

Elections Coordinating Committee (ECC)

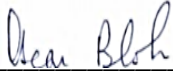
STRATEGIC PLAN



2022-2027

Foreword

This ECC five-year Strategic Plan positions ECC for its long-term engagement with electoral actors for the period of 2022-2027 and outlines five priority areas including: Institutional Capacity Strengthening of the ECC Secretariat; Partnership with National and Regional Electoral Actors; Program and Diversification; Advocacy and Media; Gender and Security. ECC appreciates the immense support of its key partner, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to democracy and governance in Liberia. The Board of Directors of the ECC further acknowledge the technical support of Democracy International (DI) in the finalization of this plan and look forward to its successful implementation.

Signed: 

Cllr. Oscar V. Bloh,
Chairperson, ECC

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AU	African Union
CDC	Coalition for Democratic Change
CECPAP	Center for Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding
CDG	Center for Democratic Governance
CDP	Capacity Development Plan
CEMESP	Center for Media Studies and Peacebuilding
CPP	Collaborating Political Parties
CSO	Civil Society Organization
EC	Executive Committee
ECC	Elections Coordinating Committee
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
HCEI	House Committee on Elections and Inaugurations
IACAT	Institutional Advocacy Capacity Assessment
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IT	Information Technology
LAVI	Liberia Accountability and Voice Initiative
LEON	Liberia Elections Observation Network
NCSCCL	National Civil Society Council of Liberia
NDI	National Democratic Institute
NETCAT	Network Capacity Assessment
MRU	Mano River Union
NEC	National Elections Commission
PUL	Press Union of Liberia
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency

SP	Strategic Plan
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats
WANEP	West Africa Network for Peacebuilding
WONGOSOL	Women's NGO Secretariat of Liberia
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNMIL	United Nations Mission in Liberia
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This five-year (2022-2027) Strategic Plan (SP) provides a guide for the implementation of the Elections Coordinating Committee (ECC) response to electoral issues in Liberia. The SP is also positioned to respond to emerging issues related to the holding of credible free and fair elections. The implementation of this SP for the five-years period is estimated to be \$US1.5 Million United States Dollars.

The SP has five key priorities and an overarching goal. For each priority, there is a strategic objective, expected outcome, broad actions and an articulated strategy to achieve the stated objectives. The SP also includes an implementation plan and cost for its execution. The contents of the SP were informed by the outcomes of a two-day working session held in Monrovia from August 21-22, 2022 and represent the collective views and vision of members of the ECC and its partners to make it a more responsive, effective and efficient network

Since its establishment in 2010 as a network, the ECC has operated under the banner of a network of civil society organizations established to monitor, document and report on elections activities in Liberia and its interventions since 2015 have not been driven by a formalized institutional and organizational SP. Though the ECC has been clear on what it was established to do and the changes and improvement it wanted to see in the elections processes in the country, these have not been properly articulated and documented for institutional memory. This SP is intended to fill this gap.

However, its monitoring, reporting and documentation of elections activities has made significant contributions to the determination of the overall credibility of elections in Liberia. This new SP is fully aligned to the priority areas of the Elections Coordinating Committee Strategic Plan for (2022-2027). It is focused on five strategic priorities:

1. INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY STRENGTHENING OF THE ECC SECRETARIAT
2. PARTNERSHIP WITH NATIONAL AND REGIONAL ELECTORAL ACTORS
3. PROGRAM AND DIVERSIFICATION
4. ADVOCACY AND MEDIA
5. GENDER AND SECURITY

Increase citizens' participation in the democratic process as a cross cross-cutting component with a clearly defined monitoring and evaluation plan will ensure that results at outputs and outcomes levels are monitored and properly documented in order to demonstrate evidence-based interventions that increase citizens' participation in the democratic processes in the country in 2023 and as well as in future electioneering periods. respond to the global targets of 2030. The

plan aims to create the institutional and programmatic framework to scale up the ECC's intervention in electioneering activities, make strategic choices in order to be results oriented. This will require strong and participatory leadership amongst network members, increase community participation through mass public awareness, collaboration with multiple stakeholders and coordination of efforts and interventions.

The network is comprised of the Center for Democratic Governance (CDG) Center for Media Studies and Peace Building (CEMESP), Center for Conflict Prevention and Peace-Building (CECPAP), Partners for Democratic Development (NAYMOTE-PADD), Institution for Research and Democratic Development (IREDD), Women NGO Secretariat of Liberia (WONGOSOL) and the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) in keeping with Article IV of the Constitution. The ECC has a Board of Directors which is comprised of seven organizations who have a duty to review and approve quarterly financial projections, annual work plans, security plans, identify threats, new partnerships, capacity development plan, annual leave plans and major procurements consistent with Article X of the Constitution. The last level of the ECC's structure is the secretariat. It is established for the purpose of running the day-to-day operations of the ECC. The secretariat is comprised of a National Coordinator, Director of Programs, Finance and Administration Officer, IT and Communications Officer and Program Assistant.

2.0 GOAL

The overarching goal of this strategic plan is to improve the quality of Liberia's democratic process. This goal will be achieved through extensive media advocacy and engagement on electoral issues such as women the participation of women in elections; peace and security; strengthening the institutional technical capacity of the ECC; program development and diversification; and strengthening internal and external partnership with stakeholders.

3.0 PRIORITY AREAS, OBJECTIVES, TARGETS AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES

3.1 Priority Area One: Institutional and Technical Capacity Strengthening of the ECC Secretariat.

Like every national non-governmental entity, the ECC's ability to implement this Strategic Plan will largely depend on its institutional capacity in many strategic areas. To achieve this thematic area, this Strategic Plan will strengthen the capacity of the ECC by building a pool of professional staff who be given opportunities to be trained in electioneering activities. Key training need of the ECC Secretariat will comprise voting technology, communicating trusted election information, best practices in the use of election websites, social media, identifying and combating misinformation and the dissemination of accurate election information through the media. The ECC will place premium on training for its staff on establishing and use its website,

use of social media for voters' engagement, combating election misinformation, mal-information and disinformation, educating and persuading public officials on election reform, working with the media and ensuring accessible communications for election offices. The ECC's ability to observe and monitor elections will require that its staff develop skills and professionalism in these key electioneering requirements,

Strategic Objective 1: To establish a functional office for the ECC Secretariat.

Target 1: ECC office equipped and functional to conduct election observation for the 2023 presidential and legislative elections by 2022

Target 2: ECC recognized election database management system established for observation (Apollo System) by 2022

Target 3: Staff technical capacity are enhanced in systematic election data collection, analysis, interpretation and reporting through trainings by 2022 through 2022 through 2025.

Target 4: Administrative and Institutional policies are developed and operationalized by 2022.

Strategic Objective 2: To increase information and communication capacity of the ECC's Secretariat.

Target 1: 500,000 persons disaggregated by gender viewing and following ECC website and posts by 2022 through 2027.

Expected Outcome:

- Visibility of the ECC increased with information and communication capacity for election observation.
- Improved and quality election observation reports
- Operations of the ECC secretariat are guided by institutional and administrative policies

Key Activities:

1. Quarterly update the ECC website.
2. ECC staff trained in the use and management of social media, information and communication.
3. ECC social media platform established, regularly updated and accessible to voters.

4. Procure and establish the ECC recognized database management system (Apollo) for observation of the 2023 general elections
5. Conduct staff training in key capacity gaps such as data collection, analysis and interpretation; policy and program development; financial and administrative management

3.2 Priority Area Two: Partnership with National and Regional Electoral Actors

Key to the implementation of the Strategic Plan will be the ECC ability to build linkages with internal and external organizations and institutions that have share vision on improving the democratic space of Liberia. To achieve this aspect of the Strategic Plan, the ECC will solicit and build strategic partnership with the National Elections Commission (NEC), Political Parties, the Security Sector and particularly the Liberia National Police, the media, Civil Society Organizations (CSO), International Elections Observation Groups and International Development Partners.

Strategic Objective 1: To increase resource support for the work of the ECC.

Target 1: ECC Signed implementation contracts with donors by 2022 through 2027.

Target 2: ECC activities funded by donors by 2022 through 2027.

Expected Outcome:

- Strengthened coordination with development partners working on democracy, elections and governance.

Key Activities:

1. Conduct a donor mapping exercise and track donor support to democracy, governance and elections in Liberia
2. Establish and maintain a current database of donors working on democracy, governance and elections issues.
3. Conduct regular coordination meetings with development partners.

Strategic Objective 2: To increase information sharing and networking during pre and post

Target 1: ECC partnership with International Organizations and Institutions by 2022 through 2027.

Target 2: ECC engagement with national, International and Regional Observation Groups established by 2022 through 2027.

Target 3: ECC engagement with national Civil Society Organizations established by 2022 through 2027.

Expected Outcomes:

1. ECC work supported and acknowledged by international partners.
2. ECC engaged with International and regional Observer Groups before, during and after election periods.

Key Activities:

1. Periodic reports presented by the ECC on the management of Donor's resources.
2. Regular meetings with partners on critical national election issues.
3. Exchange information on upcoming election events with International Observer Groups.

3.3. Priority Area 3: Programs and Diversification

During the implementation of the five-year Strategic Plan, the ECC will developed programs that evolve around creating and increasing opportunities for all citizens who have reached voting age the chance to participate in the electoral process. Citizens' participation is fundamental in every democratic process. During the 2017 elections there were almost equal number of male and female registered voters. A new voter roll will be developed for the 2023 elections and number of registered voters is expected to increase due to the first-time voters that will be captured during the registration process. The first-time voters will need to be educated about the election process to ensure their full participation. Key programmatic areas will be driven around advocacy for electoral reforms, voters' education, civic engagements. The ECC intends to work with political parties to improve their capacity through trainings for party agents/poll-watchers, election litigation procedures around the complaint process and engaging party officials on non-violence, campaign finance monitoring during electioneering periods. Programs undertaken by the ECC during the implementation of the Strategic Plan will focus on ensuring that women involvement in the democratic process is supported through access to information, trainings and education.

Strategic Objective 1: To increase the knowledge of citizens on the key electoral processes during the electioneering periods through SMS, media and community forums.

Target 1: ECC planned and conduct elections integrity activities by 2022.

Target 2: ECC plan and conduct trainings and education on election law and legal frameworks to strengthen and reinforce voters' capacities to vote by 2022 through 2027.

Expected Outcomes:

- 2 million citizens with knowledge and understanding on the voting process increased.

Major Activities:

1. Develop and disseminate awareness and educational messages in Liberian English and other local languages using diversified media formats.
2. Engage in community mobilization to rally the active involvement and participation of citizens in the election process.
3. Develop a multi-media approach to the dissemination of messages on elections.
4. Engage youth and women's groups as points of entry in creating public awareness and the dissemination of information on electoral processes.
5. Conduct yearly stakeholders mapping and analysis of other actors including CSOs and international development partners conducting awareness on elections.
6. Set indicators and use them to measure progress against targets on a yearly basis.

3.4 Priority Area 4: Advocacy and Media

The Strategic Plan seeks to strengthen the ECC's role in election advocacy as a way to become engaged in the election process so that decision-makers and future decision-makers are educated about the issues that affect people participation in the democratic process. Advocacy campaigns have the potential to make a tangible difference in the lives of everyday people. The ECC will solicit the engagement of members of the Legislature through meetings with members who share the vision and aspiration the ECC to promote election reforms. The ECC will remain engaged with the National Elections Commission (NEC) to ensure that information on election processes are clearly disseminated to the general public. In addition to strengthening its advocacy around policy engagement with national stakeholders, the ECC will develop an advocacy software as a strategy to reach the bigger audience that cannot be reached through meetings and media. The ECC will develop advocacy strategy around promoting the participation of people with special needs during the voting period. One key strategy the ECC will employ to drive its advocacy will be investing in advocacy software. The use of advocacy software will play a key role both off and online in advocacy campaigns. The ECC's digital strategy will encompass everything from social media to web design, writing, and more. The use of advocacy technology will

fundamentally transform how the ECC engages its targeted population on electioneering processes that they need to be educated about.

Strategic Objective 1: To expand the ECC engagements on policy and election reforms.

Target 1: At least three recommendations from the ECC observation reports are considered for electoral reforms by 2024-2023.

Expected Outcome:

Reformed electoral laws are responsive to the political context.

Major Activities:

1. Persuade public officials on election reforms through one-on-one engagements.
2. Hold meetings on election reforms with stakeholders.
3. Conduct digital advocacy campaigns targeting 2 million voters.

Strategic Objective 2: To work with the media to combat election misinformation, disinformation, mal-information and make election information accessible to the public.

Target 1: ECC trained in identifying top civic information gaps during electioneering periods by 2023

Target 2: ECC equipped with digital methods for accessing, increasing and building voters' trust by 2022 through 2024.

Target 3: ECC developed productive relationships with credible journalists and media entities by 2022 through 2027

Expected Outcomes:

1. ECC office with functional social media platform accessible to the public for voters' engagement.
2. ECC achieved key legislative reforms in the laws and administration.
3. ECC signed memorandum on engagement with trusted journalists and media entities.

Major Activities:

1. Establish election website and conduct trainings in website management.
2. Conduct trainings on information management and dissemination.

3. Partner with journalists and media entities to combat election misinformation, mal-information and disinformation during electioneering periods.

3.5 Priority Area 5: Gender and Security

The Strategic Plan will support a legal and policy framework for meaningful gender equality and women's participation, peace and security in the electoral process. Legal and policy frameworks define the rules of the game and directly affect gender equality and women's participation throughout the electoral process. International human rights instruments enshrine women's right to participate in politics and elections. National constitutions and domestic legislations have an important impact on women's participation and representation. The choice of the electoral system is also a key aspect of the legal framework, with concrete implications regarding the election of women. The adoption of Temporary Special Measures, including quotas, can contribute to level the playing field and can be a critical factor in increasing women's representation in elected bodies. CEDAW's general recommendation No. 25 (2004) states that "States parties are obliged to adopt and implement Temporary Special Measures [...] if such measures can be shown to be necessary and appropriate in order to accelerate the achievement of the overall, or a specific goal of, women's de facto or substantive equality" ([CEDAW's general recommendation No. 25](#)). To accelerate women's participation in the democratic process in Liberia, the ECC will promote gender quotas in legislative elections, voluntary political party quotas and undertake measures to promote women's participation in decision-making.

Strategic Objective 1: To Increase women's participation in Liberia's electoral process.

Target 1: 80% of women candidates trained and knowledgeable on election processes.

Expected Outcomes:

1. Political parties are in compliance with the election laws regarding women's political participation.
2. Women representations in the National Legislature increased.
3. Women with special needs having access to voting education and voting places.

Major Activities:

1. Conduct trainings for women candidates in political parties on campaign messages.
2. Conduct trainings for elected women in legislative procedures.
3. Carry out digital advocacy campaigns, promoting access to voting places for women and other people with special needs.

Objective 2: Reduce the occurrence of election related violence, tension and threats.

Target 1: ECC quarterly engagement with the security sector/Liberia National Police to improve elections security established by end of 2022 through 2024.

Target 2: Election violence, tension and threats reduced amongst voters and candidates.

Expected Outcome:

1. Risks for electoral violence is reduced.
2. Public confidence in election security improved.

Key Activities:

1. ECC planned and conduct community-based training to monitor, document violence, measure levels of tension, and build relationships with government, law enforcement, political and community leaders.
2. ECC conducts data collection on election violence, analyzed and published regular reports for calls for action as needed by end of 2022 through 2023.

4.0 ECC HISTORY AND LESSON LEARNED

The ECC is a coalition of civic society organizations established in 2010 with the mandate to observe elections in Liberia. During its 12 years of existence the ECC’s work has been focused on ensuring that elections held in the country are credible, free and fair. Looking back at the activities of the ECC, it has carried out observations of key elections in the country. In 20, the ECC observed the general presidential and legislative elections. Since then the ECC has maintained its observation role in many other elections that followed the elections of 2011. In 2014, 2017, 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022, the ECC observations of Special Senatorial elections and legislative by-elections were critical lending credibility to the voting process when its reports were relied on by political parties to describe the credibility and integrity s of these elections. In the early years of the ECC, election observation was characterized by broad-based mobilization, generally recruiting and deploying volunteers across polling places in the country. During this period, a key concern for the ECC was that its election observers did have requisite trainings to detect fraud, transparency issues and other improprieties during election observations and therefore the ECC recognized the lack of training as a potential gap in its work.

In 2017, with funding from USAID and technical support from NDI, the ECC moved from a broad-based observation approach to a systematic election observation that led to improved and quality collection, analysis and dissemination of data. With this improvement, the ECC has gathered evidence-based data that has provided factually accurate information on the conduct of elections including the one held in 2017. Since then, the ECC has developed a reputation for professionalism and non-partisanship which has seen it as a credible institution and prime voice on improving democracy in Liberia.

Lessons learned during the period were identified as internal and external factors that impacted the ECC's ability to perform effectively in its election observation work. Internal factors were 1. Limited capacity in analyzing acquired elections data, 2. Periodic donor support and absence of sustainable funding, and 3. Absence of strategic, resource mobilization and program diversification approach.

Externally, the key lessons learned were 1. Recruitment of young people as political thugs, 2. Lack of campaign finance monitoring which created an unlevelled playing field during the 2017 elections. 3. Increase in violence against women candidates undermined political participation and representation of women in the political process, 4. Recent interference by traditional structures during elections period which threaten the peace and security of women candidates. 5. Intermittent breach of constitutional requirements for holding elections (i.e. Census Timeline and Boundary Delimitation before general and presidential elections.

This strategic planning process looked back at key achievements, challenges, and lessons learned from the implementation of the ECC's previous three-year (2013-2015) Strategic Plan. A well thought-through process was conducted to determine the current situational context of the ECC. The current position of the ECC led to a SWOT analysis to understand the internal and external environmental, political and natural factors the ECC may encounter during the implementation its Five-Year Strategic Plan.

. In a critically thought through process, the strategic planning undertaken by the ECC in 2022 evolved around a situational analysis of the environment within which the ECC exists. The planning process also consider the things that the ECC intends to change over the next five years; the description and nature of the problem that the ECC has set out to alleviate formulating useful objectives and the strategies and as well as verifiable indicators to determine how the ECC will deal with risks. The ECC has also developed a Project Monitoring, Evaluation & Reporting plan to manage the ECC's project cycle.

5.0 ALIGNED STRATEGIC DIRECTION (2022-2027)

This ECC Strategic Plan is informed by clearly articulated vision and mission statements accompanied by core values. The Plan presents the organizational vision, mission, and core values developed collectively to drive and guide the ECC's strategic engagement, relationship and interaction with key stakeholders. also, It also outlines key priority areas that will inform the design and implementation of future engagement by the ECC in electioneering processes. The ECC will mainstream gender and security by developing a strategy to ensure that gender concerns are factored into its work so that the voices and participation of relevant stakeholders are given equal consideration.

6.0 VISION STATEMENT

A leading Civil Society Network promoting Electoral Integrity and Democratic Governance in Liberia

7.0 MISSION STATEMENT

To contribute towards transparent, accountable, credible and sustainable democratic processes in Liberia.

8.0 CORE VALUES

In pursuit of the above vision and mission statements and in the services its delivers, the ECC will be accountable to its partners and stakeholder and the general public during the performance of its work. The ECC will demonstrate transparency and integrity in the management of resources. Networking and building linkages with relevant stakeholders will be promoted. The ECC will maintain its presence during electioneering period and will maintain an impartial interaction with actors in the political space. The ECC will not engage in partisan politics and will remain neutral in its reporting during electioneering periods.

9.0 SITUATION ANALYSIS

Liberia is a constitutional republic with a bicameral national assembly and a democratically elected government led by President George Manneh Opong Weah and the political alliance

Coalition for Democratic Change. The country held presidential and legislative elections in 2017, which domestic and international observers deemed generally free and fair. The then Montserrado County Senator George Weah won the presidential runoff in December 2017 in an election that was generally considered free and fair. In December 2020 the country held midterm senatorial elections that observers deemed largely peaceful, although there were some reported instances of vote tampering, intimidation, harassment of female candidates, and election violence. Opposition and independent candidates won 12 of the 15 Senate seats contested, according to election results announced by the National Election Commission.¹

Since the win by the political alliance Coalition for Democratic Change in 2017, there has been a number of by-elections to fill seats that became vacant. On November 16, by-elections for the House of Representatives were held in Bong, Bomi, Nimba, and Grand Gedeh counties to fill vacancies created after the December 2020 midterm senatorial elections. Once again, election observers deemed the proceedings largely peaceful, although there were some reported instances of vote tampering, intimidation, harassment of female candidates, and election violence.

Over the past five years of the George Weah led government, the country is experiencing growing signs of insecurity in the country. Recent senatorial by-election held in northern Liberia's Lofa County produced heightened tensions between supporters of the ruling Coalition for Democratic Change and the supporters of the candidate from the opposition Unity Party. There were reports of intimidation of voters by groups labelled as militias that was organized under the auspices of some officials of the government.

Politically, the country appears to be gliding in an abyss of hopelessness for the population. There is growing report and accusation of mismanagement of public resources by the government and its officials with the recent accusations coming from the United States of America. There is heighten sense of insecurity amongst the population as incidences and reports of crimes and violence go uninvestigated and neither get prosecuted in the court of law.

As the country moves towards the holding of the general and presidential elections in 2023, there are worrying signs that a level playing field will not be possible due to the impoverished condition of the population. There are reports that the government is using state resources to induced voters long before the elections period. The youths are the targets for these inducement by officials of the government and this action will undermine the independence of voters in the absence of advocacy and creating voters' awareness.

Considering the violence and disputes that continue to characterize the holding of elections in the country it is expected that the 2023 general presidential elections will again be a test to reaffirm Liberia's ability to upholding its democratic governance. A very pertinent aspect of maintaining the democratic governance in the country will be the full participation of the population; especially women in the voting process. The exercise of this right by women has been hindered due to the lack of training and education on electioneering processes; and mainly for women

candidates. Compounding the problem is the intimidation that women legislators encountered amongst their male counterparts in the national assembly. The lack of women's participation in democratic institutions undermines electoral integrity, and undercuts sustainable democracy and lasting peace. In order to strengthen genuine democratic processes, the constitution and existing electoral laws should be subject to amendment and or reform. Effective regulation of the activities of political parties and candidates within an electoral process, especially in respect to the selection of candidates during electoral campaigns, is fundamental. The rights and privileges of participating members should be clearly protected.

Liberia is at a stage where the conversations of reform have taken root and there seem to be the political will to achieve and address the under-representation of women at the legislature. Section 4.5 (1c) states that "A list of candidates submitted to the commission for an election should endeavour to have no less than 30% of the candidates on the list from each gender". The term 'endeavour' is weak and does not mandate political parties to meet the stipulated threshold. Reforming this section to mandate parties will help reduce the underrepresentation of women in the Legislature. Tapping into the existing opportunity of political will by increasing advocacy for amendment is critical in increasing women political participation, especially as candidates while ensure their peace and security in the democratic processes.

Regardless of the many years of effort to bring women to elective office, including the legislature, their representation remains low. Although women account for more than half of the country's population, they remain largely underrepresented in decision-making and governance processes. For example, in the past three successive years, from 2018 to 2020, women in the Liberian Legislature only account for 12.33 percent which is far below the global average of 23.8 percent being attained by other countries¹. Prior to the 2017 general elections, several organizations such as the UN Women and the National Democratic Institute (NDI) invested time and resources by providing training for Liberian women with political interests and ambitions. These training were geared toward preparing women for successful engagement with their constituencies and strengthening their campaign skills. Notwithstanding, there was only a marginal increase in women who were elected to the Legislature from 9.86 percent in 2017 to 12.33 percent in 2018 after the elections and inauguration.

Compounding the issue of women underrepresentation, there remains a low coverage of Civic education in Liberia, during elections and post-election periods. As a result, there are missing prospects to ensure that Liberia have sustainable peace. Effective information dissemination is a core pillar of democratic elections. In a fragile democratic state like Liberia, citizens' faith in the electoral system needs to be reaffirmed because of the daunting levels of illiteracy, poverty and

¹The Global Economy.com-Liberia: Women in Parliament

corruption. Post elections violence erupts after electoral processes due to breakdown of trust, miscommunication and misconception between the actors in society that which have the potential to undermine the democratic gains made thus far. Ensuring that citizens of Liberia receive adequate information about their civil responsibilities as well as electoral processes will help yield a result of peaceful co-existence. There is a need to largely increase civic information dissemination especially to the youth, since in fact they account for about 58 percent of the country’s total population. According to IFES 2017 Civic and Voter’s Education (CVE) campaign report, most youth are receptive to visual media and that since the 2011 presidential elections, Liberia’s media landscape has undergone a sea change with introduction of 4G internet and the sharp rise in the use of digital social media platforms – largely as Facebook. Considering that the greater percentage of the youthful population (33 percent) reside in urban population², there exist the opportunity and avenue to disseminate information via audio-visual content and reach out to Liberian youth.

10.0 INSTITUTIONAL AND PROGRAMMATIC ASSESSMENT: SWOT ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<p>Programmatic:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good reputation, expert on electoral matters and visible in the electoral sector • Decentralized network structures • Leading national civil society voice on elections issues. • Strong national and international recognition. • High Profile cadre of personnel. • Knowledgeable and experienced in 	<p>Programmatic:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low knowledge on use and management of IT in elections observations and analysis. • Limited diversify programmes and resources. • In adequate planning between the ECC and the NCSCL in the recruitment of election observers. • Limited investment in knowledge management and publications

² Youthpolicy.org-Liberia Factsheet

<p>electoral legal framework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic partnership with key Stakeholder (i.e. NEC) <p>Institutional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong visibility in the counties • Coordination and collaboration with strategic partners • Clear organizational structure • Meeting deadlines • Good donor relationship • Participatory leadership and team decision-making style 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited funded and sustainable plans • In adequate funding and resources to maintain secretariat during pre and post elections periods. • Limited partnership with political parties and other relevant government institutions. <p>Institutional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited knowledge on use and management of IT in elections observations and analysis. • Limited investment in knowledge management and publications • Limited funded and sustainable plans • In adequate funding and resources to maintain secretariat during pre and post elections periods. • Limited capacity of Secretariat staff
<p>OPPORTUNITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Legal and political framework that conditioned the thriving of political process (i.e. Constitution, NEC, Laws/Regulations) ▪ Growing citizens’ interest in supporting and protecting democratic tenets ▪ Increased use of ICT in advancing democracy (i.e. social media) ▪ Alliance and coalition of political parties. ▪ Growing interest in ECC work by internal and external partners. 	<p>THREATS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mounting political tension that may result into violence during the upcoming general and presidential elections. • Inability by the government to hold elections on due dates leading to postponements. • Potential conflict of interest by ECC members due to opened alignment to political parties. • Donor fatigue

The above SWOT analysis shows that the strength of ECC is in the area of programming; particularly in observation, monitoring and reporting on elections in the country. Knowledge and experience over time in electioneering activities; particularly the ECC's credibility is also an asset of the institution that can be leveraged during its participation in the up-coming general and presidential elections and future ones. Two key institutional weaknesses include inadequate funding and resources to maintain secretariat during pre and post elections periods and limited knowledge on the use and management of IT in elections observations, reporting and documentation. These weaknesses require attention because the ECC needs to operate in a holistic manner and the administrative side needs to be as strong as the programming for interventions to be carried out in a comprehensive and sustainable manner.

Actions to address weaknesses: Several actions were proposed as a means of addressing the identified weaknesses at the programmatic and institutional levels and at the same time continuing to do things that are working but develop strategies to leverage existing and emerging opportunities to expand current interventions.

Institutional:

- Develop a resource mobilization plan or strategy to diversify funding sources from multiple partners. This will stabilize the institution in terms of guaranteed funding.
- Develop training strategy to for IT usage during elections observation.
- Secretariat staff capacity development through training and mentorship

Opportunities:

- Launch the final version of the SP targeting multiple international development partners to communicate the core programmatic areas and targets to be achieved.
- Constructively engage policy makers at the highest level to build strategic alliances and relationships in the implementation of the SP.
- Develop a fact-sheet that highlights the achievements of the ECC over the past twelve years and a summary of the priority areas for the next five years. The fact sheet can be shared with current and potential development partners.
- Initiate one-on-one engagement with international development partners to generate their interest in supporting one or more components of the SP.

11.0 STRATEGIC APPROACH AND COMMUNICATION

This Plan will adopt a five-pronged approach in the implementation of interventions supportive of the ECC's electoral engagements. These approaches are 1. Institutional and Technical Capacity of the ECC's Secretariat, 2. Partnership with National and Regional Electoral Actors, 3. Programs and Diversification, Advocacy and Media and 5. Gender and Security. These key interventions underpinning this strategic approach will contribute significantly to the ECC's performance during the lifespan of the plan.

The plan will be communicated through diverse means such as briefing meetings with donors and partners, proposals and reports, media conferences and the ECC official website. Key component such the priorities areas, mission, vision and core values will be visibly posted in the office of the ECC, posted on banners and other key communication materials including posters, flyers and fact-sheet.

12.0 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Monitoring and evaluation of the progress and impact of the ECC's work has often not been carried out during the past years. While many engagements in election observations have been carried out, more evidence on successful observations and lessons learned are needed. Planned monitoring of activities and context as well as measuring progress over time will provide valuable data to make programmatic and policy decisions in the implementation of the Strategic Plan. The documentation of lessons learnt can contribute to making policy decisions to guide the strategic direction of the ECC.

The M&E Department will formulate an M&E strategy and coordinate the gathering and documentation of information on the implementation of the Plan. The M&E Department will support the various projects and departments in taking full responsibility for tracking results of the ECC's activities. This support will involve the identification of an M&E officer to lead internal M&E activities. While the M&E Department is responsible for tracking overall progress on the extent to which stated objectives per project are being achieved, individual projects will be charged with the responsibility for collecting data on activities implemented.

To facilitate the implementation of the M&E strategy, a result-based M&E Plan should be developed to monitor and capture relevant data on established indicators, including reporting frequencies, data sources, and data collection tools. The ECC should identify and recruit a person to be a full-time staff responsible for monitoring and documentation of lessons learnt. The knowledge and skills of this person need to be developed so that he or she can implement a simple M and E data collection plan. The purpose of investing in quality monitoring, evaluation and lessons learnt is to position ECC to be able to collect information that will communicate changes its interventions are making in increasing citizen participation in the democratic process in the country.

12.1 SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

Resources for election observations are limited. At the same time, the ECC's election observations needs to be effective and efficient and this will require a strong structure and process to provide leadership, coordination, collaboration, and oversight to ensure that targets are achieved. These will be supported and reinforced by a strategy for sustained resource mobilization that represents income from diversify programming. In this way, the ECC will remain relevant in the sector of democracy, governance and elections. Any resource mobilization efforts need to consider emerging health issues and global trends around security and climate change that will have global and national implications for the allocation of scarce resources. In order to attract donors' support, resource mobilization must take into account co-financing and complimentary approach in order for the response to be sustainable. Domestic co-financing contributions will be intended to compliment available donor funds such as DI, USAID, Foreign Embassies and other international development partners to reach appreciable funding level during the implementation of the Strategic Plan.

ECC Implementation Plan (2022-2027)

PRIORITY AREAS and	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	TARGETS	EXPECTED OUTCOMES	KEY ACTIVITIES	INDICATORS	TIMELINE	PROJECTED COST (USD)
INSTITUTIONAL AND TECHNICAL CAPACITY STRENGTHENING OF THE ECC	To establish a functional office of the ECC Secretariat	Target 1: ECC Office equipped and functional to conduct election observation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visibility of the ECC increased with information and communication capacity for election observation • Improved and quality election observation reports • Operations of the ECC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly update the ECC website. • ECC staff trained in the use and management of social media, information and communication. • ECC social media platform established, regularly updated and accessible to voters. • Procure and establish the 	Evidence of prominent ECC office Posts and content on the ECC social media platforms and website Evidence of the ECC database system of observation of electoral events	Year 1: 2022	\$400,000
		Target 2: ECC recognized election database management system established for observation (Apollo System) by 2022					

		<p>Target 3: Staff technical capacity are enhanced in systematic election data collection, analysis, interpretation and reporting through trainings by 2022 through 2025.</p>	<p>secretariat are guided by institutional and administrative policies</p>	<p>ECC recognized database management system (Apollo) for observation of the 2023 general elections</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct staff training in key capacity gaps such as data collection, analysis and interpretation; policy and program development, financial and administrative management 	<p>Evaluation report of staff performance in its administrative and technical operations</p>	<p>Year 1-4: 2022-2025</p>	
		<p>Target 4: Administrative and Institutional policies are developed and operationalized by 2022.</p>					
	<p>To increase information and communication capacity of the ECC Secretariat</p>	<p>Target 1: 500,000 persons disaggregated by gender viewing and following ECC website and posts</p>			<p>ECC reports on social media and website engagement by the public showing at least 100,000 persons</p>	<p>Year 1-5: 2023-2027</p>	

					reached annually		
PARTNERSHIP WITH NATIONAL AND REGIONAL ELECTORAL REGIONAL ACTORS	To increase Resource Support for the work of the ECC	Target 1: ECC signed implementation contracts with donors	Strengthened coordination with development partners/donors working on democracy, governance and elections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct donor mapping exercise and track donor support to democracy, governance and elections in Liberia Establish and maintain a current database of donors working on democracy, governance and election issues Conduct regular coordination meetings with development partners 	Copies of contracts in ECC archive	Year 1-5: 2022-2027	\$200,000
		Target 2: ECC activities funded by donor/partners			Bank accounts, accounting reports showing existence of funds provided donors/partners		
	To increase information sharing and networking during pre and post-election periods	Target 1: ECC partnership with international organization and institution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ECC work supported and acknowledged by international partners ECC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Periodic reports presented by ECC on the management of donors' resources Regular meetings with partners on critical national elections issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reports of meetings with partners Evidence of information sharing 	Year 1-5: 2022-2027	

		<p>Target 2: ECC engagement with, national, international and regional observation groups</p> <p>Target 3: ECC engagement with National civil society organization</p>	<p>engaged with international and regional observer groups before, during and after election periods</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exchange information on upcoming election of upcoming election events with international observer groups 	<p>with partners</p> <p>Evidence of meetings and reports</p> <p>Evidence of meetings and information sharing</p>		
<p>PROGRAMS AND DIVERSIFICATION</p>	<p>To increase the knowledge of citizens on key electoral during electoral processes through SMS, media and community forums</p>	<p>Target 1: ECC plan and conduct election integrity activities</p> <p>Target 2: ECC plan and conduct training on election laws and legal frameworks to strengthen and reinforce voters' capacity to vote</p>	<p>2 million citizens with knowledge and understanding on voting process increased</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and disseminate awareness and educational messages in Liberian English and other local languages using diversify media formats Engage in community mobilization to rally the active involvement and participation of citizens in the election process Develop a multi-media approach to 	<p>Evidence of election integrity performed and reports available</p> <p>Evidence of public participation and reports on trainings held with voters</p>	<p>Year 1-5: 2022-2027</p>	<p>\$ 400,000</p>

				<p>the dissemination of messages on elections</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage youth and women groups as points of entry in creating public awareness and the dissemination of information on electoral processes • Conduct yearly stakeholders' mapping and analysis of other actors including CSOs and international development partners conducting awareness on elections • Set indicators and use them to measure progress against targets on a yearly basis 			
ADVOCACY AND MEDIA	To expand ECC engagement on policy and election reform	At least 3 recommendations from the ECC observation reports are considered for	Reformed electoral laws are responsive to the political context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persuade public officials on election reforms through one-on-one engagement • Hold meetings 	Evidence of election reform as a result of ECC recommendatio	Year 3: 2024-2027	\$300,000

		election reforms		on election reforms with stakeholders	n		
	To work with the media to combat election misinformation, disinformation and mal-information and make election information accessible to the public	Target 1: ECC trained in identifying top civic information gaps during electioneering periods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ECC office with functional social media platforms accessible to the public for voter's engagement ECC achieved key legislative reforms in the laws and administration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct digital advocacy campaigns targeting 2 million voters Establish election website and conduct training for staff in website management Conduct training on information management and dissemination for staff 	ECC statements and reports on civic information gaps	Year 1-3: 2022-2024	
		Target 2: ECC equipped with digital methods for accessing, increasing and building donors' trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ECC signed memorandum on engagement with trusted journalists and media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner with journalists and media entities to combat election misinformation, disinformation and mal-information during electioneering periods 	Evidence on the use of social media by the ECC for voters	Year 1-5: 2022-2027	
		Target 3: ECC develop productive relationship with credible journalists			Evidence of joint statements, releases, MOUs, etc with		

		and media entities	entities		journalists and media entities		
GENDER AND SECURITY	To increase women participation in Liberia electoral processes	80% women candidates trained and knowledgeable on election processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political parties are in compliance with the election laws regarding women political participation • Women representation in the national legislature increased • Women with special needs having access to voting education and voting places 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct training for women candidates and political parties on developing campaign messages • Conduct training for elected women in legislative procedures • Carry out digital advocacy campaign, promoting access to voting places for women and other people with special needs • ECC plan and conduct community-based training to monitor, document 	Evidence and reports of training conducted for women candidates		\$200,000

	To reduce the occurrence of election related violence, tension and threats	Target 1: ECC quarterly engagement with the security sector and or police to improve election security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk for electoral violence reduced • Public confidence in election security improved 	<p>violence, measure levels of tension and build relationship with government, law enforcement, political and community leaders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECC conducts data collection on election violence, analyse and publish regular reports for calls to action 	Evidence of engagement meetings, MOUs key security institutions		
		Target 2: Election violence, tension and threats reduced amongst voters and candidates			Violence prone counties remain peaceful		

Appendix: ECC Board Resolution

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD

THE ELECTIONS COORDINATING COMMITTEE (ECC)

We the undersigned, being members of the Board of the Elections Coordinating Committee hereby known as the (ECC) existing under the laws of Liberia, and having had the review of the ECC Five-year Strategic Plan in Sinkor, Monrovia, Liberia, hereby state that the following is a true and correct copy of a RESOLUTION duly adopted by Board members consent on Monday August 29, 2022, and that such RESOLUTION has not been modified, rescinded or revoked, and is at present in full force and effect.

Now therefore, it is resolved that:

The ECC Five-year Strategic Plan (2022-2027) has been reviewed and validated by all Board members and staff of the ECC Secretariat and is hereby endorsed and will become the document to guide the operations of the ECC for the stipulated five-year period.




Cllr. Oscar Bloh (Chairperson)
Center for Democratic Governance (CDG)

Date: 30/08/22

Mr. Eddie D. Jarwolo (Member)
Naymote-Partners for Democratic Development (Naymote-PADD)

Date: _____



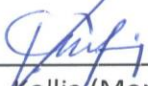
Mr. Malcolm W. Joseph (Member)
Center for Media Studies and Peacebuilding (CEMESP)

Date: 08/30/2022



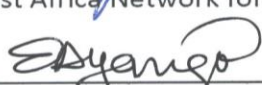
Mr. Matthias Yeanay (Member)
Institute for Research and Democratic Development (IREDD)

Date: 08/29/2022




Mr. Philip M. Kollie (Member)
West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP-Liberia)

Date: 08/29/2022



Mrs. Esther D. Yanko (Member)
Women NGO Secretariat of Liberia (WONGOSOL)

Date: 08/30/2022



Mr. Charles Crawford (Member)
Center for Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding (CEPAP)

Date: 08/29/22