



INDEPENDENT NATIONAL ELECTORAL COMMISSION (INEC)



STRATEGIC PLAN (2012 – 2016)

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ACRONYMS

ANC- All Nigeria Congress

ACF-Arewa Consultative Forum

AIDS-Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

ATR-African Traditional Religion

AU-African Union

CBN – Central Bank of Nigeria

DFID- UK Department for International Development

DGD Project – Democracy Governance and Development Project

ECN-Electoral Commission of Nigeria

ECOWAS- Economic Community of West African States

EMB-Election Management Body

EO- Electoral Officer

FBO – Faith-based Organisation

FCT – Federal Capital Territory

FEC- Federal Electoral Commission

FEDECO- Federal Electoral Commission

FTO-Foreign Terrorist Organisation

GDP- Gross Domestic Product

GL- Grade Level

GSM- Global System for Mobile Communication

HIV-Human Immunodeficiency Virus

ICCES – Inter-Agency Consultative Committee on Election Security

ICT-Information and Communications Technology

IDEA- International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance

IFES- International Foundation for Electoral Systems

INC- Ijaw National Congress

INEC-Independent National Electoral Commission

IRI- International Republican Institute

JNI- Jama'atu Nasril Islam

MASSOB-Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra

MDG- Millennium Development Goals

NDI –National Democratic Institute

NEC- National Electoral Commission

NECON- National Electoral Commission of Nigeria

NEEDS- National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy

NICVE- national Inter-Agency Committee on Voter Education

NURTW- National Union of Road Transport Workers

NYSC – National Youth Service Corps

OCV – Out of Country Voting

OPC-Oduwa Peoples' Congress

PDP- Peoples Democratic Party

RAO- Registration Area Officer

RECs – Resident Electoral Commissioners

RERC- Registration and Election Review Committee

SIEC- State Independent Electoral Commission

TI- Transparency International

UN- United Nations

UK- United Kingdom

UNDP-United Nations Development Programme

UPGA-United Progressive Grand Alliance

UPU-Urhobo Progress Union

FOREWORD

This strategic plan is a practical, action-oriented guide which has been developed to provide a strategic direction for INEC and the actions to be taken to achieve its mandate given the international and national context of its operations. It is a design, a blueprint, and a master plan to help the Commission develop a pragmatic roadmap for its work over the next five years.

The conduct of elections is one of the largest, most costly, most administratively and logistically burdensome operations at a national level that a single country could ever undertake in times of peace. It involves a complex and large-scale set of operations, spanning a multitude of activities including delivery of professional training to thousands of electoral officers and ad-hoc or temporary poll workers, designing and delivering voter education, registering voters, regulation of political parties, monitoring political party campaigns, procurement of hundreds of election materials in enormous quantities, developing voting and counting procedures, liaising with stakeholders, dealing with security, adjudicating electoral disputes and much more. All of these have to be done with limited resources and within a frame-work and time set by laws. In performing these various functions, election management bodies around the world have employed a number of innovative approaches, some of which are now considered best practices, to improve the management and conduct of elections. Electoral reforms that have been instituted include the use of information and communication technology, adoption of more transparent and inclusive processes, professionalization of the organization, amendments to legal framework and improvement of relationships with external stakeholders, to cite a few. As a result of these efforts, the past several years have seen the varying successes of a number of EMBs in the manner by which they prepare, organize, administer and conduct elections. All of these experiences have been taken into cognizance in the production of this strategic plan.

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) conducted the 1999, 2003, 2007 and 2011 elections. The 2011 general election was adjudged by both local and international observers to be free, fair and credible. Indeed, the conduct of the 2011 elections has halted, if not reversed the history of progressive degeneration of the outcome of elections in Nigeria from 1922 to 2007.

This strategic plan has builds on the lessons of the past to prepare for a much improved conduct of the 2015 and future elections in the country. It has addressed the mandate of the Commission in a holistic manner. The Commission is committed to implementing the Strategic plan to ensure free, fair and credible elections.

I am confident that this strategic plan will help the Commission to manage electoral processes better, plan for change in a systematic approach, adapt processes based on new information and the changing political, financial or cultural environments, and foster better communication within and outside the Commission. In addition, the operationalisation of the Strategic Plan and implementation of the Programme of Action arising from the Strategic Plan will help us to optimize the organizational systems and structures, provide guidance to management for day-to-

day operations, enable the Commission to assess progress in achieving set goals and provide a framework for monitoring and evaluation and improvements within the Commission.

Prof. Attahiru M. Jega, OFR
Chairman, INEC
December, 2012

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A lot of individuals and organisations contributed to the production of this Strategic Plan. We are greatly indebted to the Commission Members, led by the Chairman Prof. Attahiru M. Jega, OFR for the visionary leadership in the production of a strategic plan to guide the work of the Commission over the next five years. It is well known that the production of a strategic plan is a process that helps to guide and focus the entire work of an organization, build a resilient organization that is effective, efficient and competitive and helps to manage change in individuals, leadership, environment and the organization. The production of this Strategic Plan was process-driven involving the Commission and its staff as well as stakeholders. We are immensely grateful to all the Resident Electoral Commissioners who made well informed inputs to the document at various Stages of its production. The Commission's Administrative Secretaries, some Heads of Operations, Legal Services, Information and Communication Technology Departments / Units. The Electoral Officers in our State offices also made wonderful contributions to the Plan. The Commission owes them a debt of appreciation. All Management Staff from the Commission's Headquarters and its States offices took part in the interactive sessions and made useful inputs which facilitated the production of both the Strategic Plan and its Programme of Action. We are indeed grateful to all of them. This initiative of getting the critical mass of our workforce involved in the process is a novel and deliberate policy to make them own the plan thereby facilitating its implementation. We are grateful to the members of the Strategic Plan Committee for their hard work and commitment: Barr. Mike Igini (REC, Cross River), Prof. Istifanus Dafwang (REC, Gombe), Prof. Okey Ibeanu (Chief Technical Adviser to Hon. Chairman), Mustapha M. Kuta (Director, Internal Audit), Margaret Ejeh Ikwunja (Director, Civil Society & Gender), Engr. Emmanuel Akem (Director, Voter Registry), Okey Ndeche (Director, Operations), U. F. Usman, (Director, Logistics & Transport), Augusta Chinwe Ogakwu (Director, Alternative Dispute Resolution), Emmanuel Umenger (Director Public Affairs), Engr. Chidi Nwafor (Director ICT), Eyum Ode (HOD, Research & Documentation), Thomas W. Afanga (Deputy Director, Finance and Accounts), Mohammed S. Mohammed (Assistant Director, HRM) and last but not the least Torgba Nyitse (Director, CPM) who served as member and Secretary to the Committee.

Special thanks go to our stakeholders who participated in the process of producing this strategy especially representatives of Political Parties, Civil Society Organisations, Security agencies and organisations that partner with and provide services to INEC.

The production of this strategy benefited greatly from the contributions of our Consultant Dr. Otiye Igbuzor and we are grateful.

We are greatly indebted to the UNDP-DGD Project for their support towards the production of this strategic plan.

I enjoin the Commission and Staff to implement the Strategic Plan meticulously so as to achieve free, fair and credible elections.

Engr. Dr. Nuru A. Yakubu, OON
National Commissioner &
Chairman Strategic Plan Committee, INEC
December, 2012

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) is an Election Management Body (EMB) established by the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to among other things organize elections into the various political offices in the country. INEC has a broad mandate including registration of political parties; monitoring of the organization and operation of political parties; registration of persons qualified to vote; voter and civic education and conduct of referendum.

The Vision of INEC is to be one of the best Election Management Bodies in the world that meets the aspirations of the Nigerian people. The mission of INEC is to serve as an Independent and effective EMB committed to the conduct of free, fair and credible elections for sustainable democracy in Nigeria. INEC shall be guided by the following values in the performance of its duties: autonomy, transparency, integrity, credibility, impartiality, dedication, equity, excellence and team work.

The Strategic Plan is a practical, action-oriented guide which has been developed based on examination of internal and external factors that direct goal setting and resource allocation to achieve meaningful results over time. It is a master plan designed to help the Commission develop a pragmatic roadmap for its work over the next five years.

The process of developing this strategy was guided by the need for ownership of the process by staff of INEC and engagement with key stakeholders. It included a process of visioning by the office of the Chairman of INEC, establishment of a Strategic Plan Committee, retreat by staff of the Commission, and extensive interactive sessions by Resident Electoral Commissioners, stakeholder validation conference and approval by the Commission.

All over the world, the crucial place of elections is being recognized by the international community including international organisations and non-governmental organisations. Over the years, scholars have identified electoral standards which contribute to uniformity, reliability, consistency, accuracy and overall professionalism in elections.

Nigeria is operating in a unique national context. The country has a large land mass of about 923,768 square kilometers and an estimated population of 140, 431,790 in 2006 (population census). The country is multi-religious with 36 states, a Federal Capital Territory and 774 local government areas. Out of the 52 years of post-independence Nigeria, the military has ruled for about 30 years. The country has been under civil rule since 1999. Elections were held in 1999, 2003, 2007 and 2011. The April 2011 elections were adjudged by local and international observers to be free, fair and credible. Nigeria is a country of paradox with widespread poverty in the midst of plenty. Nigeria is the largest oil producer in Africa and the seventh largest in the world, yet it has the third largest number of poor people in the world, after China and India. Nigeria ranks very low in all socioeconomic and development indices. In its Human Development Report for 2011, the UNDP ranked Nigeria 156 out of 187 countries. The country has been consistently rated by Transparency International (TI) to be among the most corrupt countries in the world in its Corruption Perception Index. The rapid pace of technological development in the area of communications especially GSM and internet has penetrated Nigeria and has impact in the conduct of elections in the country.

Since 1959, there has been at least six election management bodies namely Electoral Commission of Nigeria (ECN)(1959-1964), Federal Electoral Commission(FEC) (1964-1966), Federal Electoral Commission (FEDECO)(1979-1983), National Electoral Commission (NEC) (1987-1993), National Electoral Commission of Nigeria (NECON)(1995-1998) and Independent Electoral Commission (INEC)(1998-date).

The Independent National Electoral Commission conducted the 1999, 2003, 2007 and 2011 elections. INEC has over the years exhibited some strengths which have enabled it to effectively function as an Election Management Body (EMB) including the fact that it derives its powers from the Constitution and has financial autonomy. In addition, it has national spread, credible leadership, experienced staff and improved IT infrastructure. But the Commission depends on ad-hoc or temporary staff and faces the challenge of red-tapism, absence of clear training programme, poor delegation of responsibilities and overlapping functions. However, there are opportunities open to the Commission to build upon and become a very effective and reliable EMB including public goodwill, improved use of ICT and partnership with international agencies and other EMBs coupled with increased political consciousness and a supportive media. But there are external factors that threaten the effective work of the Commission including lack of internal democracy in political parties, insecurity, uncertainties in legal framework and numerous election related litigations. Despite all of these challenges, there is the will and commitment by the leadership of the Commission to do all that is necessary to conduct free, fair and credible election in Nigeria. This Strategic Plan is intended therefore to seize these opportunities and focus on strategic objectives and actions that will impact on the environment in such a way as to lead to the conduct of free, fair and credible elections.

In line with the contextual analysis, vision and mission of INEC, the strategic objectives are:

1. to Provide electoral operations, systems and infrastructure to support delivery of free, fair and credible elections;
2. to Improve voter education, training and research;
3. to Register political parties and monitor their operations;
4. to Interact nationally and internationally with relevant stakeholders;
5. to Re-organise and reposition INEC for sustained conduct of free, fair and credible elections

There are clear organizational implications for the effective implementation of this strategic plan. The Commission will provide strategic leadership and policy direction for the entire work of INEC as an organization. The Management of INEC and the electoral process shall continue to be a joint responsibility of the Commission and its Staff. The office of the Chairman of the Commission will be responsible for the coordination of the implementation of the Strategic Plan. The Commission will ensure that a comprehensive work plan emanates from the strategy which will incorporate an election project plan. There will be improved management of logistics and contractors/vendors. The management and deployment of ad-hoc staff will be improved with the creation of a database and ranking of ad-hoc staff to aid training and tracking of performance. Human resource and organizational development will be a key priority with this strategy. Performance management system will be instituted at all levels. Budget planning and execution will be improved. There will be detailed funding plans for each year and a comprehensive plan made for the 2015 elections which will be used to engage the legislature and development partners. Financial management will be improved with strict compliance with the Financial

Regulations as well as the Commission's financial policies and guidelines. The quality of communication will be improved. Both internal and external communications will be enhanced. Communication between the Headquarters, State and LGAs areas will be improved as well as communication amongst the departments of the Commission. The use of new media in communication will be enhanced. The Electoral Institute will exist as a separate unit with its Governing Board and will be responsible for research, training and publications on electoral matters. The Commission will improve on the deployment and utilization of ICT. The capacity of staff will be built on the deployment and utilization of IT. Technical support will be provided to support deployment and utilization of ICT in the Commission. The quality of documentation in the Commission will be improved upon across board. The capacity of staff to document the activities, trends and issues in the Commission will be built. The Electoral Institute will be strengthened to document research reports on elections.

A key step towards building trust and ensuring the effectiveness, credibility and accountability of the INEC Strategic Plan is the development of a monitoring and evaluation (M & E) framework. The long term impact will be free, fair and credible elections. Management will operationalise the monitoring and evaluation framework through routine data collection, surveys, progress monitoring, management review, stakeholder meetings and annual reviews.

SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) was established by the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to among other things organize elections into various political offices in the country.

The functions of INEC as contained in Section 15, Part 1 of the Third Schedule of the 1999 Constitution (As Amended) and Section 2 of the Electoral Act 2010 (As Amended) include the following:

1. 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;
2. Register political parties in accordance with the provisions of the constitution and Act of the National Assembly;
3. Monitor the organization and operation of the political parties, including their finances; conventions, congresses and party primaries.
4. 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;
5. 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;
6. Monitor political campaigns and provide rules and regulations which shall govern the political parties;
7. Conduct voter and civic education;
8. Promote knowledge of sound democratic election processes; and
9. Conduct any referendum required to be conducted pursuant to the provision of the 1999 Constitution or any other law or Act of the National Assembly.

1.2 Vision

The vision of INEC is to be one of the best Election Management Bodies in the world that meets the aspirations of the Nigerian people.

1.3 Mission

The mission of INEC is to serve as an independent and effective EMB committed to the conduct of free, fair and credible elections for sustainable democracy in Nigeria.

1.4 Values

INEC shall be guided by the following values in the performance of its duties:

- ▶ **Autonomy:** INEC shall carry out all its functions independently, free from external control and influence.
- ▶ **Transparency:** INEC shall display openness and transparency in all its activities and in its relationship with all stakeholders.

- ▶ **Integrity:** INEC shall maintain truthfulness and honesty in all its dealings at all times
- ▶ **Credibility:** INEC shall ensure that no action or activity is taken in support of any candidate or political party.
- ▶ **Impartiality:** INEC shall ensure the creation of a level playing field for all political actors.
- ▶ **Dedication:** INEC shall be committed to providing quality electoral services efficiently and effectively, guided by best international practice and standards
- ▶ **Equity:** INEC shall ensure fairness and justice in dealing with all stakeholders.
- ▶ **Excellence:** INEC shall be committed to the promotion of merit and professionalism as the basis for all its actions.
- ▶ **Team work:** INEC shall create a conducive environment that promotes teamwork among its staff at all levels.

1.5 Purpose of the Strategy

The INEC strategic plan is a practical, action-oriented guide which has been developed based on examination of internal and external factors that direct goal setting and resource allocation to achieve meaningful results over time. It is a design, a blueprint, and a master plan to help the Commission develop a pragmatic roadmap for its work over the next five years.

The purpose of the strategy is to:

- Provide a strategic direction for INEC and the actions to be taken to achieve its mandate given the international and national context of its operations.
- Propose what needs to be done by the organization to achieve its mandate following assessment of its performance over the years.
- Provide a framework and focus for improvement within the Commission as a whole
- Optimise the Commission's organizational systems and structures.
- Provide guidance to managers for day-to-day decisions.
- Provide a monitoring and evaluation framework for measurement of the performance of the Commission.

1.6 Strategy Development Process

The process of developing this strategy was guided by the need for ownership of the process by staff of INEC and engagement with key stakeholders. The process started with a visioning process by the office of the Chairman of Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC). After the 2011 Elections, INEC commissioned major review exercises, including the Registration and Election Review Committee (RERC) and comprehensive structural review of the Commission. The Commission then established a Strategic Plan Committee to lead the process of developing the strategy under the chairmanship of a National Commissioner, Engr. Dr. Nuru A.Yakubu. The Committee had representatives drawn from the Resident Electoral

Commissioners (RECs) and departments of the Commission. A Strategy Consultant was also hired to provide technical support and facilitate the process.

The Strategic Plan Committee outlined specific activities which it meticulously implemented for the preparation of an enduring plan which include:

- i) A strategic plan retreat
- ii) Interactive sessions on the Strategic Plan for all management staff of the Commission
- iii) Production and harmonisation of report of all interactive sessions
- iv) Preparation of a draft Strategic Plan and Strategic Programme of Action
- v) Stakeholder validation conference
- vi) Printing of final copy of the Strategic Plan document
- vii) Presentation of the Strategic Plan document to stakeholders.

The Strategic Plan was held on the 27th and 28th of August at Eko hotel in Lagos with 114 core participants in attendance as follows:

- i) Chairman and Members of the Commission
- ii) Resident Electoral Commissioners
- iii) Secretary to the Commission
- iv) SPC Members/HODs from Headquarters
- v) Twelve Administrative Secretaries of the Commission
- vi) COS, CTA and SA to the Hon. Chairman INEC
- vii) Six Heads of Operations Department from the States (one from each Geo-political zone)
- viii) Six Heads of ICT Units from the States (one from each Geo-political zone)
- ix) Six Heads of Legal Services Units from the States (one from each Geo-political zone)
- x) Seven Electoral Officers, one selected from each Geo-political zone and FCT
- xi) A five-member Secretariat
- xii) The Consultant moderated the retreat.

The Retreat Considered

(a) Re-articulation of the Vision, Mission and Core Values of the Commission.

The existing Vision, Mission and Core Values of the Commission were compared with the proposals developed by SPC and the Consultant. Five syndicate groups each worked and submitted what each group considered the best Vision and Mission Statements, and Core Values of the Commission.

The Committee with the support of the Consultant harmonised the different submissions by the groups and suggested the best options which were incorporated in the draft Strategic Plan.

(b) The Commission's Contextual Analysis.

The Political, Economic, Social and Technological contexts in which the Commission operates were discussed. Key challenges arising from the analysis ranged from imperfect legal

framework, negative influence of money in politics, and lack of internal party democracy. Opportunities available for the Commission for consolidation on the gains of 2011 elections were also discussed.

(c) SWOT Analysis

This tool for self assessment was used to analyse the Commission's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. Each of the five syndicate groups produced what it considered as the Commission's SWOT.

Careful study of this was undertaken so that the strengths identified can be sustained, weakness remedied, opportunities prioritized and optimised while the threats are overcome.

(d) PEST Analysis

This analysis paint a larger picture of the Political, Economic, Socio-cultural and Technological (PEST) environment under which the Commission operates. Five groups each presented their PEST analyses.

This information was used to produce a more detailed plan which offers the latitude for optimization of the opportunities presented.

(e) Stakeholders Analysis

This afforded participants the opportunity to identify the Commission's Stakeholders, their power and resources, (low or high), their interests (whether negative or positive) and how the Commission should respond to each stakeholder. Each group identified a minimum of ten stakeholders ranging from the executive, legislative, judiciary, political parties, candidates, security agencies, development partners etc.

This exercise has thrown up an avalanche of information which the Commission may use in its engagement with stakeholders.

(f) INEC Strategic Direction

The retreat came up with 16 areas of its Strategic Direction which have been condensed into five Strategic Objectives.

The sixteen strategic directions and objectives generated at the retreat and captured in the draft Strategic Plan document were placed at the disposal of all Commission Management Staff at interactive sessions which were organized at its Headquarters for its headquarters staff and its twelve supervisory zones for staff from its States Offices.

The sessions which were organised from 29th September to 13th October involved 150 and 1,224 of its Headquarters and State staff respectively.

The import of the engagement with staff was to make all management staff aware of the Commission's Strategic Direction and its Strategic Objectives as charted at the retreat, to get staff to suggest 'do-able' actions that could facilitate the attainment of the outlined objectives, to

ensure ownership of the plan by staff who will be implementing it and to facilitate smooth implementation.

It was at these interactive sessions that elaborate actions for the attainment of the mapped out strategic objectives were compiled, harmonized and made available to Departments for production of the draft Strategic Programme of Action and for further enrichment of the Strategic Plan. While the Strategic Plan has the technical inputs of the Project Consultant, the Strategic Programme of Action is exclusively prepared by SPC in collaboration with Departments.

Strategic Plan and the Strategic Programme of Action were then presented to key stakeholders of the Commission at a Stakeholder Validation Conference which held on the 18th of December 2012 at the Transcorp Hilton Hotel, Abuja. One hundred and sixty five participants drawn from the Commission and major Stakeholders were in attendance which include;

- (i) Members of the Commission
- (ii) The Resident Electoral Commissioners
- (iii) The Secretary to the Commission
- (iv) Seven Chairmen of State Independent Electoral Commissions
- (v) Members of the SPC
- (vi) All Directors/HODs from the Commission's Headquarters
- (vii) All the thirty seven Administrative Secretaries
- (viii) Twelve Political Parties that won seats either in the National or State Assemblies
- (ix) Security Agencies (Chief of Defence Staff, Chief of Army Staff, Chief of Naval Staff, Chief of Air Staff, State Security Services, Comptroller Generals of Customs, Immigrations, Prisons, Corp Marshal of the Federal Road Safety Corps, Commandant General Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps)
- (x) Five Civil Society Organisations (with focus on elections, gender and persons with disability)
- (xi) The Legislature

Suggestions made by participants at the conference have been integrated into the documents and its content has become richer.

The process of preparing the Strategic Plan which has received tremendous support from the UND-DGP Project is novel and presents lessons and traits as list below:

- i. The Commission is producing for the first time both a Strategic Plan and a Strategic Programme of Action. In the past, only an 'Operational Plan' was produced.
- ii. There had been comprehensive involvement of a broad range of staff of the Commission at Headquarters and all the State Offices. This is novel and we believe it has sufficiently generated sense of ownership among all staff.
- iii. Key stakeholders have been afforded the opportunity also for the first time to make inputs into the documents. Issues contained in the documents have therefore been accepted as germane and adequate in providing a roadmap to the quest for a credible electoral process.
- iv. The implantation process has substantially been achieved by this approach adopted in the preparation of the documents.

- v. It is also clear that the process of implementation and evaluation will be much easier as all staff who would be required to put the documents to use are sufficiently knowledgeable about the content of the Plans.
- vi. The process has also built appreciable capacity of the Commission's staff in Strategic Planning.

Final copies of the Strategic Plan and Strategic Programme of Action were approved by the Commission on Tuesday 5th February 2013.

SECTION TWO: CONTEXT

2.1 International Context

Election is crucial because it gives the procedure that allows members of an organization or community to choose representatives who will hold positions of authority within it.ⁱ In any democratic system, it is crucial that elections be free and fair. Mackenzie (1967) identified four conditions for the conduct of a free and fair election viz.:

- (1) An independent judiciary to interpret the electoral laws.
- (2) An honest, competent non-partisan electoral body to manage the elections.
- (3) A developed system of political parties.
- (4) A general acceptance by the political community of the rules of the game.ⁱⁱ

Another scholar, Dundas (1994) argued that the assessment of an election as to whether it is free and fair or not can be done by answering the following questions:

- (1) Is the legal framework adequate to ensure that the organization of free and fair multi-party elections be achieved in a given situation?
- (2) Has the potential to contribute to the holding of free and fair multi-party elections been reflected in the provisions of the constitution and those of electoral laws?
- (3) Have the courts been given the fullest possible role in assisting aggrieved persons who complain about failures in the procedures of major election processes?
- (4) Are the election safeguards satisfactorily balanced with the facilitation measures in place and aimed at delivering high quality election services at cost effective levels?ⁱⁱⁱ

The commencement of what Samuel Huntington calls the ‘Third Wave of Democratisation’ in the 1990s has seen the role of international forces becoming more prominent in the electoral processes of countries engaged in democratic transitions. Indeed, various countries elevated the conduct of elections in transitional countries as critical elements of their foreign policies. International organizations as well as international non- governmental organizations increasingly focused their attention on elections in the ‘emerging democracies’. The Third Wave of democratization coincided with, or could in fact, be considered as a major dimension of the process of globalization that was gathering pace from the 1990s. This process saw national elections and their various actors in the remotest part of the world becoming the subject of global attention and scrutiny. These were possible through the instantaneous, real life coverage made possible by the technological drivers of the globalisation process such as round the clock satellite television, the internet and the GSM telephone. National elections have in effect, become internationalized.^{iv}

Apart from the impact of these classes of actors on the elections, the configuration of the international environment as well as specific events within the environment can shape the domestic context of national elections. The global environment is one that has increasingly placed a normative premium on multi-party democratic governance, even as popular participation through the vote has more or less become the preferred, internationally sanctioned means of regime succession. As the NDI (2003) puts it, the international community express support for the democratic process through election observation and offer an accurate and impartial report on the character of the elections.^v This role of electoral character witness has evolved from the basic monitoring and observation form, with its election day focus to an

electoral cycle machinery that is more or less permanently deployed in emergent democracies, and involving close coordination and cooperation between an increasingly ‘integrated’ donor community and the host country. Thus, the impact of various international forces has been quite pronounced in national elections since the early 1990s. Besides, the international environment could also be seen as a repository of policies and practices that a country like Nigeria can draw vital lessons from in the conduct of its own elections.

Over the years, scholars have identified electoral standards which contribute to uniformity, reliability, consistency, accuracy and overall professionalism in elections.^{vi} These standards include:

1. Constitutional provision that provides the foundation for the key elements of electoral framework including electoral rights and the basic principles of the electoral system.
2. Electoral law that guides the conduct of the elections including the powers of the electoral management bodies and governmental bodies.
3. Election administration must demonstrate respect for the law; be non-partisan and neutral; transparent; accurate, professional and competent and must be designed to serve the voters.
4. Electoral system that should guarantee political inclusiveness, representation, frequency of elections and fairness in the organization of electoral units.
5. Organization of electoral units which is done in such a way as to achieve the objective of according equal weight to each vote to the greatest degree possible to ensure effective representation.
6. Legal framework which should ensure that all eligible citizens are guaranteed the right to universal and equal suffrage as well as the right to contest elections without any discrimination.
7. Election management body established and operates in a manner that ensures the independent and impartial administration of elections.
8. Voters registers which is maintained in a manner that is transparent and accurate and protects the rights of qualified citizens to register, and prevents the unlawful or fraudulent registration or removal of persons.
9. All political parties and candidates are able to compete in elections in an equal basis on a level playing field.
10. The electoral campaigns are organized in such a way that each political party and candidate enjoys the right to freedom of expression and freedom of association, and has access to the electorate, and that all stakeholders in the election process have an equal chance of success.
11. All political parties and candidates having access to the media owned or controlled by the state and those privately owned and that no unreasonable limitations are placed on the right of political parties and candidates to free expression during election campaigns.
12. All political parties and candidates are equitably treated by legal provisions governing campaign finances and expenditures.
13. Polling stations are accessible and that there is accurate recording of ballots and that the secrecy of the ballot is guaranteed.
14. All votes are counted and tabulated accurately, equally, fairly and transparently.
15. There are representatives of parties and candidates contesting the election to observe all voting processes.

16. To ensure transparency and to increase credibility, there should be provision for election observers to observe all stages of election process, and
17. There should be compliance with and enforcement of the electoral law.

2.2 National Context

2.2.1 Introduction

Nigeria occupies an area of 923,768 square kilometres. It had an estimated population of 140,431,790 million in 2006 (population census). The estimated population in 2010 is put at 167,912,561 million (NPC Jan 2013). Nigeria is ethnically and linguistically diverse with over 250 ethnic groups and four hundred languages and dialects.^{vii} The country is also multi religious with Christianity and Islam and to a lesser extent, African Traditional Religion (ATR) as the main religious groups. Administratively, Nigeria is a federation which has 36 states and a Federal Capital Territory (FCT). The states are broadly grouped into six geopolitical zones namely: North Central, North East, North West, South East, South South and South West zones. There are also 774 local government areas in the states and six area councils in FCT.

2.2.2 Political Context

Nigeria occupies a special place in Africa and international affairs. It is by far the most populous country in Africa with an estimated population of over 150 million people as at 2012. Nigeria attained political independence in 1960 and marked 50 years of independence in 2010. Out of the 52 years of post-independence Nigeria, the military has ruled for about 30 years. Nigeria is endowed with human and natural resources but years of despotic and debilitating military rule rendered the country vulnerable to arbitrary and often poor governance, lack of transparency and accountability, lawlessness, economic instability and human rights violations of a severe magnitude.^{viii} The current democratic dispensation began in 1998 with the election of Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, a retired military General who once ruled the country from 1976-1979. Obasanjo was re-elected in 2003. He was replaced by Alhaji Umaru Musa Yar'Adua after the April 2007 elections. Yar'Adua died in 2010 and was replaced by his Vice-President, Dr. Goodluck Jonathan. Elections were held in April 2011 and Dr. Goodluck Jonathan was elected President. The April 2011 elections were adjudged by local and international observers to be free, fair and credible. Unfortunately, the election was accompanied by post-election violence. The level of conflict and terrorist attacks is high in Nigeria today. This is likely to have impact on the trajectory of development in the country.

2.2.3 Economic Context

Nigeria is a country of paradox with widespread poverty in the midst of plenty. Long years of military rule and poor policies combined with rent-seeking culture have left the country with high levels of poverty and low access to social services. Nigeria is the largest oil producer in Africa and the seventh largest in the world, yet it has the third largest number of poor people in

the World after China and India. Nigeria is a mono-culture economy with oil contributing 99 percent of export revenues, 78 percent of government revenues and 38.8 percent of GDP.^{ix} The contribution of other sectors to GDP are: agriculture (32.5 percent); wholesale and retail (13.5 percent), industry excluding petroleum (2.9 percent) and other sectors (1.5 percent). In 2004, the Obasanjo administration formulated the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS). The strategy was meant to accelerate economic growth, reduce poverty and achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Official reports of the Nigerian government indicate that given the available information, Nigeria is unlikely to meet most of the goals of the MDGs by 2015 especially the goals relating to eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, reducing child and maternal mortality and combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases as well as achieving environmental sustainability.

2.2.4 Social Context

Nigeria ranks very low in all socioeconomic and development indices. In its Human Development Report for 2011, the UNDP ranked Nigeria 156 out of 187 countries. The Country has been consistently rated by Transparency International (TI) to be among the most corrupt countries in the World in its Corruption Perception Index. In its most recent report released in December 2012 TI ranks Nigeria 143 out of 183 countries surveyed in 2011. Several probes by the National Assembly indicate that there is a high level of corruption in the Country.

Nigeria has very poor social indicators; about 10 million children of school going age are out of school in Nigeria, was one of the richest 50 countries in the early 1970s but retrogressed to become one of the 25 poorest countries at the threshold of the twenty first century. Statistics show that the incidence of poverty using the rate of US \$1 per day increased from 28.1 percent in 1980 to 46.3 percent in 1985 and declined to 42.7 percent in 1992 but increased again to 65.6 percent in 1996. The incidence increased to 69.2 percent in 1997. The 2004 report by the National Planning Commission indicates that poverty had decreased to 54.4 percent. But by 2010, the poverty rate has increased again to 69.1 percent.

Nigeria has one of the highest maternal mortality rates in the world. It is higher in rural areas and in the Northern part of the country.

2.2.5 Technological Context

The rapid pace of technological development in the area of communications is one of the major drivers of the contemporary phase of globalization. Advancement in various communication technologies has brought about increased efficiency in the dissemination of information worldwide. The three main forms of this development are of value to the electoral process. Satellite television and radio broadcast can put on-going election processes out to an international audience, a quality that can complement international election observation.

GSM communication and the internet have facilitated the development of the social media. The ubiquitous mobile phone's recordings of electoral processes and results have been made and disseminated to international audiences as they were happening. Media chats on mobile phones

and laptops can be the basis of running commentaries on elections as they are being held. The great strength of these is that they enable people to put their observations out there in the international public domain and invite instantaneous reactions from a broad audience. The knowledge that election malpractices are being observed and these observations are being disseminated to a wide international audience can serve as deterrent to those who plan to participate in such malpractices. This can also draw the attention of relevant electoral authorities and security agencies to the points where their immediate intervention is required.

The merit in the development of social media for free, fair and open elections is so high that what ought to be done is to explore the utility of their admissibility in evidence when electoral matters go to court. It is certainly the case that as the mobile phone and internet culture deepens in Nigeria, the ability for multiple audience interaction internationally on election day matters will increase remarkably.

SECTION THREE: ORGANISATIONAL ASSESSMENT

3.1 Historical Review of Electoral Commissions in Nigeria

The first election held in Nigeria was into the legislative Councils in Lagos and Calabar in 1922 in line with the Clifford Constitution. The elections during the colonial period were organized by the colonial government. But as from the 1959 elections, election management bodies were set up to conduct elections in Nigeria. In 1959, the Electoral Commission of Nigeria (ECN) was set up to conduct elections in the Country. The ECN conducted the 1959 general elections. In 1964, another Federal Electoral Commission was set up to conduct the December 1964 federal elections and the 1965 Western regional elections. On 15th January, 1966, the first military coup de'tat took place and the military ruled from 1966-1979. The 1979 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria established the Federal Electoral Commission (FEDECO) which organized the 1979 and 1983 general elections. In 1987, the Babangida regime established the National Electoral Commission (NEC) which organized elections in 1992-1993 and finally the June 12, 1993 elections which was adjudged to be free and fair but was annulled by the regime. In December 1995, General Sani Abacha established National Electoral Commission of Nigeria (NECON). The 1999 Constitution established the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC).

Table I: Election Management Bodies in Nigeria

S/No	Name of Election Management Body (EMB)	Period of Existence
1.	Electoral Commission of Nigeria (ECN)	1959-1964
2.	Federal Electoral Commission (FEC)	1964-1966
3.	Federal Electoral Commission (FEDECO)	1979-1983
4.	National Electoral Commission (NEC)	1987-1993
5.	National Electoral Commission of Nigeria (NECON)	1995-1998
6.	Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC)	1998-date

Some scholars argue that Electoral Commissions lie at the heart of the problem of elections in Nigeria.^x The Electoral Commissions have been accused at different times for being used to rig elections either through connivance or poor performance of its functions. Electoral Commissions have themselves explained their performances in elections to a number of factors: inadequate legislation, poor funding, lack of real autonomy and independence, lack of understanding and compassion by the public at large, the negative designs of political parties, partisan interests on the part of some Members of the Commission, difficult terrains, the failure of other parties involved in elections to play their roles effectively and other factors.^{xi} It is therefore important to conduct an organizational assessment of INEC with a view to identifying the organizational strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities so as to reposition it to deliver credible, free and fair elections.

3.2 Organisational Strengths and Weaknesses

INEC has over the years exhibited some strengths which have enabled it to effectively function as an Election Management Body (EMB). INEC is a creation of the law. In other words, INEC drives its powers from the Constitution and other Acts of parliament. It therefore has the constitutional responsibility to conduct and manage elections in the country. It has financial autonomy. It has national spread and credible leadership. The mode of appointment and tenure of office has made the job of commissioners more secure. The body has a competent and experienced staff. It is continuously engaging stakeholders. There is also the highly improved IT infrastructure in the organization and the use of zonal stores to improve logistics. Other strengths of the Commission include; its enhanced image, the establishment of the Electoral Institute which conducts training and research in electoral matters. The remarkably improved biometric national register of voters is strength of the electoral body.

Nevertheless, there are some issues that act as drawback to Commission's performance. These include dependence on and inadequate control of ad-hoc staff, bureaucratic red-tapism and attitude of staff. Others include absence of clear training programme, poor delegation of responsibilities and overlapping functions. Late preparations for elections, lack of team work and low level inter- departmental cooperation and communication are other mitigating factors. The issue of structural deficiencies, absence of proper career progression and poor record management also negatively affect the work of INEC. These other weakness were also identified which include inadequate communication between the Commission headquarters and its State offices; lack of a database of trained ad-hoc nationwide and overcentralisation planning at the Commission's headquarters.

There are opportunities open to the Commission to build upon and become a very effective and reliable EMB. It has got the public goodwill. This arose from the conduct of the 2011 general elections and other bye-elections since 2011, especially the Edo and Ondo States governorship elections. The use of ICT and partnership with other agencies can be built upon. The technical support from international agencies and continuous interaction with other EMBs continues to enhance the work of the Commission. The ongoing constitutional review will go a long way in making INEC more independent and effective especially if it tackles grey areas militating against INEC's effectiveness. Increased political consciousness of the citizenship and a supportive media are other opportunities the Commission can tap into.

Other, mainly external, factors threaten the effective work of the Commission. These include lack of internal democracy in political parties, insecurity (kidnapping, armed robberies, religious terrorism) all over the nation, uncertainties in legal framework and numerous litigations. Occasionally, the electoral laws are changed without recourse to the Commission and this affects its operational plans. The socio-economic challenge also affects the conduct of elections. Due to high incidence of poverty in the country, the election process is most often compromised by desperate politicians. The actions and inactions of State Independent Electoral Commissions (SIECs) are also undermining the effort to institutionalize free and fair elections at the grassroots level. There is the issue of inadequate facilities in the Commission. Another major challenge is the delimitation of constituencies, a decennial requirement as provided for in Section 73 of the 1999 Constitution (As Amended), not least because various groups tend to read meanings into the exercise. The last constituency delimitation undertaken was in 1996. Therefore another delimitation exercise is long overdue. The fear of change within the Commission itself is another

challenge. Yet other challenges are difficult terrains, political interference, electoral violence, gender imbalance and too many political parties. Other threats include the do or die mentality of the political elite and prevalence of the culture of impunity, disenchantment with the democratic process arising from bad governance, indiscriminate issuance of *ex parte* orders by courts and inadequate structure for the prosecution of electoral offenders.

3.3 Key Challenges and Opportunities

It is well known that the stability of societies depend to a large extent on smooth political succession and the mechanism of choosing elective public political office holders. It is therefore necessary that there is a level playing field for candidates and participants in the electoral process.

But it has been shown that were many challenges with the conduct of elections in Nigeria from the 1922 election to the 2007 election. It has been documented that elections in Nigeria are constant tales of violence, fraud and bad blood.^{xii} The challenges include among other things irregularities which put the credibility of the entire electoral process in doubt; problems with the legislative framework which puts constraints on the electoral process. Several organisations are not playing their roles to ensure credible, free and fair election; the electoral system does not give room for inclusiveness; lack of independence of electoral commissions; long process of election dispute resolution; irresponsible behaviour by many politicians and their followers manifesting in thuggery and violence; lack of strong and effective democratic institutions and monetisation of politics. It has also been documented that money not only determines who participates in electoral politics but that money drowns votes and voices in Nigeria as ‘godfathers’ openly confess about shady deals, funding or sponsoring elections for ‘godsons’ and purchasing electoral victory.^{xiii} The end result of the challenges is that the votes of the citizens did not count in those elections.^{xiv}

The 2011 general election was, however, adjudged by local and international observers to be free, fair and credible despite some challenges. The Registration and Election Review Committee (RERC) has documented that the limited improvement and success of the 2011 voters’ registration and general elections was not unconnected with the consistent clamour for credible elections and the appointment of a new set of members of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), under the leadership of Prof Attahiru M.Jega.^{xv}

The RERC concluded that the major challenge facing the country remains that of crafting an electoral governance system that will manage and facilitate the electoral process constructively in spite of the complex character of the country.^{xvi} The problem is how to secure electoral governance from distortion, violations and manipulations, in ways that will manage diversity, generate and sustain confidence in the legitimacy of democratic elections, and through it the legitimacy of democratic political succession in the country. In other words, the problem is how to conduct free, fair and credible election by an impartial umpire. Specifically, the Commission is being confronted with the following challenges:

- ▶ The challenge of the political and legal framework of electoral governance. There has always been review of the electoral law after every election since 1999.
- ▶ The challenge of voter registration. Although the 2011 voter registration exercise marked a great improvement over similar exercises in the past, there is need to ensure that

multiple registration and underage voter registration is completely eliminated, as well as the institutionalization of an effective continuous voter registration process.

- ▶ The challenge of the political culture characterized by violence; partisan use of state resources at federal, state and local government levels through the power of incumbency and monetized politics. In other words, an unrelenting culture of impunity.
- ▶ The challenge of inability of political parties to practice internal democracy and be responsible and accountable to their members.
- ▶ The challenge of the mindset of the political class, political parties and the general public on what it takes to win elections which usually involves malpractices.
- ▶ The challenge of logistics, financial, and human resource capacity, shortages arising out of the country's underdevelopment and its weak institutions.
- ▶ The huge challenge of expecting beneficiaries of flawed electoral management, like presidents, state governors, legislators and ruling parties to act against their own interest by legislating and undertaking reforms that may serve to get them out of power.

Despite the challenges mentioned above, there is a great opportunity for the Commission to make the necessary strategic moves to consolidate the gains of the 2011 general election and improve on the conduct of elections in Nigeria. First and foremost, the conduct of the 2011 elections has halted, if not reversed the history of progressive degeneration of the outcome of elections in Nigeria from 1922 to 2007. There is a compelling need therefore to take the necessary strategic decisions and direction to consolidate the gains.

Secondly, there is the will and commitment by the leadership of the Commission to do all that is necessary to conduct free, fair and credible election in Nigeria.

Thirdly, the leadership of the Commission has tremendous goodwill and support from citizens, political parties and international community. This is very critical to the proper functioning of any election management body.

Fourthly, the level of political consciousness of Nigerians has increased tremendously. All classes and groups of Nigerians are getting more interested in the electoral process of the country.

Finally, the use of ICT, including social media has opened up additional avenues of assisting in the conduct of free, fair and credible elections.

This Strategic Plan is intended therefore to seize these opportunities and focus on strategic direction and actions that will impact on the environment in such a way as to lead to the conduct of free, fair and credible elections. In addition, there will be policy, regulatory and institutional changes in the Commission to drive the new strategy. The new strategy will learn from the history of elections in the past, take note of the challenges and utilise the opportunities that are now available to lay a good foundation for free, fair and credible election in Nigeria.

3.4 Stakeholder Analysis and Strategic Choices

In order for INEC to achieve its mandate, it interacts with multiple stakeholders, including the executive, legislature, judiciary, political parties, candidates, the media, security agencies, civil society organizations, development partners, election observer groups (domestic and international) the electorate, traditional rulers, ad-hoc or temporary staff, NYSC directorate,

contractors and vendors, service providers including CBN, commercial banks and insurance companies, Faith-based Organisations (FBOs), Trade Unions, Professional bodies, National Orientation Agency (NOA), and persons living with disabilities.

Some of the stakeholders have significant powers and have a high level of interest in the Commission's activities such as the executive; legislature and political parties. The Commission will have to engage them fully in its decisions and actions. Some of the stakeholders such as security agencies, contractors and vendors and service providers are crucial for the work of the Commission and there is the need for continuous engagement. Other stakeholders such as CSOs, development partners, FBOs and Trade Unions show a lot of interest and support for the commission's activities and they be regularly informed and carried along.

The Commission will now focus on its mandate guided by its vision, mission and values; and will utilise this strategy to address the identified challenges including the legal framework for the conduct of elections, continuous voter register, monitoring of political parties, and improvement of logistics. It will tap on the tremendous goodwill and support of citizens, politicians and the international community and increase its voter education and deployment of ICT including social media.

SECTION FOUR: STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

4.1 Strategic Objectives

In line with our contextual analysis, vision and mission, the strategic objectives are:

1. To provide electoral operations, systems and infrastructure to support delivery of free, fair and credible elections;
2. To improve voter education, training and research;
3. To register political parties and monitor their operations;
4. To interact nationally and internationally with relevant stakeholders;
5. To re-organise and reposition INEC for sustained conduct of free, fair and credible elections.

Key Actions and Outcomes

Strategic Objective One: To provide electoral operations, systems and infrastructure to support delivery of free, fair and credible elections

Key Actions

- Ensure a good constitutional and legal framework for the conduct of free, fair and credible election.
- Ensure that there is a comprehensive Register of Voters that is accurate and regularly updated.
- Improved ICT deployment and utilization.
- Undertake proper constituency delineation in line with constitutional provisions.
- Establish an effective and transparent election complaints and dispute resolution mechanism.
- Improved electoral processes, procedures and systems.
- Provide infrastructure to support delivery of free, fair and credible elections.

Key Outcomes

- Constitutional framework that provides for adequate time for preparation for elections; electoral offences tribunal; enhance internal democracy of political parties; how political parties can get on the ballot and gives power to INEC to prosecute electoral offenders.
- Constitutional framework that allows INEC to be truly independent, including in its finances.
- Constitutional framework that allows for electronic voting.
- Comprehensive Register of Voters that is accurate and updated regularly.
- Register of Voters published on website.
- Effective ICT deployment and utilization at all stages of the electoral process including testing and certifying equipment prior to supply and deployment, software training for staff, video recording of all collation centers, IT based transmission of election results and publication of election results on the Commission's website.

- Effective election complaints and dispute resolution mechanism set up and functioning properly with administrative complaints desk using Alternative Dispute Resolution mechanism.
- Constituency delimitation and delineation carried out in accordance with international best practice and in line with the Constitution and Electoral Act provisions.
- Development of Standard Operating Procedure for recruitment and deployment of electoral officials, and development of data base for election officials, including security personnel established.
- Improved infrastructure to support the conduct of free, fair and credible elections.

Strategic Objective Two: To improve voter education, training and research

Key Actions

- Formulate and implement voter education programme
- Formulate and implement training programme
- Formulate and implement a research agenda
- Institutionalise the National Inter-Agency Committee on Voter Education (NICVE)
- Formulate and implement policies to ensure participation of marginalized groups including persons living with disabilities as well as Out of Country Voting (OCV)

Key Outcomes

- Strategies for improving voter education including voter education in school curriculum, early production of voter education materials including e-materials, advocacy and partnership with stakeholders
- Conduct of training needs assessment and training programmes with a clear training calendar for all categories of staff and stakeholders
- Developed civic education curriculum for primary and secondary schools and general studies for tertiary institutions
- A research agenda based on the experience of the country on election management developed
- Re-organised and refocused Electoral Institute
- Publications and database on electoral issues in Nigeria
- Increased voter turnout during elections
- Policies on the participation of marginalized groups in the electoral process.

Strategic Objective Three: To register political parties and monitor their operations

Key Actions

- Register Political Parties
- Monitor the nomination of candidates
- Monitor the finances of political parties,
- Monitor campaigns
- Tracking of campaign finances of candidates and political parties

- Monitor media access

Key Outcomes

- Easy process of registration of political parties with procedures of getting on the ballot with adequate time lag for registration of political parties before election.
- Trained and empowered staff on the monitoring of nomination of candidates, finances of political parties, campaigns and media access.
- Improved legal framework for the operation of political parties.
- Establishment of framework for monitoring of nomination of candidates, finances of political parties, campaigns, campaign finances and media access.
- Partnership with stakeholders on the monitoring of operation of political parties.
- Improvement in the operation of political parties particularly in terms of nomination of candidates, management of finances, campaigns and campaign finances.
- Adherence to code of conduct by political parties.
- Established an effective mechanism for tracking of campaign finances of candidates and political parties, including sanctions.

Strategic Objective Four: To interact nationally and internationally with relevant stakeholders

Key Actions

- Establish a mechanism for regular consultation with stakeholders and other EMBs;
- Publish a newsletter;
- Engage election observers;
- Engage the media;
- Institutionalise the Inter-agency consultative committee on election security (ICCES)

Key Outcomes

- Stakeholders forum meet regularly to share information and get input of stakeholders
- Regular meetings and consultations with other EMBs for learning and experience sharing.
- INEC newsletter published regularly and distributed widely through hard and e-copies for information, education and enlightenment
- Election observers (both domestic and international) identified, screened and accredited at least one month before any election
- Platforms established for engaging with key stakeholders including the executive, legislature, judiciary, political parties, candidates, the media, security agencies, civil society organizations, development partners, election observer groups (domestic and international) the electorate, traditional rulers, INEC ad-hoc staff, NYSC directorate, contractors/vendors, service providers including CBN, commercial banks and insurance companies, FBOs, Trade Unions, Professional bodies, National Orientation Agency (NOA), and persons living with disabilities.
- MoU signed with civil society organizations on partnership

- Effective dissemination of information about activities of the Commission through regular engagement, publications, website, social media and special programmes.
- Improved capacity of the Inter-Agency Consultative Committee on election security
- MoUs signed by INEC with various agencies represented on ICCES
- Developed manual for engagement of security personnel on election duties and continually train them based on the manual.

Strategic Objective Five: To re-organise and reposition INEC for sustained conduct of free, fair and credible elections

Key Actions

- To enhance institutional capacity for managing election operations smoothly, effectively and efficiently.
- Improve capacity, communication, co-ordination, training and data gathering and management.
- Improve the work environment for and enhance team work among the staff of the Commission.
- Improve human resource management to meet current and future challenges of the Commission.
- Improve gender equality and raise gender sensitivity throughout the Commission.
- Budget and manage the financial resources of the Commission effectively and efficiently
- Implant the new strategy
- Implement the new strategy
- Evaluate the strategy

Key Outcomes

- Improved staff capacity through training, proper placement, motivation and discipline.
- Improved capacity of management and staff through participation in the election of other countries
- Improved communication between headquarters, States and LGAs and co-ordination through regular team meetings, video-conferencing, wide area network (WAN), new media (youtube, twitter, website, facebooketc) and team building exercises.
- Improved work environment through the provision of well furnished offices, operational vehicles, computers and staff welfare.
- Improved database management through the building of capacity of staff and provision of infrastructure.
- Improved human resource planning and management with open and transparent recruitment process, proper placement, regular promotion, training, discipline and welfare of staff.
- Developed a robust gender policy for the Commission.
- Institutionalised gender advocacy to check gender insensitivity and ensure gender mainstreaming.

- Improved budget management with timely preparation of budget, release of funds and implementation of budgets.
- Improved management of ad-hoc staff through direct payment from the Commission.
- Improved understanding of the strategy through implantation activities including departmental discussions on the content of the strategy and plans for implementation.
- Effective implementation of strategy through the preparation of elaborate work plans, operating plans and standard operating procedures and monitoring and evaluation.

SECTION FIVE: STRUCTURE AND ORGANISATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Structure

The framework for the structure of the Commission is provided in Section 14 (1), Part I of the Third Schedule of the 1999 Constitution (As Amended), and Sections 6, 7 and 8 of the 2010 Electoral Act (As Amended).

The Commission comprises a Chairman, who is also the Chief Electoral Commissioner and twelve other members, known as National Electoral Commissioners. The current membership of the Commission is shown in Annexure “A”. The President appoints all Members of the Commission, in consultation with the Council of State, after which the appointments are subjected to confirmation by the Senate.

The Constitution also provides for the appointment of Resident Electoral Commissioners (RECs) for each State of the Federation and the FCT. The list of the RECs and their States of posting is shown in Annexure “B”. The RECs are answerable to the Commission.

As provided for in Section 8(1) of the Electoral Act, the Secretary to the Commission is appointed by the Commission. He serves as the Head of the Commission’s Secretariat and is responsible for its administration. He is also responsible for the control of all other employees of the Commission with the approval of the Commission.

5.2 Organisational Implications

5.2.1 Governance

The Commission will provide strategic leadership and policy direction for the entire work of INEC as an organization. The Resident Electoral Commissioner is the head of the Commission’s office at the State level. The Administrative Secretary who is the Head of Administration in the State reports to the Resident Electoral Commissioner. The Local Government office of the Commission is headed by an Electoral Officer (EO). At the Registration Area (Ward) Office, the Registration Area Officer (RAO) is responsible to the EO for all his work. Leadership at all levels in the Commission will be developed to lead by example. Within the strategy period, the governance of the Commission will be developed and enhanced.

5.2.2 Management

The management of INEC and the electoral process shall continue to be a joint responsibility of the Commission and its Staff. The committees of the Commission, with the Commission’s approval will be responsible for providing strategic direction as well as monitor operations for execution of the Commission’s plans.

The office of the Chairman of the Commission will be responsible for the coordination of the implementation of the Strategic Plan. The Commission will ensure that a comprehensive work plan emanates from the strategy which will incorporate an election project plan.

There will be improved management of logistics and contractors/vendors. The existing stores will be upgraded and an online inventory system will be established for tracking the location and quantity of materials. The management of the payment of allowances to personnel before, during

and after elections will be improved with payment of some percentage before elections and the balance at completion. The management and deployment of ad-hoc staff will be improved with the creation of a database of ad-hoc staff to aid training and tracking of performance.

5.3 Human Resource and Organisational Development

Human resource and organizational development will be a key priority with this strategy. The functions of departments, directorates, divisions and units will be clearly demarcated and defined. All the jobs to be performed will be properly identified and job descriptions developed. Top management meetings will be held regularly to increase collaboration and synergy. The number and composition of committees will be reviewed and clarified to eliminate ambiguities and conflicts. State and Local Government Offices of the Commission will be re-organised to have appropriate number of departments and units with clearly spelt out functions. The Commission will provide detailed job descriptions for each role. The Human Resources Management department will engage in a comprehensive staff audit focusing on quality of staff with a view to improving proper placement and training. Performance management system will be instituted at all levels.

5.4 Resource Mobilisation and Financial Management

Budget planning and execution will be improved. There will be detailed funding plans for each year and a comprehensive plan made for the 2015 elections which will be used to engage the Executive, the Legislature and development partners. Financial management will be improved with strict compliance with the Financial Regulations as well as the Commission's financial policies and guidelines.

5.5 Communication

The quality of communication will be improved. Both internal and external communications will be enhanced. Communication between the Headquarters, State and LGAs areas will be improved as well as communication amongst the departments of the Commission. The use of new media in communication will be enhanced.

5.6 The Electoral Institute

The Electoral Institute will exist as a separate unit with its Governing Board and will be responsible for research, training and publications on electoral matters. Persons of high integrity, professionalism and appropriate knowledge will be appointed into the Board of the Institute.

5.7 Information and Communication Technology

The Commission will improve on the deployment and utilization of ICT. The capacity of staff will be built on the deployment and utilization of ICT. Technical support will be provided to support deployment and utilization of ICT in the Commission.

5.6 Documentation

The quality of documentation in the Commission will be improved upon across board. The capacity of staff to document the activities, trends and issues in the Commission will be built. The Electoral Institute will be strengthened to document research reports on elections.

SECTION SIX: MONITORING AND EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

6.1 Introduction

A key step towards building trust and ensuring the effectiveness, credibility and accountability of the INEC Strategic Plan is the development of a monitoring and evaluation (M and E) framework. Monitoring and Evaluation are key functions of management. It starts from the strategy process where key indicators are determined to be monitored and evaluated. The framework used for this strategy highlights the strategic objectives, indicators, means of verification and assumptions. The long term impact will be free, fair and credible elections.

Management will operationalise the monitoring and evaluation framework through routine data collection, surveys, progress monitoring, management review, stakeholder meetings and annual reviews.

6.2 Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

OBJECTIVES	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS (OVI)	MEANS OF VERIFICATION (MOV)	ASSUMPTIONS
1. To provide electoral operations, systems and infrastructure to support delivery of free, fair and credible elections	<p><i>INEC and civil society position papers submitted to Constitutional and legal reform committees published.</i></p> <p><i>Constitutional and legal reforms reflect desired changes contained in INEC's position paper.</i></p> <p><i>Frequency and timeliness of Register of Voters update.</i></p> <p><i>No of ICT equipment purchased</i></p> <p><i>No of personnel effectively using ICT</i></p> <p><i>Extent to which electoral processes reflect transparency and accountability.</i></p> <p><i>Electoral conflict management processes in place.</i></p> <p><i>No of cases of electoral conflict speedily and successfully mediated/resolved.</i></p>	<p>INEC position paper; National Assembly Constitution Review Committee report.</p> <p>Amended Constitution</p> <p>Register of Voters</p> <p>List of polling units published for 2015 elections</p> <p>Media reports</p> <p>Survey Reports</p>	<p>Political stability</p> <p>National Assembly will complete the constitutional review process.</p>

	<i>No and distribution of new polling units established across the country.</i>	Published Directory of Polling Units	
To improve voter education, training and research	<p><i>Existence and deployment of voter education manual at all levels.</i></p> <p><i>No of persons (by sex and location) trained on relevant themes/voter education modules .</i></p> <p><i>Existence and deployment of a comprehensive training curriculum for all categories of staff and stakeholders.</i></p> <p><i>Existence of a civic education curriculum for primary and secondary schools and general studies for tertiary institutions.</i></p> <p><i>No of Schools (primary, secondary and tertiary institutions) deploying the civic education curriculum.</i></p> <p><i>No and type of researches commissioned by INEC and</i></p>	<p>Voter Education Manual</p> <p>Staff training curriculum</p> <p>Civic Education Curriculum</p> <p>Research reports/publications</p>	Stakeholders willing to participate actively in the electoral process.

	<p><i>partners on election management in Nigeria.</i></p> <p><i>Extent of re-organization and repositioning of The Electoral Institute.</i></p> <p><i>Existence of publications and functional database on electoral issues in Nigeria</i></p> <p><i>Ratio of female to male voters per election disaggregated by location.</i></p> <p><i>Existence of policies for the inclusion of marginalized groups (Nigerians in the Diaspora, persons with disabilities, prisoners) in the electoral process.</i></p>	<p>Database</p> <p>Election review report</p> <p>Policies</p> <p>Media reports</p>	
To register and monitor the operation of political parties	<p><i>No of political party chieftains/executives expressing satisfaction with the political party registration process.</i></p> <p><i>No of comprehensive political party monitoring reports</i></p>	<p>Media report</p> <p>Survey report</p> <p>Political Party</p>	Political parties are willing to cooperate with INEC

	<p><i>highlighting relevant issues published and disseminated.</i></p> <p><i>Existence of comprehensive framework for the operation of political parties.</i></p> <p><i>No of key stakeholders (by sex and location) expressing satisfaction with political party processes.</i></p>	<p>monitoring reports</p> <p>INEC Guidelines</p> <p>Media reports Survey reports</p>	
To interact nationally and internationally with relevant stakeholders	<p><i>No of consultative meetings / stakeholder fora / platforms for engagement established with various categories of stakeholders per location.</i></p> <p><i>No of editions of INEC newsletter published and disseminated.</i></p> <p><i>No of election observers (both domestic and international) identified, screened and deployed per election (by sex and location).</i></p> <p><i>No of strategic partnerships established with civil society organisations (including MoUs</i></p>	<p>Meeting reports</p> <p>INEC Newsletter</p> <p>INEC report on election observation</p>	Stakeholders are willing to partner with INEC

	<p><i>signed).</i></p> <p><i>Range of multimedia deliverables, listenership and viewership numbers.</i></p> <p><i>Existence and functionality (existence of guidelines, specific engagements, trainings, periodic meetings) of an Inter-agency committee on election security.</i></p>	<p>MoUs</p> <p>INEC Media reports</p> <p>Meeting reports</p>	
<p>To re-organise and reposition INEC for sustained conduct of free, fair and credible elections</p>	<p><i>Number of electoral study tours conducted towards improving capacity of management and staff of INEC.</i></p> <p><i>Evidence of improved communication, coordination and team work between INEC headquarters, States and LGAs.</i></p> <p><i>No of personnel expressing satisfaction with improvements in INEC's work environment, infrastructure and operations.</i></p> <p><i>Existence of a functional and accessible database.</i></p>	<p>Study tour reports</p> <p>Meeting reports</p> <p>Survey report</p>	<p>National Commissioners, Resident Electoral Commissioners and Management cooperate.</p>

	<p><i>No of personnel expressing satisfaction with INECs human resource management, staff development, discipline and welfare.</i></p> <p><i>Existence and implementation of a gender policy for INEC.</i></p> <p><i>Existence of budget and expenditure analysis report</i></p> <p><i>Existence and utilization of M and E plans and tools for monitoring and evaluation of the new strategy</i></p> <p>.</p>	<p>Database</p> <p>Staff survey</p> <p>Gender Policy</p> <p>Programme reports</p> <p>Financial reports</p> <p>M and E reports</p>	
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ENDNOTES

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