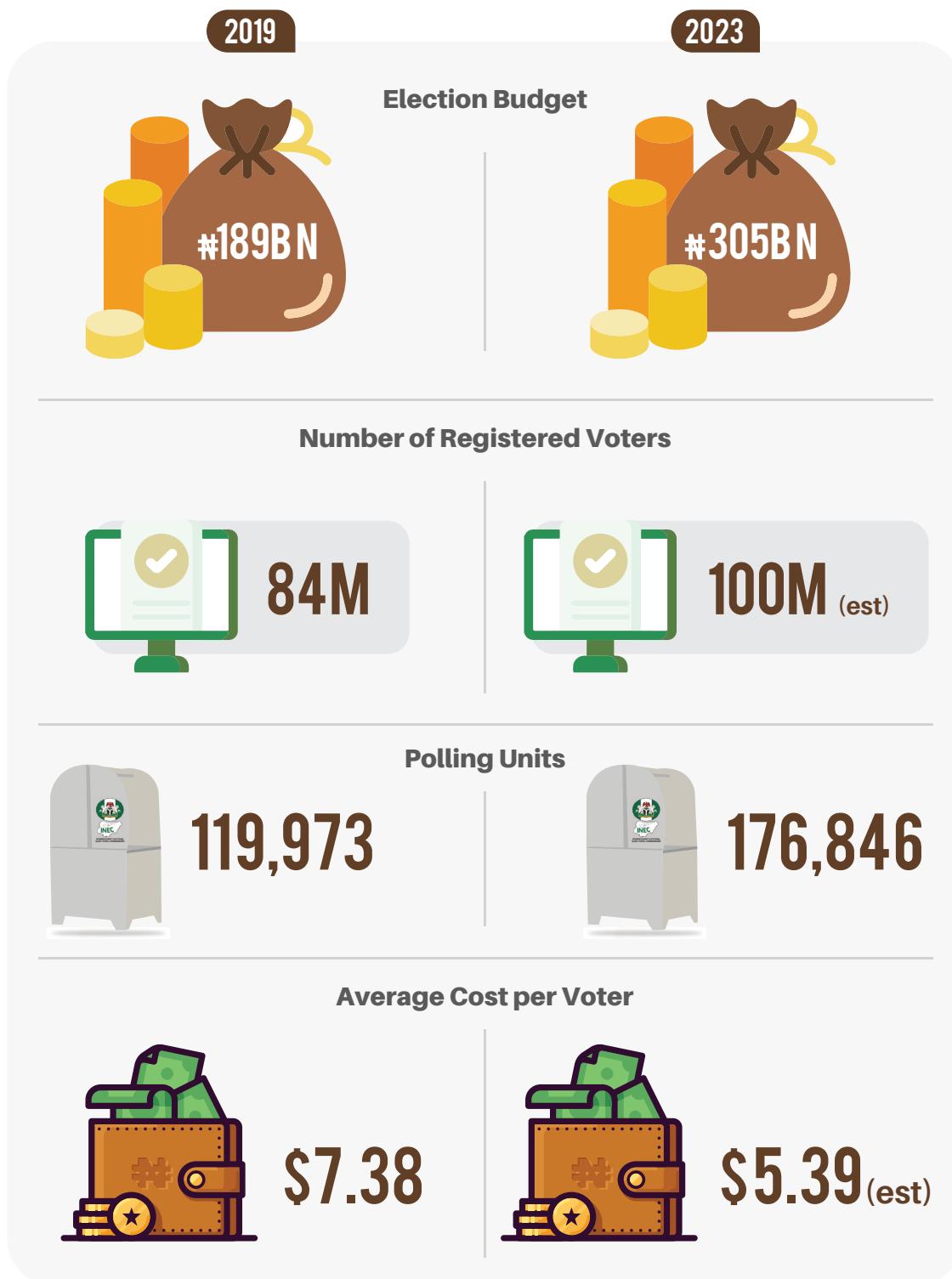
(US\$) of a new voter enrolment and voter accreditation device to combine the functions of the Direct Data Capture Machine, the Z-Pad and the Smart Card Reader. In the period of registration, the new device, known as the new INEC Voter Enrolment Device (IVED) will be used for the physical registration eligible voters. On Election Day, the same device will transform to become the Bimodal Voter Accreditation System (BVAS) to be used first for fingerprint authentication during accreditation and where it fails for facial authentication. Thereafter, the same device will be used to capture the polling unit results and for the transmission of the result to the INEC Result Viewing (IReV) Portal.

**Table 9: Cost of 10 Top Items in the Election Budget**

SN	Item	Cost	% of Total Budget
1	Procurement of Accreditation Devices for 2023 Elections	105,254,911,600.00	34.51%
2	Provisions For Run-Off Elections	27,113,527,644.89	8.89%
3	Honoraria for Adhoc Staff	23,769,910,554.00	7.79%
4	Election Logistics Expenses (Movement, Deployment and Retrieval of Men and Materials for Election)	23,010,464,020.00	7.54%
5	Printing of Ballot Papers	20,675,040,000.00	6.78%
6	Procurement of Non-Sensitive Materials	12,715,547,154.00	4.17%
7	Printing of Result Sheets	9,582,104,180.93	3.14%
8	Procurement of Ballot Boxes	7,821,900,000.00	2.56%
9	Procurement of Ballot Boxes	5,394,622,500.00	1.77%
10	Procurement of Operational Vehicles	3,920,000,000.00	1.29%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>239,258,027,653.82</b>	<b>78.44%</b>



**Figure 7: Comparative Analysis of 2019 and 2023 Election Project Plan Budgets**



Another major expenditure item on the election budget is the election logistics expenses for the movement, deployment and retrieval of personnel and materials to and from the various election locations across the country. The huge cost associated with this activity is due to the Commission's adherence to the safety and health measures associated with the conduct of elections within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. This meant significant increases in the number of Registration Area Centres (RACs), which serves as the overnight camp for election officials on the eve of election as well as for vehicles, boats and motorcycles to be hired by the Commission for the transportation of election personnel. The Commission's continued effort to protect the security and sanctity of the sensitive materials including the ballot papers and result sheets by producing them to the highest standards and quality is another heavy cost item in the budget. The other top expenditure item is the personnel cost for the recruitment and deployment of at least four election officials to the 176,846

polling units nationwide and for the required number of Collation Officers, Supervisory Presiding Officers and Returning Officers. So also, is the cost of procurement, storage and distribution of strategic logistics items and non-sensitive election materials and for the Conduct of nationwide Continuous Voter Registration (CVR) exercise.

## 7.4 Sources of Fund

The Federal Government of Nigeria as a sovereign responsibility provides required funding to INEC to cover the fixed and direct costs of elections. Consequently, the Commission can cover fixed personnel cost and routine expenditure for maintaining its electoral infrastructure as well as the core expenses required to undertake activities that are directly related to the conduct of elections. For the purpose of appropriating funds for the 2023 general election, the Commission proposes that the election budget should be spread over a period of three years from 2021 to 2023 as shown in Table 10.

**Table 10: Proposed Appropriation for Funding the 2023 General Election Budget**

SN	Department	2021	2022	2023	Total
1	Administration	6,000,000.00	33,882,600.00	148,307,000.00	188,189,600.00
2	Commission's Secretariat	0.00	337,398,887.00	417,492,591.00	754,891,478.00
3	Election & Party Monitoring	0.00	709,708,895.49	65,010,000.00	774,718,895.49
4	Electoral Operations	11,495,111,444.94	125,940,913,045.68	3,000,000,000.00	140,436,024,490.62
5	Estate, Works & Transport	3,491,700,000.00	4,754,300,000.00	274,492,000.00	8,520,492,000.00
6	Finance And Accounts	0.00	4,366,632,846.07	0.00	4,366,632,846.07
7	Gender And Inclusivity	0.00	216,027,120.00	53,426,200.00	269,453,320.00
8	Health Services	140,000,000.00	1,315,727,000.00	0.00	1,455,727,000.00
9	Human Resources	0.00	95,625,000.00	0.00	95,625,000.00
10	ICT	54,204,800.00	114,177,682,843.18	30,000,000.00	114,261,887,643.18
11	Internal Audit	7,457,600.00	35,888,000.00	162,089,600.00	205,435,200.00
12	International Cooperation & Protocol	0.00	109,809,000.00	473,842,750.00	583,651,750.00
13	Inter-Governmental Affairs	0.00	20,255,000.00	4,000,000.00	24,255,000.00
14	Legal Drafting & Clearance	0.00	337,473,697.00	548,744,800.00	886,218,497.00
15	Litigation & Prosecution	0.00	2,104,965,000.00	3,087,195,425.00	5,192,160,425.00
16	Planning & Monitoring	190,750,000.00	982,258,000.00	634,820,000.00	1,807,828,000.00
17	Procurement	0.00	1,112,587,500.00	0.00	1,112,587,500.00
18	Security	0.00	116,100,000.00	274,400,000.00	390,500,000.00
19	Stores	63,388,000.00	228,140,000.00	0.00	291,528,000.00
20	The Electoral Institute (Research)	0.00	172,818,000.00	293,189,750.00	466,007,750.00
21	The Electoral Institute (Training)	0.00	5,910,806,983.00	31,317,537.00	5,942,124,520.00
22	Voter Education & Publicity	20,000,000.00	1,754,738,400.00	466,201,300.00	2,240,939,700.00
23	Voter Registry	6,000,000.00	7,259,877,350.00	30,000,000.00	7,295,877,350.00
24	Miscellaneous Electoral Expenses	386,865,296.12	6,802,340,379.19	249,863,223.82	7,439,068,899.13
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>15,861,477,141.06</b>	<b>278,895,955,546.61</b>	<b>10,244,392,176.82</b>	<b>305,001,824,864.49</b>

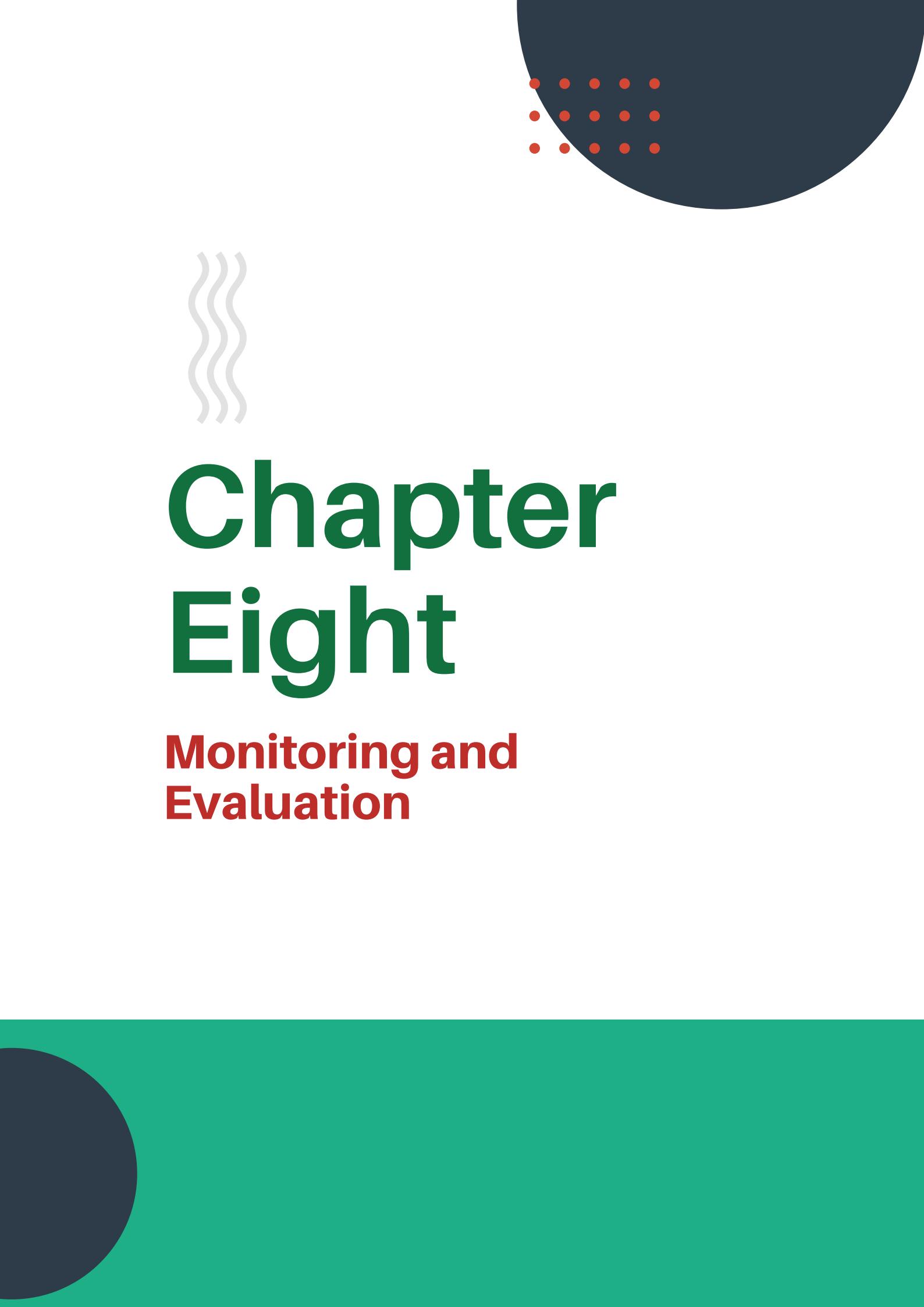
In addition to funding from the Federal Government, the Commission also receives support from Development Partners for some of its electoral activities in the areas of training, capacity building, civic and voter education, production of information, education and communication materials and engagement with stakeholders. Such supports are directed at strengthening the integrity of the electoral process, promoting citizens' participation and enhancing advocacy for inclusivity with reference to women, youths, persons with disability and other marginalized groups.

In this regard, these supports are governed by the INEC Policy on Receiving Support from Development Partners, which establishes the principles, areas of support required by the Commission and the processes and procedures for requesting and receiving such support. Consequently, support from development partners to the Commission is anchored on the principles of independence, zero cash transfer, flexibility, accountability and coordination. Pursuant to these principles, the Commission will continue to determine and retain control over the overall purpose of any support based on

its strategic interest and as required by the Office of the Honourable Chairman.

Furthermore, development partners are not allowed to make any direct transfer of funds to the Commission. Rather they are encouraged to keep their funds and undertake direct implementation of activities directed either at meeting urgent and sometimes unanticipated needs of the Commission or to augment the work of the Commission in enhancing electoral integrity. Lastly, the Commission will maintain a high level of transparency and accountability in requesting and receiving any support in well harmonized and coordinated manner.

Going by this policy, support from Development Partners is not reflected either in the fixed budget of the Commission or in the core costs for the conduct of elections. In the course of the 2019 - 2023 electoral cycle, support to the Commission will come mainly from the European Union (EU) through the European Union Support for Democratic Governance in Nigeria (EU/SDGN) Project implemented by the European Centre for Electoral Support (ECES), the International Federation for Electoral Systems (IFES) with funding from the United States and United Kingdom Department for International Development (USAID/UKAID), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) with funding from the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung of Germany.



# **Chapter Eight**

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

## 8.1 Management of the 2023 EPP

The need to enshrine a proper Monitoring and Evaluation mechanism in the implementation of the Election Project Plan is very sacrosanct. It is a key step towards building trust and guaranteeing efficiency, enhancing effectiveness, credibility, accountability and value for money in the implementation of the plan. Therefore, a lot of efforts went into developing a detailed framework that crystallized actions and activities to be undertaken while spelling out key measurable and standard indicators with which to track the progress of implementation. This was done by the Directorate of Planning and Monitoring (DPM) in consultation with Departments and relevant Directorates.

Alongside the DPM whose major role is to facilitate and support effective planning, monitoring and evaluation of all Commission's activities, are multiple layers of management responsibility, with oversight functions geared towards effective monitoring and implementation of the plan. These layers of management responsibilities stretch upwards from the Directing Staff to the Secretary to the Commission, the National and Resident Electoral Commissioners and ultimately to the Chairman of the Commission. Therefore, the successful management of this plan depends to the extent which these key officials of the Commission carry out their assigned responsibilities diligently: The critical components being the effective supervision of staff with the use of appropriate reward and sanction systems.

To institutionalize proper monitoring and evaluation of the plan, it is important for the Commission to deploy the use of relevant technologies such as KOBO

TOOLBOX in data collection. The creation of an automated activity dashboard with built-in automated triggers either by way of emails or other electronic messaging systems, to notify activity owners of the timelines of schedule of activities. In this regard, the completed Performance Indicator Reference Sheets developed by Departments/Directorates will be used to create a Performance Dashboard using Microsoft Project Management Applications (MPMA) or any other Business Intelligence Application (BIA) that will incorporate automated triggers, flags and warnings to prevent any lapses in the implementation processes most especially the Nine Plus Two Principal Business Areas (PBAs). It will also provide for appropriate monitoring of indicators as it will clearly spell out definitions, unit of measurement, source and location of where there are delays, frequency of reporting etc. A three month's signal predating activity due date is advised. While this was a major recommendation in the 2019 EPP Plan, it inadvertently could not be implemented.

The 2023 EPP is designed to leverage Electoral Technology and innovative management tools to positively impact the Nigerian electoral process and governance through the formulation and implementation of an IT Governance Policy for the Commission and deployment of appropriate election technologies. For efficient and effective planning, implementation, monitoring and tracking of the Election Project Plan, a complete integration of the EMSC components (EMS, ERM and EOSC) with a common dashboard is exigent. The previous plan was unable to achieve full integration and operationalization of these three monitoring tools as approved by the Commission. This current plan therefore seeks to review and complete the EMSC components, institute an integration of the three using Microsoft Project, review its operational framework

and scope, thereafter, incorporate it into the Commission's website.

## 8.2 Monitoring

This involves systematic collection and processing of data on activities to track progress toward objectives and provide officials and decision-makers with critical information on outcomes in the areas of evaluation as highlighted in Table 10. It is a continuous process focusing on the planned activity and the expected result through

### 8.2.1 Direct Monitoring and Reporting using both Internal and External Mechanisms

#### 8.2.1.1 Internal Mechanisms

The following activity and task owners within the Commission are responsible for the direct monitoring of the Plan: i. Directorate of Planning and Monitoring; ii. Directorate of Audit; iii. Secretary to the Commission; iv. Resident Electoral Commissioners; v. National Commissioners; and vi. Chairman of the Commission.

#### 8.2.1.2 External Mechanisms

An important fundamental philosophy that underpins this Plan is openness, which envisages increased role for stakeholders in the monitoring of its implementation. Consequently, the Commission would establish and develop effective mechanisms for receiving reports on the implementation of this plan from all stakeholders including: (i) Civil Society Organizations; (ii). Election Observers; and (iii) the general public.

### 8.2.2 Formal Reports from Implementing Departments and Directorates

Understanding that the task of developing the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for departmental activities and the framework for periodic evaluation of their attainments lies with DPM, the Directorate dedicatedly set out on a mission to draw up Departments-specific KPIs and checklists based on the peculiarities of activities relevant to individual Departments/Directorates bearing in mind that well formulated indicators are the basis for clear and comprehensive monitoring. In order to achieve this, the DPM through its liaison officers pulled together all decision extracts approved by the Commission, as well as other decisions which have been granted administrative approval by the National Commissioners in charge of the Departments. Using these assembled approved decisions of the Commission over the last one year, it developed a set of Department-specific Key Performance Indicators which it has overtime deployed in its periodic monitoring and evaluation exercise. In monitoring the implementation of the 2023 EPP and the 2022-2026 SP/SPIP, the Commission intends to sustain this practice.

The implementing Departments and Directorates are expected to submit to the DPM implementation status reports at periodic intervals or as determined by the DPM and the Commission: (i). Periodic project status report.

(ii) Periodic project Schedule chart. Periodic project financial status report; (iv) Graphic presentations and dashboard; (v) Milestones attained on a quarterly basis; (vi) Actuals vis-à-vis what was proposed to be done during the quarter; and (vii) Success stories and lessons learned during implementation.

### 8.2.3 Templates for Addressing Gaps and Challenges in the EPP

Departments and Directorates while executing the 2023 EPP may encounter challenges and observe lacunas that need to be taken into cognizance by the Commission to mitigate future re-occurrence. Hence, the activities of the various departments and directorates shall be closely monitored by the

Planning and Monitoring Directorate (PMD). To this effect, each Department and Directorate will be required to use the template provided in Table 11 to report their performance in term of the challenges encountered and gaps observed in the course of implementing the activities in the 2023 EPP. In reporting the monitored activities to the Commission, the PMD shall depict the actual status of the activity as at the time of monitoring.

**Table 11: Review Template for 2023 Election Project Plan (EPP)**

S/N	ACTIVITIES IN SEQUENCE	LEAD DEPT/ DIR	COLLABORATING DEPT/DIR	CHALLENGES	GAPS	LESSONS LEARNT	OPPORTUNITIES	REMARKS

## 8.3 Evaluation

This entails the study of factors for explaining the successes or failure of actions and/or activities and provides estimates of impact focusing on planned activities, as well as intended and unintended results. The responsibility for developing the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for departmental activities and the framework for the periodic evaluation of their attainments lies with DPM based on the monitoring and evaluation framework as illustrated in Table 12. Some of the principles that will guide the evaluation process are that: (i) Evaluation is a continuous process (continuity); (ii) Evaluation should involve minimum possible costs

(inexpensive); (iii) Evaluation should be done without prejudice to day-to-day work (minimum hindrance to day-to-day work); (iv) Evaluation must be done on a co-operative basis in which the entire staff and the Commission members should participate (total participation); (v) As far as possible, INEC should itself evaluate the implementation of the EPP (Internal Evaluation), but occasionally outside evaluation machinery should also be made use of (external evaluation); (vi) Total overall examination of the Commission will reveal its strength and weaknesses (agency/program totality); and (viii) The result of evaluation should be shared with employees of the Commission (sharing).

**Table 12: FRAMEWORK FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATION 2023 EPP**

S/N	STRATEGIES/ PBA	ACTIVITIES	IMPLEMENT-ING DEPT	COLLABO- RATING DEPT	TIME FRAME	KPI	RESPONSIBLE DEPT/ COMMITTEE
1	Election Day Logistics (EDL)	Verification and Reconciliation of Materials Received for Elections Nationwide at CBN	EOPs	State Office	Q1, 2023	Number of milestones met in Verification and Reconciliation of Materials Received for Elections	P&M & Relevant National Commissioners
2		Delivery and Distribution of Non-Sensitive Materials and Logistics Items		State Office	Q4, 2022	Number of Non-Sensitive Materials distributed and disaggregated by types	P&M & Relevant National Commissioners
3		Receipt of Materials at the International Airports		P&M, Proc, EOPs	Q1, 2023	Number of Sensitive Materials received and disaggregated by types	P&M & Relevant National Commissioners
4		Receipt of Electoral Materials in Zonal Stores in Preparation for the 2023 GE	STORES	EOPs, Proc, P&M	Q4, 2022	Number of Non-Sensitive Materials received and disaggregated by types	P&M & Relevant National Commissioners
5		Assessment of the Zonal Stores in Preparation for the 2023 GE		EOPs, Proc, P&M	Q3, 2022	Number of Zonal Stores Assessed with Reports submitted to the Commission	P&M & Relevant National Commissioners
6		Quarterly Inspection of all the Zonal Stores (including the 3 newly created holding stores) and Stores Records as required by FR 1701(ii) & 1706(ii) {Quarter 4, 2021 to Quarter 4, 2022}	IA	EOPs, Proc, P&M	Q1-Q4, 2022	Number of Ad-hoc Staff verified by Categories	P&M & Relevant National Commissioners
7	Election Staff Management (ESM)	Verification of AdHoc Staff Recruitment for GE	HR	EOPs	Q1, 2023		
8	Election Day Training (EDT)	Cascade Training for Security Personnel	TEI (TRN)	P&M	Q4, 2022 - Q1, 2023		P&M & Relevant National Commissioners
9		Cascade Training for Political Party Leadership and Agents		P&M	Q4, 2022 - Q1, 2023		
10		Cascade Training for Civil Society Organisations		P&M	Q4, 2022 - Q1, 2023		
11		Cascade Training for Election Observers		P&M	Q4, 2022 - Q1, 2023		
12		Cascade Training for Media		P&M	Q4, 2022 - Q1, 2023		
13		Conduct of training for all categories of election officials 2023 GE		P&M	Q4, 2022 - Q1, 2023		
14		Monitoring of training of EO/ AEOs for regulatory compliance in the States & LGAs for 2023 GE	P&M	TEI(TRN)	Q4, 2022 - Q1, 2023	Number of Trainings monitored and report submitted to the Commission	P&M & Relevant National Commissioners
		Monitoring of training of Ad-hoc Staff for regulatory compliance in the States & LGAs for 2023 G.E (SPO Training)		TEI(TRN)	Q4, 2022 - Q1, 2023		

15		Monitoring of training of Ad-hoc Staff for regulatory compliance in the States & LGAs for 2023 GE (PO/APO Training)		TEI(TRN)	Q4, 2022 - Q1, 2023		
16	Continuous Voter Registration (CVR)	Consolidation and integration of the CVR data into the National Voter register	ICT	VR	Q3- Q4, 2022	Number of milestones met in Consolidation and integration of the CVR data into the National Voter register	P&M & Relevant National Commissioners
17		Printing of Permanent Voters' Card for CVR exercise, including transfers and replacement of lost or damaged PVCs.	ICT	VR, State Offices	Q3- Q4, 2022	Number of milestones met in Printing of Permanent Voters' Card for CVR exercise	P&M & Relevant National Commissioners
18		Quality Assurance (QA) on IVED,	ICT	P&M, VR	Q1- Q4, 2022	Number of Quality Assurance (QA) Exercise conducted on IVED	P&M & Relevant National Commissioners
19		Conduct of Nationwide Continuous Voter Registration (CVR)exercise at designated centres for 2023 GE	VR	ICT, State Offices	Q1- Q4, 2022	Number of milestones met in conduct of Nationwide CVR	P&M & Relevant National Commissioners
20		Printing of National Register of Voters for display prior to 2023 GE		ICT, State Offices	Q4, 2022 -	Number of Quality Assurance (QA) Exercise conducted on IVED	P&M & Relevant National Commissioners
21		Issuance of Permanent Voter Card		State Office	Q4, 2022 -	Number of milestones met in Issuance of Permanent Voter Card	P&M & Relevant National Commissioners
22	Election Day Procurement (EDP)	Procurement and deployment of INEC Voter Enrolment Devices (IVED) for Continuous Voter Registration Exercise (CVR)	EW&T	Proc, VR	Q1- Q3, 2022	Number of IVED procured and deployed	P&M & Relevant National Commissioners
23		Procurement of Operational Vehicles for use during the 2023 GE		Proc, EOPs	Q1- Q3, 2022	Number of Operational vehicles procured by type	P&M & Relevant National Commissioners
24		Acquisition of additional desktop computers for capturing pre-registered voters, for the completion of registration of online registrants (2 per State and 6 for HQ = 80 desktops)	ICT	Proc, VR, State Offices	Q1- Q3, 2022	Number of Desktop Computers acquired	P&M & Relevant National Commissioners
25		Procurement of stationeries printing and copier consumables and Procurement of office equipment	PROC	All Departments	Q1- Q4, 2022	Number of office equipment acquired by types	P&M & Relevant National Commissioners
26		On the ground assessment of prequalified printers of sensitive materials (Factory Inspection)	EOPs,	EOPs, P&M	Q1- Q4, 2022	Number of Milestones achieved in Factory Inspection	P&M & Relevant National Commissioners

27		Monitoring Production of all Sensitive materials & equipment (Local and Foreign)		EOPs, P&M	Q3- Q4, 2022	Number of Milestones achieved in Monitoring of Production of Sensitive Materials	P&M & Relevant National Commissioners
28		Tracking and Confirmation of Contract Execution		EOPs, P&M,	Q1- Q4, 2022	Number of Contract confirmed and executed	P&M & Relevant National Commissioners
29		Procurement of Accreditation Devices for 2023 GE	ICT	Proc, VR, P&M	Q1- Q4, 2022	Number of Accreditation devices Procured	P&M & Relevant National Commissioners
30		Procurement of Continuous Voter Registration Materials for 2023 GE	VR	Proc, ICT, P&M	Q1- Q4, 2022	Number of CVR Materials procured by types	P&M & Relevant National Commissioners
31		Compliance Monitoring of Procurement and Deployment of IVED for accreditation for 2023 GE	P&M, Audit	ICT, VR	Q1- Q4, 2022	Number of Milestones met in Monitoring the Procurement and Deployment of IVED	P&M & Relevant National Commissioners
32	Election Day Support (EDS)	Readiness assurance for the 2023 General Election to determine the level of preparedness in the States & LGAs	P&M	State Office	Q1, 2023	Number of Readiness Assurance conducted with Reports submitted to the Commission	P&M & Relevant National Commissioners
33		Compliance Monitoring of the 2023 GE (Presidential, National Assembly, Governorship and State House of Assembly)	P&M	State Office	Q1, 2023	Number of Elections monitored and reported disaggregated by type of Election	P&M & Relevant National Commissioners
34	Voter Education and Enlightenment (VEE)	Sensitization Forums in LGAs for enhanced participation of grassroots women in elections (To be organized by EOIs)	G&I	LGA Offices	Q4, 2022 - Q1, 2023	Number of Sensitization Forums conducted across LGAs for enhanced participation of grassroots women	P&M & Relevant National Commissioners
35	Complaints and Dispute Management (CDM)	Pre/Post- Election mediation clinic	LP	LGA OFFICES	Q1-Q4	Number of pre-election dispute carried out and number of post-election disputes settled	P&M & Relevant National Commissioners
36		On-the-spot settlements of election disputes	LP	LC&D	Q1-Q4	Number of disputes published	P&M & Relevant National Commissioners
37	Election Security (ES)	Purchase of fire ball/ fire blanket	SEC	Proc	Q2-Q3	Number of fireballs and fire blankets purchased	P&M & Relevant National Commissioners
38		Installation of solar lights to state offices	SEC	Proc	Q3	Number of INEC offices with solar lights	P&M & Relevant National Commissioners
37	Gender and Inclusivity (GI)	Training of Ad-hoc staff and other staff in the use of inclusive materials and assistive devise provided by the Commission	GI	TEI	Q1-Q4	Number of Ad-Hoc staff trained on the use of devices provide by the Commission	P&M & Relevant National Commissioners

## 8.4 Mid Term Review of the 2023 Election Project Plan

A plan is only a proposal and therefore a living document. Hence, periodic review of the plan is inevitable during implementation. The EPPC proposes a comprehensive biannual review of the Plan during the two-year implementation period. This will complement the regular review of the plan based on the periodic monitoring reports to facilitate proper alignment of activities and optimal use of resources all through the plan, using the template in Table 10 above.

## 8.5 Capacity of the Directorate of Planning and Monitoring

The DPM is reasonably staffed and equipped to undertake basic monitoring and evaluation services for the successful implementation of the 2023 EPP. In this regard, the DPM appreciates and commends the Commission for sponsoring seven staff members of the Directorate to acquire certification as Professional Planners of the Institute of Planning, Nigeria. However, with the Commission's avowed determination to safeguard the electoral environment and increase the integrity of the electoral process and deepen our democracy through technological and innovative inputs, particularly, the voter registration and accreditation processes, it is imperative that DPM must be in constant sync with contemporary monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and strategies. Consequently, the capacity of the Directorate of Planning and Monitoring must be strengthened in areas such as Data Management, Collaboration, Learning and Adaptation (CLA), Problem Driven Iterative and Adaptation to ensure optimum performance in the M&E exercise. Recruitment of additional

staff with requisite skills, continuous training and retraining of available staff and timely provision of requisite working tools, are desiderata to a successful execution of the 2023 EPP.

It is pertinent to note that, in order to operationalize a proper monitoring and evaluation framework, Departments, Directorates and Units would have to be properly oriented on the need to step out of their silos and embrace unity and oneness of purpose which should constitute a force propelling their actions. In this regard, effective oversight on the DPM and liaison with the Commission by the PMSC is instructive since Committee advises the Commission on organisational development and strategic direction, strategic planning and innovations as well as monitoring all approved activities of the Commission. The Committee's function that impacts directly on ensuring success of the M&E processes are:

**Consequently, the capacity of the Directorate of Planning and Monitoring must be strengthened in areas such as Data Management, Collaboration, Learning and Adaptation (CLA), Problem Driven Iterative and Adaptation to ensure optimum performance in the M&E exercise**

- i. Prepare, coordinate and monitor readiness assurance mechanisms and programmes for all departments of the Commission;
- ii. Prepare quarterly reports on the implementation of the Commission's projects and plants;
- iii. Prepare periodic reports on all Commission's activities and to determine levels of implementation;
- iv. Advise on the development of the Commission's capacity for planning and project management;
- v. Advise the Commission on broad policy and strategy for the achievement of its core mandate;
- vi. Advise the Commission on the prerequisites necessary for the creation of new departments in order to improve efficiency in their assigned schedules and to eliminate possible overlap and conflict of schedules;
- vii. Coordinate, supervise and generally oversee the activities of the Election Monitoring and Support Centre (EMSC) and other monitoring and tracking tools which includes the Commission's newest tracking platform - INEC Security Alert and Notification System (INEC-SANS).

Conducting secure and violence-free elections constitutes a major challenge confronting many Election Management Bodies in developing countries, including Nigeria. Elections represent a very important aspect of the political system and existing security challenges confronting a country become heightened during elections. This is particularly so because contending social forces perceive elections either as threats or advantages to the pursuit of their political interest and consequently seek to influence

the electoral process with far-reaching implications. Technology driven solutions such as the INEC Security Alert and Notification System (INEC-SANS) provides a platform to limit these implications.

The INEC-SANS is an application developed by INEC which allows for on-the-go communication to mitigate and forestall critical incidences or provide immediate responses if they occur. It was also built to address the sudden rise in security threats on lives and properties of the Commission. It is hoped that the proper utilization of INEC-SANS will greatly enhance preventive and responsive actions towards security challenges during election activities. The INEC-SANS is arguably the most innovative platform that the Commission has ever owned. Its application is limitless with series of far-reaching functionalities with the most crucial being the safety and protection of lives and properties of the Commission. This it does by providing a head start alert in crises situations. The Commission deployed this novel tool in the 6 November 2021 Gubernatorial election in Anambra State as a pilot test. The remarkable success of the application in that election is an indication of its utility for the 2023 general election.

Considering its strategic position and the centrality of its activities as highlighted above, the Directorate of Planning and Monitoring can rightly refer to it as the eagle eye of the Commission. It not only provides the Commission with a 3600 view of activity implementation processes and status, but it also ensures compliance with the defined strategies and goals of the Commission. To fulfil this function effectively, it is therefore exigent and logical to upgrade the Directorate to a full-fledged Department at Headquarters and to function as an autonomous Unit at the State and Local Government levels.



# Chapter Nine

**Critical Recommendations  
for the Successful  
Implementation of the EPP**

The success or failure of any Election Project Plan is dependent upon several intervening factors associated with the conduct of elections in a developing democracy like Nigeria. These factors include the adequacy of the electoral legal framework, prevailing political, socio-cultural, demographic, topographic and infrastructural environment. The success of an election project plan is broadly determined by the extent to which most, if not all, polling units open on schedule at 8am on Election Day and within a situation where collation and transmission of results are transparent, seamless, and credible and ultimately where elections results are announced within an acceptable time limit. Based on the experiences of the conduct of the 2015 and 2019 general elections and from the lessons learnt from the review of the 2015 and 2019 Election Project Plans, the EPPC makes the following key recommendations towards the successful implementation of 2023 Election Project Plan.

## 9.1 Implementing Electoral Legal Framework Provisions and Timelines

Elections are governed by law and in making policy decisions on the conduct of elections and how their results are determined; the Election Management Body is guided by the electoral legal framework. In Nigeria, the framework comprises the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended), the Electoral Act 2022, as well as election guidelines, regulations, and manuals for election officials and case law. The power of the Commission to carry out its mandate such as registration of voters, maintenance of register of voters, registration and regulation of political parties, procedures for election

and all other activities incidental to the electoral process rests on the certainty of the law. However, the law is dynamic and requires periodic review to strengthen the electoral process, cure the lacuna in the extant electoral laws and give legal backing to the new innovations introduced by the Commission in improving the conduct of elections.

Unfortunately, the process of amending the electoral legal framework in Nigeria is painstaking and time consuming so much so that in 2015, the amendments were enacted only days before the general election, while in 2019, the proposed amendments were not enacted at all.

### 9.1.1 Required Actions

- i. Strict application and adherence to the electoral legal framework by the Commission and all electoral stakeholders.
- ii. Undertake a comprehensive review and update of Commission's Guidelines, Regulations and Manuals based on the Electoral Act 2022

## 9.2 Timely Procurement of Election Materials and Services

The timely procurement and deployment of both sensitive and non-sensitive election materials in adequate quantity is perhaps the most critical issue to the successful implementation of any Election Project Plan. The outcome of the post-election review of the 2015 and 2019 general elections and the review of the Election Project Plan for both elections clearly identified late procurement as a debilitating factor. Given that an election is a time-bound

activity with a definitive schedule and timetable, the organisation and management of the procurement process in a timely, cost effective and efficient manner is fundamental for success. This is particularly so in the conduct of a general election in Nigeria where any delay or disruption in the procurement process will have direct impact on the management of the election. As it were, the Commission is bound by the Public Procurement Act 2007, which among other provisions sets out the principles for the procurement of goods, works and services by MDAs of the Federal Government of Nigeria. Based on the Act, it could take about 30 weeks to procure even the most rudimentary election material and this time is further extended if the limit of approval is beyond the Commission and must go to the Federal Executive Council.

### 9.2.1 Required Actions

- i. Establish a safe and realistic timeline for the procurement of election materials based on the timetable and schedule of activities for the 2023 general election.
- ii. Early preparation of the election budget anchored on programming-based budgeting approach wherein each major activity in the election plan will be articulated with clear anticipated benefits, measurable Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) over the duration of the activity, as well as a detailed cash flow requirement and resources. This will ensure that the Commission embark of fully funded activities only.
- iii. Timely submission of the election budget to the Executive to ensure expeditious consideration, approval and release of election funds to mitigate the challenge of late procurement of election materials.
- iv. Engage with the Bureau of Public Procurement (BPE) for the possible review of the application of the Public Procurement Act to INEC given its peculiar circumstances as an Election Management Body implementing time-bound activities. Apart from the issue of delays in obtaining required approvals from the Bureau, the Commission is hamstrung in the procurement of critical and time bound electoral goods and services by the provisions of Section 16 of the Act on the fundamental principles for procurement.
- v. Review the pivotal role of the Procurement Department to serve as a central procuring entity that will coordinate the procurement of specific goods and services in order to ensure quality control, standards,

**Based on the Act, it could take about 30 weeks to procure even the most rudimentary election material and this time is further extended if the limit of approval is beyond the Commission and must go to the Federal Executive Council**

value for money and fitness for purpose. To this end, each end-user department should develop its procurement requirements for works, goods and services based on approved template and submit for them for the consideration of the Procurement Planning Committee, relevant Standing Committee of the Commission and the Tenders Board. The recommendations on these requirements from the Tenders Board will be submitted for the approval of the Commission.

### **9.3 Surveillance of the Implications of the COVID -19 Pandemic and other Emergencies on Electoral Activities**

The continuous mutation of the SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) remains a source of global and national concern. As at beginning of January 2022; 245,404 cases have been confirmed and 3,058 deaths have been recorded in Nigeria. Since SARS-CoV-2 was first identified, the virus has continued to mutate and will continue to do so. While the Commission was able to conduct the Edo and Ondo Governorship election and other bye elections without significant risk to public health and safety, there has been the emergence of new variants of the virus that have manifested a faster and more efficient transmission, evaded detection by existing test, escaped immunity from past infection or vaccination and increased the risk of severe disease or death. According to the NCDC, there are about 55 different lineages of SARS-CoV-2 circulating in Nigeria as of February 2021 and new strain of the virus will continue to evolve as demonstrated with the Delta and Omicron variants. This has serious public health and logistics implications for the

Commission in the preparations and conduct of the 2023 general election as envisaged under this plan.

#### **9.3.1 Required Actions**

- i. Facilitation of full vaccination against COVID - 19 for all INEC Staff and election duty Staff.
- ii. Constant adherence to the provisions of the INEC Policy on Conducting Elections in the Context of the COVID - 19 Pandemic, the INEC Voters Code of Conduct for Elections during the COVID -19 Pandemic and all protocols and advisories issued by the Presidential task Force on COVID -19, State Committees on COVID -19 and other relevant health authorities.
- iii. Continue consultation and collaboration with the Presidential task Force on COVID -19, the NCDC and all health authorities at various levels to monitor the spread of the pandemic in order to develop and implement appropriate measures to protect the health and safety of electoral officials and stakeholders.
- iv. Deepening the use of appropriate and secure electoral technology to undertake certain electoral activities involving the congregation of large crowds.
- v. Ensure the delivery of critical electoral materials to State and FCT Office at least 15 days to the 2023 general election.

### **9.4 Inventory, Storage and State of Election Materials and Equipment**

Important for the successful implementation of this Plan is the availability of required election materials

and equipment on time and in the right quantity and location. In the run up to the 2019 general election, it was suddenly discovered that some state did not have the required complement of the red and black-lid ballot boxes. The Commission had to resort to very drastic and ingenious measures to rescue the situation. It is therefore important that the Commission undertake a comprehensive audit of essential election materials and equipment to ascertain their state and status and to make up for any shortages by the end of November 2022.

#### **9.4.1 Required Actions**

- i. Regular and periodic decongestion of Stores at all levels to dispose obsolete equipment and materials. This is required to provide suitable, adequate, and secure storage facilities for election materials and equipment. The Stores Directorate should conclude the deployment of its automated inventory system to track its operations.
- ii. Conduct a comprehensive audit of election materials and equipment, especially non-sensitive materials such as ballot boxes, voting cubicles, generators etc. to ensure their availability in adequate quantities in the run up to the 2023 general election.
- iii. Comprehensive review of the storage system of Commission's ICT - related assets and equipment, especially the newly introduced INEC Voter Enrolment Devises (IVED). It is important to store these devises in an environment conducive to ensure their optimum protection and guarantee their continued functionality. To this end, the ICT Department should collaborate with Stores Directorate

to develop an appropriate storage policy imbued with periodic, routine maintenance and status check to ascertain the health and condition of these assets and equipment.

- iv. Development of clear guidelines for comprehensive inspection of Commission's assets and equipment before and after deployment for electoral activities, including a comprehensive checklist for both the issuing and receiving official to certify the status and functionality of such assets and equipment before and after use for any electoral activity.
- v. Explore the possibility of leasing equipment such as generators, heavy-duty photocopy machines and printers for short-term use where and when necessary, based on well-defined rules and regulations.

#### **9.5 Activation of the EMSC Performance Management Dashboard for 2023 General Election**

The EMSC Performance Management Dashboard (PMD) is a critical analytical tool encompassing and coordinating reports from other tools such as the Election Project Plan Calendar of Activity Templates, the Green, Amber and Red Zone Reporting Templates, the Threats/Risks Templates and the Intervention and Support Templates. Data across these templates are collected from field assets and fed into the single dashboard to provide a real-time status of the state of preparations for the election and to track the implementation status of the Election Project Plan as reflected in the EMSC Harmonized Checklist. The PMD, as a web-based mobile application, was designed to assist various categories

of users, either as task owners or task managers/supervisors, to upload data and access reports on the implementation status of electoral activities under the Green, Amber and Red Operational Zones. The EMSC operational zone provides the necessary interface for all categories of users to interact with the EMSC to track implementation and compliance statuses, monitor emerging concerns, assess election readiness status, and provide early warning signals to the Commission for possible quick intervention and support to field operations.

Having the 2023 general election in focus, EMSC Performance Management Dashboard will be activated immediately the 2023 Election Project Plan is concluded and Calendar of Activities is finalized. The Green Zone for 2023 general election is scheduled to commence from 26 March to 26 November 2022. The Amber Zone is scheduled to commence on 27 November 2022 to 13 February 2023. The first Red Zone starts on 16 February and ends on 27 February 2023, and the second Red Zone starts on 2 March and ends on 13 March 2023. The EMSC through its operational units and structure would deploy the necessary platform resources for data collection and reporting as the Commission transits through the election timetable and the EMSC operational timelines. However, the following are recommendations for effective activation of the EMSC Performance Management Dashboard for the tracking and monitoring of the election plans and activities for 2023 general election.

### 9.5.1 Required Actions

- i. The implementation of the approved 2021-2023 EMSC Workplan should be fast-tracked as it will form the backbone of monitoring, implementation and support
- ii. Requisite Tools and equipment for the effective setup and management of state EMSC Secretariats and State Situation Rooms should be provided

**The PMD, as a web-based mobile application, was designed to assist various categories of users, either as task owners or task managers/supervisors, to upload data and access reports on the implementation status of electoral activities under the Green, Amber and Red Operational Zones**

activities for the General and other off-cycle and re-run elections. Towards this, the following need to be placed in constant view of the Commission:-

- a. The process review of the EMSC operational structure, Principal Business Areas, and checklist/indicators, as outlined in the EMSC 2021 - 2023 work plan as approved by the Commission, should be concluded in order to upgrade the dashboard and other platform resources without further delay.
- b. The training and capacity building program outlined in the EMSC 2021 - 2023 work plan should be implemented and concluded before June 2022.

well ahead of the activation of the EMSC for the 2023 general election.

- iii. Budgetary allocations should be made to support the EMSC's Operational Units, especially the HQ EMSC Secretariat and State Secretariats.
- iv. The EMSC's timelines for the general election and other reporting processes should be strictly observed and enforced.

## **9.6 Change Management Training and Institutional Capacity Building**

The EMSC, amongst the many other innovations the Commission has introduced into the management of the electoral process, aims to improve the effectiveness, efficiency and coordination of electoral operations and activities through its planning, monitoring and support mechanism. There are about 1,300 identified task owners and task managers/supervisors (HQ and State Offices) in the pre-election mode and about 11,000 personnel (inclusive of LGTECHs/RATECHs), in a general election scenario, that are operative within the EMSC framework. While the anticipated goals and objectives are well articulated, the role of the human element in the framework remains a determinant factor in the quest to actualize the goals and objectives of the EMSC.

Arising from the post-election review on the operationalization of the EMSC for the 2019 general election, the human element has accounted for the major challenges encountered, especially in the aspect of compliance to processes and procedures around data collection, report validation and quality reporting.

This may partly be due to inadequate understanding of the goals and objectives of the EMSC, attitudinal depositions to the digital concept of the EMSC, and the failure to adequately familiarise staff with the operations and mechanisms of the EMSC as a modern election management mechanism. While administrative action to formulate policy framework for the EMSC that seeks to enforce reporting on the EMSC is an impetus to address the human element, a change management strategy needs to be developed and implemented to support the policy framework for the EMSC as well as other changes the Commission maybe introducing now or in the future.

The change management strategy should be systematized wherein training and capacity building plans as well as the communication strategy of the Commission would be imparted to newly recruited and existing staff through periodic refresher courses.

**The EMSC, amongst the many other innovations the Commission has introduced into the management of the electoral process, aims to improve the effectiveness, efficiency and coordination of electoral operations and activities through its planning, monitoring and support mechanism**

### 9.6.1 Required Actions

- i. A comprehensive change management policy should be developed for the Commission led by the Departments of Planning and Monitoring and Human Resource Management.
- ii. The Planning, Monitoring and Strategy Committee, should review the appropriate aspects of EMSC work plan to ensure the concept of change management is introduced and implemented.
- iii. Change management training should be routinely organized for the entire staff, led by external consultants for a period of 2 years and later by the Commission itself.
- iv. A comprehensive Commission documentation policy should be developed for the management of records, to ensure digitization, archiving and retrieval of records with adequate access levels for the Commission's staff as well as for the members of the public..

## 9.7 Enhancing Internal and External Communication

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has an uncommon, constitutionally derived responsibility to conduct elections, except Local Government elections, register eligible voters, register and regulate political parties, organize voter and civic education, and prosecute electoral offenders. The Commission also periodically hires many ad-hoc staff for regular and off-season elections. With Offices across the 36 States, the

FCT and in the 774 LGA, in addition to Zonal Stores in the 6 geo-political zones, the Commission is one of the largest government organizations in Nigeria. Given its size and scale of responsibilities, it is expedient for the Commission to implement an efficient system of coordinating its team and the multiple layers of activities it undertakes from time to time. Indeed, cohesion and a sense of belonging among staff are critical, in addition to the employees' shared understanding of the Commission's philosophy and vision. This underscores the necessity for a seamless internal communication system, which the Commission could leverage to manage the various departments and units within its headquarters on the one hand, and between the centre, the various State and Local Government offices on the other.

The other side of the coin entails the Commission's critical engagements with its large base of stakeholders and partners on a regular basis. These include the electorate, political parties, media, civil society, security agencies and the National Assembly, among others. The nexus is primarily informed by INEC's centrality to the conduct of elections, the outcomes of which determines who occupy executive political offices at the federal and state levels. This reality has constantly put the electoral umpire in the eye of the storm. Moreover, with a trust deficit underlying an average Nigerian's impression of public institutions, fuelled in part by the endless conspiracy theories and fake news flooding the social media space, the Commission faces a constant integrity challenge. Unfortunately, the winner-takes-all nature of Nigeria's politics does not help matters.

A strategic internal and external communication strategy thus

becomes an indispensable tool for the Commission. The Freedom of Information Act (2001), which requires all public organizations to, among others, proactively provide information about their activities to the public, imposes additional responsibility on the Commission. This recognition played out during the formulation of its Strategic Plan 2012 – 2016, leading to the production of the maiden edition of the INEC Communication Policy (IPC) in 2013. The document was substantially updated in 2019, incorporating new realities and adopting modern technological tools for sharing and disseminating information. The Internal and External Communication Matrices provide detailed information not only about what needs to be done but also the roadmap to achieving projected objectives.

The 2023 general election will, no doubt, be like no other in the history of Nigeria. Three historical events have already taken place. First, the Commission has successfully expanded voter access by increasing the number of polling units from 119,974 to 176, 846, breaking the jinx that had defied the solution for many years. Also, for the first time, the Commission on 28th June 2021 launched the online pre-registration of voters and the INEC Voter Enrolment Device (IVED), which will also be used for fingerprint and facial authentication/accreditation on Election Day. The device is a significant improvement on, and a replacement of the famous Smart Card Reader. Furthermore, the new device will make impossible the use of incident forms as accreditation can be effected either by fingerprints or through facial recognition. On top of that is the introduction of the INEC Result Viewing Portal (IReV), which has changed the perception of many Nigerians about the election result management process. The innovation facilitates posting

polling unit result sheets to an online portal, where Nigerians can log in and view such results live. A practical strategic communication blueprint is thus needed to ensure that Nigerians understand the Commission's actions and plans.

### 9.7.1 Required Actions

- i. The established frameworks for sharing information between and among key departments, directorates/units including the unit in charge of external communication; between the headquarters and the states; and between the states and local government offices should be strengthened.
- ii. Means of communication, such as minutes of meetings, email, bulletins and WhatsApp tools, should be continually standardized and enhanced in accordance with the Commission's established rules and regulations.
- iii. The Commission's website should be configured to give the relevant staff access to pertinent information in segmented folders through passwords/access codes, in accordance with established rules to promote internal communication
- iv. The Commission's Online Newspaper, INECNEWS, should be enhanced to play its fundamental role in information dissemination.
- v. ICT Communication tools/equipment should be procured in adequate quantities to facilitate seamless and continuous information dissemination.
- vi. The Voter Education and Publicity Department, as the key implementer

- of the Communication Policy, should be professionalized for effective service delivery.
- vii. The Commission should provide an adequate budget continuously for capacity development of VEP staff at the headquarters and State offices.
- viii. The Commission should continue with its regular engagements with stakeholders and expand the list to accommodate less visible groups.
- ix. The Commission should implement all aspects of the Revised INEC Communication Policy to attain its communication goals.



# Annexure 1

# **TIMETABLE & SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES FOR 2023 GENERAL ELECTION**



By virtue of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 (as amended), tenure of the President, Vice President, Governors and Deputy Governors of States of the Federation (except Anambra, Bayelsa, Edo, Ekiti, Imo, Kogi, Ondo and Osun States) will expire on the 28th day of May 2023 while the National and State Assemblies will stand dissolved on the 8th day of June 2023.

Pursuant to Sections 76(2), 116(2), 132(2) and 178(2) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 (as amended), elections to the said offices shall hold not earlier than One Hundred and Fifty (150) days and not later than Thirty (30) days before the expiration of the term of office of the last holder of that office. In line with this provision and the Regulations of the Independent National Electoral Commission (hereinafter referred to as "the Commission"), the Presidential and National Assembly elections shall hold on Saturday 18th February 2023 while the Governorship and State Assembly elections shall hold on Saturday 4th March 2023.

The Commission is empowered by Section 28(1) of the Electoral Act 2022 to issue Notice for the elections not later than Three Hundred and Sixty (360) days before the date of the elections.

In exercise of the powers conferred by the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 (as amended) and the Electoral Act 2022 and of all other powers enabling it in that behalf, the Commission hereby issues this Timetable and Schedule of Activities for the 2023 General Election.

	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Remark</b>
1	 Notice of Election	28th February 2022	<b>Section 28(1) of the Electoral Act 2022 provides not later than 360 days before the election.</b>
2	 Collection of Forms EC9 (Formerly CF001) and EC9A, 9B, 9C, 9D & 9E (Formerly CF002) for the election by Political Parties from INEC website.	1st March 2022	Collection by Political parties to be issued to their candidates.
3	 Conduct of Party Primaries including resolution of disputes arising from the Primaries.	Commencement date 4th April 2022 End 3rd June 2022	To enable Political Parties democratically nominate candidates for the election as required by Section 84 of the Electoral Act 2022.

4



**Submission of Forms EC9 and EC9A, 9B, 9C, 9D & 9E online (Nomination Portal).**

**Presidential & National Assembly**  
9.00am 10th June 2022 - 6.00pm 17th June 2022

**Governorship & State Houses of Assembly**  
9.00am 1st July 2022 - 6.00pm 15th July 2022

**Access code for the submission of nomination forms shall be available for collection from 5th June 2022 at the Commission's Headquarters.**

**Section 29(1) of the Electoral Act 2022 provides for not later than 180 days before the election.**  
**EC9 (Personal Particulars of Candidates).**  
**EC9A, 9B, 9C, 9D & 9E (Names/List of Nominated Candidates).**

5



**Publication of Personal Particulars of candidates (EC9) by the Commission.**

**Presidential & National Assembly**  
24th June 2022

**Governorship & State Houses of Assembly**  
22nd July 2022

**Section 29(3) of the Electoral Act 2022 provides for publication within 7 days of the receipt of Form EC9.**

6



**Last day for withdrawal by candidate(s)/replacement of withdrawn candidate(s) by Political Parties.**

**Presidential & National Assembly**  
15th July 2022

**Governorship & State Houses of Assembly**  
12th August 2022

**Section 31 of the Electoral Act 2022 provides not later than 90 days to the election.**

7



**Last day for submission of Nomination forms (EC13A, 13B, 13C, 13D & 13E) by Political Parties.**

**Presidential & National Assembly**  
8th August 2022

**Governorship & State Houses of Assembly**  
18th August 2022

**To enable Political Parties comply with Section 30(1) of the Electoral Act 2022.**

8



**Publication of final list of nominated candidates by the Commission.**

**Presidential & National Assembly**  
20th September 2022

**Governorship & State Houses of Assembly**  
4th October 2022

**Section 32(1) of the Electoral Act 2022 provides at least 150 days before the day of election.**

9



**Commencement of campaign by Political Parties in public.**

**Presidential & National Assembly**  
28th September 2022

**Governorship & State Houses of Assembly**  
12th October 2022

**Section 94(1) of the Electoral Act 2022.**  
**Campaign in public by every political party shall commence 150 days before polling day and end 24 hours prior to that day.**

10	 <p><b>Last day for submission of names of Polling Agents for the Election to the Electoral Officer of the Local Government Area by Political Parties through the Commission's dedicated portal.</b></p>	<p><b>Presidential &amp; National Assembly</b> 30th December 2022</p> <p><b>Governorship &amp; State Houses of Assembly</b> 6th January 2023</p>	<p><b>Section 43 of the Electoral Act 2022 provides for not later than 14 days before the election.</b></p>
11	 <p><b>Publication of official Register of Voters for the election by the Commission.</b></p>	<p>12th January 2023</p>	<p><b>Section 10(4) of the Electoral Act 2022</b></p>
12	 <p><b>Publication of Notice of Poll by the Commission.</b></p>	<p>30th January 2023</p>	<p><b>Section 44 of the Electoral Act 2022 provides for not later than 14 days before the election.</b></p>
13	 <p><b>Last day for campaigns by Political Parties.</b></p>	<p><b>Presidential &amp; National Assembly</b> 23rd February 2023</p> <p><b>Governorship &amp; State Houses of Assembly</b> 9th March 2023</p>	<p><b>Section 94(1) of the Electoral Act 2022.</b> Campaign in public by every political party shall commence 150 days before polling day and end 24 hours prior to that day.</p>
14	 <p><b>Date of Election</b></p>	<p><b>Presidential &amp; National Assembly</b> 25th February 2023</p> <p><b>Governorship &amp; State Houses of Assembly</b> 11th March 2023</p>	<p><b>Sections 76 (1) &amp; (2), 116 (1) &amp; (2), 132 (1) &amp; (2) 178 (1) &amp; (2) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 (as amended) empower the Commission to appoint dates for Presidential, Governorship, National Assembly and State House of Assembly elections not earlier than 150 days and not later than 30 days before the expiration of the term of office of the last holder/before the House stands dissolved.</b></p>



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