

United Nations Development Programme



Country: Nigeria
Project Initiation Plan

Project Title:	Support to inclusive, credible, transparent and non-violent elections and democratic processes
Expected CP Outcome(s):	
Initiation Plan Start Date:	17 March 2022 – 31 December 2022
Implementing Partner	INEC, Yiaga Africa, Channels TV, Ekiti state government, Osun state government

Brief Description

As Africa's largest democracy, the 2023 elections represent another crucial step in the consolidation of Nigeria's democracy. The electoral processes in Nigeria are still numerous challenged by voter apathy and low voters' turnout; lack of party's internal democracy and imposition of candidates; lack of credible or ineffective mechanism for resolution of inter and intra party disputes; proliferation of political parties; elections' operations and logistics issues; manipulation of voting population via religious, ethnic and sectional sentiments; concentration of party authority and executive power in the executive at all tiers of government; abuse of incumbency power including use of state resources to run party affairs by the ruling parties; political violence; and hate media campaigns.

Much needs to be done to strengthen the credibility of elections in Nigeria. The reports of the International Elections Observer Missions (IEOM) especially the European Union Election Observer Mission (EU EOM) and the Domestic Elections Observer Missions (DEOM) led by Yiaga Africa, and the INEC's report of the 2019 General Elections made far reaching recommendations for the improvement of future general elections in Nigeria. One key recommendation is to strengthen gender equality and improve women and youth participation in electoral processes, as well as to support Election Management Bodies and Civil Society Organizations to ensure inclusive, credible, transparent and non-violent elections.

This project aims to promote youth and women participation in governance and elections process in Nigeria. to enhance peace and security through inclusive, transparent and credible elections that foster and consolidate democratic governance and national development.

Programme Period: 17 March 2022 to 31 December 2022 Atlas Project Number: Atlas Output ID: Gender Marker: _____	Total resources required \$2,500,000 Total allocated resources: • Regular \$200,000 (TRAC) • Other: ○ Donor UNDP ○ Donor _____ ○ Government _____ Unfunded budget: \$2,300,000 In-kind Contributions _____
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Agreed by UNDP:

Mohamed Yahya, Resident Representative



I. CONTEXT

As Africa's largest democracy, the 2023 elections represent another crucial step in the consolidation of Nigeria's democracy. The democratic process in Nigeria is challenging. At the federal level, there is evidence of incremental improvement despite the initial challenges encountered between 1999 and 2007. Nigeria has organized six consecutive elections since 1999, attaining a significant milestone in 2015 with a change of power between the ruling party and the opposition. The democratic culture continues to deepen. The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has continued to deliver its constitutional mandate.

The picture is different at the state level. The State Independent Electoral Commissions (SIECs) have been less able to conduct credible, free, fair and acceptable elections, and have been unable to organize regular elections at the local government level. Only Kaduna SIEC is perceived to have delivered local government elections considered to be credible.

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The electoral processes in Nigeria are still numerously challenged by voter apathy and low voters' turnout; lack of party's internal democracy and imposition of candidates; lack of credible or ineffective mechanism for resolution of inter and intra party disputes; proliferation of political parties; elections' operations and logistics issues; manipulation of voting population via religious, ethnic and sectional sentiments; concentration of party authority and executive power in the executive at all tiers of government; abuse of incumbency power including use of state resources to run party affairs by the ruling parties; political violence; and hate media campaigns.

The public, international and domestic observers, and political analysts' perception was that the 2019 general elections in Nigeria were less credible than the elections in 2011 and 2015. The 2019 National Corruption Survey found that, on average, one in five Nigerian voters had either been offered money or another benefit in exchange for their votes. INEC was not able to access the required resources to prosecute initial electoral activities ahead of the general elections and its decision to postpone election date so close to the original date generated a huge public outcry. There is the need for UNDP, in collaboration with development partners including the Nigeria Development Partners' Group (NDPG), Key Political Partners' Group (KPPG), international non-governmental organizations (INGO) and domestic civil society organizations (CSOs), to assist INEC to deliver on the 2023 general elections effectively and creditably.

The context for the 2023 elections is more challenging than at any time since 1999. There is insecurity in the North (with the Boko Haram and ISWAP insurgency in the North East; kidnappings and banditry in the North West; and gender-based violence, human right abuses, criminality, cultism, and farmer / herder violence across the country). There is a lack of trust and confidence in the government and the state among different ethnic groups and constituents, with increased separatist agitation in the South-East. The COVID-19 pandemic continues to have significant economic, social (and political) destabilising impacts. The 2023 election has the potential to be a stabilising influence (if the process is credible); or highly destabilising if it lacks credibility.

Voters' turnout and inclusive elections

Credible and democratic elections depend on successful voters' registration, high voters' turnout and inclusive and participatory processes. In the Nigeria 2019 elections as well as in subsequent state elections, the voters' turnout was dangerously low. INEC announced that more than 70million people obtained Permanent Voter Cards (PVCs) to participate in the 2019 elections while less than 30 million people participated in the electoral

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process. In the Anambra state governorship elections 2021, only 10% of registered voters participated in this election. This trend of extremely low voters' turnout affects the legitimacy and credibility of democratic processes.

Furthermore, People with Disabilities (PWD) and Internally Displaced People (IDP) were often left behind. Despite INEC's efforts during the 2019 elections, some polling units were located in areas where people on wheel chair could not access and only a few polling units were established in IDP camps and host communities.¹

Continuous voters' registration and sensitization efforts to increase voters' turnout as well as the inclusion of IDPs, PWDs, women and youth are critical for credible democratic processes.

Women political participation

Nigeria has the lowest rate of women in parliament in Africa, with the number progressively decreasing since 2011, and has still not had an elected female governor. As there are no legal provisions promoting women's political participation and for independent candidacy, women depend on political parties – often lacking Gender sensitive policies - for nomination.²

Women in Nigeria face many challenges to entering and remaining engaged in politics. Undemocratic party nomination processes and negative gender stereotypes hinder women from taking on leadership positions in public life. These are deeply entrenched in a patriarchal, male-dominant culture with minimal political will to make the changes needed to improve women's political participation. Unequal skills and lack of financial capacity amongst other things are all barriers to women's active engagement in politics. The 2019 polls recorded a decline in the number of women elected into national and state legislatures. For instance, the Center for Democracy and Development (CDD) Report^[1] revealed that 2,970 women were on the electoral ballot, representing only 11.36% of nominated candidates. Only 62 women were elected representing 4.17% of the elected officials. This figure represents a decline from the 2015-19 period, when women formed 5.65% of elected officials and risks declining further without robust action to reverse the trend.

Nigeria is entering into a critical stage of its election cycle, with only one year until the 2023 elections. Support for enhancing women's participation and leadership in decision-making is critical to Nigeria's development and recovery processes and ensures that gains made in promoting women's political representation are not lost.

Youth political participation

As the Nigerian population of more than 206million people is fast growing, so is her youth population. By 2050, Nigeria's population is expected to reaching 400million with over 50% under the age of 30. Currently, Nigeria has more than 84 million registered voters with youth aged 18-40 representing over 60% of the registered voters. Youth groups and civil society organizations such as Yiaga Africa are vibrant in Nigeria, and have achieved some level of success with the NotToYoungToRun campaign resulting in the enactment of the Age Reduction Bill. However, youth are often marginalized and political offices mostly occupied by men over 50 years³, culminating in frustration and discontent. Various youth-led protests, including the EndSARS protests in October 2020, created more awareness that it is high time for more youth political participation. With the various youth groups advocating for and promoting youth political participation, it is critical to leverage on these efforts and enhance youth political participation in view of the 2023 general elections. The marginalization of youth or women could further destabilize the country while more inclusive elections tend to be more peaceful, making the 2023 elections a stabilizing factor.

Previous UNDP Assistance to Democratic Process and Elections in Nigeria

Since the advent of the Nigeria's current democratic dispensation in 1999, UNDP has effectively been a key allied supporting the country to deepen her democratic aspirations, build/strengthen key democratic institutions (EMBs, NASS, Judiciary, security agencies, etc.) and CSOs, and promote inclusive participation in elections. The assistance climaxed in 2011 when UNDP galvanized development partners to pool resources together to support the electoral processes leading to the conduct of the general elections through a joint donor

¹ National Human Rights Commission, observation report, Nigeria presidential election 2019

² EU Election Observation Mission, Nigeria, General elections, final report, 2019

^[1] CDD Report on Nigerian Women performance during the Post-Mortem of 2019 General Elections Conference June 26, 2019 at Transcorp Hilton, Abuja-Nigeria.

³ <https://www.thecable.ng/2023-and-the-nigerian-youths>

basket for two consecutive general elections (2011 and 2015). The initiative helped to lay the foundation for a credible, free and fair elections and changed the dominant narrative and/or perception of election fraudulence that previously pervaded the democratic space in Nigeria. It helped to provide funds to finance pre-election activities and embark on credible electoral reforms. It equally assisted to support INEC formulate critical electoral tools and instruments, women participation in politics and election, civic and civil society participation in election, CSOs to embark on civic campaigns and voter education amongst others.

Key partners

1. **Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC):** INEC is the primary electoral management body (EMB) in Nigeria. This assistance will be deployed to enrich its mandate. INEC will be lead partner to implement Activity 4.
2. **Yiaga Africa:** Yiaga Africa is one of the leading Nigeria's civil society organizations committed to advancing democratic governance in the country. It has been playing a leading role in youth empowerment and mobilization for political participation, transparency and accountability. Yiaga Africa will be partnering with UNDP to implement Activities 2, 3 & 5.
3. **Channels Television:** Channels Television is a foremost national television in Nigeria. UNDP Nigeria has a strategic partnership agreement with Channels Television to promote public engagement on development issues facing Nigeria with the aim of finding durable people-centred solutions.

OVERALL PURPOSE AND EXPECTED OUTPUT

The overall purpose of this PIP is to catalyse the design of assistance to inclusive and credible elections and democratic process programme in the context of the Nigeria 2023 general elections. The project aims to expand youth and women participation in politics and elections in Nigeria through mass voter registration and participation in political parties' programmes. This will help the youth and women to influence decision-making process in party politics and ensure that youth and women occupy strategic political offices (elective and appointive) at national and subnational levels, thereby creating employment for them. This objective compliments UNDP's ongoing programme aiming to reduce the rate of youth and women unemployment in Nigeria, including the Nigeria Jubilee Fellows Programme. This intervention will equally help to reduce high rate of insecurity, booster peaceful co-existence and political harmony. The project also aims to mobilize further resources from development partners.

More specifically, implementation of this PIP will contribute to the following **specific outputs**:

1. UNDP Nigeria's capacity to mobilize additional resources from development partners to support youth and women participation in governance and elections strengthened.
2. Improved transparency and accountability in elections results in increased youth and women participation in governance and democracy.
3. Compilation of key election data and indicators at national and subnational levels visualized and monitored through a digital platform.

Three main activities will be undertaken within this PIP:

Activity 1: Support the electoral Needs Assessment Mission to Nigeria (NAM), mobilize additional resources and consolidate the project

- a. Support the electoral Needs Assessment Mission to Nigeria (NAM) in terms of logistics, planning and organizational assistance.
- b. Establish the NAM programme with key national, regional and international election stakeholders and organize the meetings.
- c. Mobilize resources and raise further funds to enrich the project, including through the contracting of an international expert consultant.
- d. Draft a comprehensive and acceptable project document to support inclusive, credible and transparent elections and democratic processes in view of the 2023 general elections.

Activity 2: Support youth and women voter registration in states with low voter registration.

- a. Produce radio and television jingles and advertisements targeting youth and women in selected states.
- b. Place and air radio and television jingles and advertisements.

- c. Identify and engage youth/artiste superstars to mobilize youth and women for voter registration exercise.
- d. Monitor and document youth and women turnout in the selected states.
- e. Produce activity report.
- f. Work with Yiaga Africa and Channels TV as implementing partners to effectively support youth and women voter registration.

Activity 3: Organize television/townhall debates for political office holders, especially the presidential, vice presidential, governorship and deputy governorship aspirants in selected states starting with Ekiti and Osun to assist voters to make an informed decision.

- a. Identify and engage media house(s) to arrange event.
- b. Develop programme contents.
- c. Create publicity and awareness around the debates through electronic and social media.
- d. Hold a briefing session for the television programme anchor(s) and journalists on the public debates and townhall sessions.
- e. Organize, at least, 20 television debates for presidential and state governorship aspirants (in state with low voter turnout).
- f. Organize, at least, 20 television debates for vice presidential and state deputy governorship aspirants (in states with low voter turnout).
- g. Conduct, at least, 30 townhall meetings for National Assembly political aspirants (in states with low voter turnout) and FCT.
- h. Produce activity report.
- i. Work with Yiaga Africa and Channels TV, as well as the Ekiti and Osun state governments to organize effective television debates and voters' sensitization.

Activity 4: Strengthen INEC's institutional and professional capacities (in areas not supported by other development actors) to deliver on its mandate.

- a. Provide technical assistance to INEC.
- b. Support INEC to organize regular stakeholders/citizens' engagements and dialogues.
- c. Support publicity, awareness and sensitization of INEC's programmes and activities, such as, printing and dissemination of extracts of the new Electoral Act, collection of voter's cards, new polling units, etc., through media.
- d. Conduct BRIDGE training for INEC staff.
- e. Produce activity report.
- f. Work closely with INEC as key implementing partner.

Activity 5: Develop a digital dashboard to host key election data and indicators at the national and subnational levels.

- a. Research and collate relevant existing datasets and sources disaggregated by key demographics (age, gender, etc.) to be incorporated into the election monitoring platform.
- b. Data collection including rapid citizen polls and missing or incomplete key variables at national and subnational levels in close partnership with INEC.
- c. Design, develop and release digital platform to visualize and monitor key election variables and indicators.
- d. Publish digital platform for citizen's use.
- e. Work with INEC, Channels TV and Yiaga Africa as implementing partners to develop an effective digital dashboard.

II. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

The project will be implemented by UNDP under UNDP's Direct Implementation Modality (DIM) in close collaboration with the designated counterparts in the targeted states. The project will be implemented under direct supervision of the UNDP Deputy Resident Representative – Programme and overall guidance of the UNDP Nigeria Resident Representative while the Governance, Peace and Security Team Lead will oversee the day to day implementation of this PIP. UNDP PMSU will provide quality assurance and monitoring support of the PIP pending.

III. MONITORING

UNDP Regular Monitoring procedures will be applied to ensure effective monitoring of the PIP. PMSU will provide quality assurance support while UNDP Focal Point of the Project will be responsible for the production of regular briefing and progress reports.

IV. ANNUAL WORK PLAN

Period⁴: Mar 17, 2022 to Dec 31, 2022

EXPECTED OUTPUTS <i>And baseline, indicators including annual targets</i>	PLANNED ACTIVITIES <i>List activity results and associated actions</i>	TIMEFRAME				RESPONSIBLE PARTY	PLANNED BUDGET		
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		Funding Source	Budget Description	Amount (\$)
1. UNDP Nigeria's capacity to mobilize additional resources from development partners to support youth and women participation in governance and elections strengthened. Baseline: 2,500,000 Targets:	1. Support the electoral Needs Assessment Mission to Nigeria (NAM), mobilize additional resources and consolidate the project	X	X	X		UNDP	UNDP	NAM (travels, meetings, logistics) Consultancy fee	300,000

⁴ Maximum 18 months

2. Improved transparency and accountability in elections results in increased youth and women participation in governance and democracy. Baseline: 51.11% (registered); 46.3% (voted) - 2019 Targets: 70% (registered); 60% (voted). Indicator: % of youth and women registered and voted in the 2023 elections	2. Support youth and women voter registration in states with low voter registration. 3. Organize television/townhall debates for political office holders, especially the presidential, vice presidential, governorship and deputy governorship aspirants in selected states starting with Ekiti and Osun to assist voters to make an informed decision. 4. Strengthen INEC's institutional and professional capacities (in areas not supported by other development actors) to deliver on its mandate.	X	X	X	X	UNDP			1,800,000
3. Compilation of key election data and indicators at national and subnational levels visualized and monitored through a digital platform. Baseline: 0 Targets: 1 Indicator: A digital public dashboard on elections in place (the dashboard will contain up to date administrative and survey	5. Develop a digital dashboard to host key election data and indicators at the national and subnational levels.				X				400,000

<i>data on elections at national and subnational levels).</i>															
TOTAL														2,500,000	