Observing Nigeria's elections in real time



CASE 2019 REPORT

CONTENT AGGREGATION SYSTEM FOR ELECTIONS





1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Yar'Adua Foundation's initiative to improve the inclusiveness, conduct and perception of Nigeria's 2019 elections was designed to strengthen the democratic character of Nigerian political processes and provide support to key electoral stakeholders, relevant arms of government and civil society organizations.

Technical assistance improved the responsiveness of security agencies and INEC to incidents as they occurred. Building on the Content Aggregation System for Elections (CASE) developed in 2015, technology and process support enhanced collaboration among civil society organizations, improving the effectiveness of their efforts and the quality of their reports.

Deployment planning and coordination support was provided to CSO partners to ensure that 2019 election observation was inclusive of women and youth. Over 40% of election observers submitting reports to the platform were female. The Foundation also ensured sufficient inclusion of young people; over 70% of registered observers on the CASE platform were between the ages of 18-35.

The Foundation developed a web-based platform for INEC to facilitate on-line registration and accreditation of observers for the 2019 elections. Integrated with the INEC voter database, the platform eliminated the need to gather and process thousands of paper-based forms and passport photographs from prospective observers – increasing the number of applications INEC successfully processed in preparation for the elections.



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2 BACKGROUND

In Nigeria, elections have too often been a sour point of our democracy. Incidences of fraud, rigging, vote-buying and blatant results manipulation have undermined the credibility of this important process, resulting in low public confidence in the outcome. If Nigeria's young democracy is to be sustained, openness, transparency and credibility must be institutionalized as part of the culture of electoral processes.

In 2015, the Yar'Adua Foundation developed the Content Aggregation System for Elections (CASE 2015) as a pioneer platform for multi-stakeholder collaboration in sharing election observation information. The platform retrieved more than 2.6 million microreports from social media and received over 11,000 reports from registered observers in the field. These reports enabled volunteers to identify 1,542 critical incidents that were escalated to INEC and relevant security agencies in a timely manner.

The impact of CASE on the 2015 elections demonstrated that the collaborative use of technology by a community of election stakeholders holds great promise for improving the scope and quality of information available to stakeholders during and after elections.

The CASE 2019 election project was subsequently designed to deepen and sustain the successes of CASE 2015 by supporting CSOs to improve their capacity to carry out inclusive and non-partisan election observation, supporting INEC to improve its observer accreditation process and its engagement and responsiveness to citizens – especially young voters and supporting security agencies to respond to election incident reports in a timely and effective manner.

3 PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

OBJECTIVES

Improve participation, conduct and perception of the 2019 elections by:

- Contributing to enhancement of inclusive and non-partisan election observation
- Supporting INEC to improve engagement and responsiveness to citizens especially young voters
- Supporting INEC to improve its observer accreditation process

Project Partners

Civil Society

Fourteen CSO deployment partners used CASE 2019 as their primary reporting tool to observe the general elections:

- CLEEN Foundation
- Federation of Muslim Women's Associations in Nigeria (FOMWAN)
- Stakeholder Democracy Network (SDN)
- Caritas Gboko
- Youth Alive Foundation (YAF)
- YIAGA
- Neem Foundation
- Initiative for Credible Electons (ICE)
- Partners West Africa Nigeria (PWAN)
- Network for Community Advancement and Empowerment (NCAE)
- Conscience for Human Rights and Conflict Resolution (CHRCR)
- Centre for Women and Adolescents Education (CWAE)
- Youth Adolescents Reflection and Action Centre (YARAC)
- Alliances for Africa (AfA)

INEC

Technology support was provided to the following INEC departments:

- **Elections and Party Monitoring Department (EPM)** to develop an online platform for observer accreditation to help eliminate the accreditation process bottleneck that prevented thousands of election observers from being accredited in 2015.
- Voter Education and Publicity Department (VEP) to develop prototypes for an improved mobile app that allows voters to access personalized election services and enables direct engagement with INEC to drive increased enthusiasm among young voters.

Office of the National Security Adviser

The Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA) collaborated on incident management for the 2019 election using the CASE platform. ONSA subsequently nominated representatives to be trained and registered on the platform as responders to election security incidents.

4 COORDINATION AND PLANNING

To ensure that election observation was inclusive (particularly with respect to participation of women and youth) and strategic (with adequate coverage of rural/vulnerable areas), the Foundation developed a deployment plan and provided coordination support to CSO partners throughout the project.

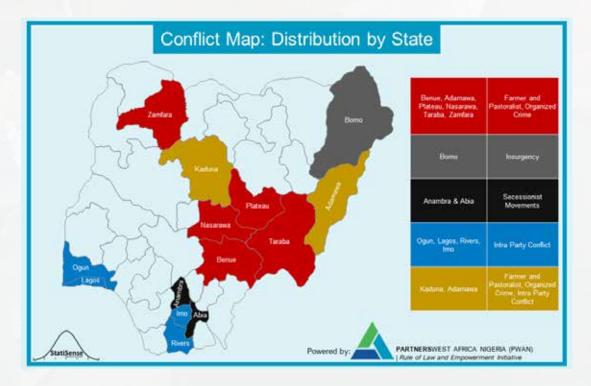
This included support for:

- 1. Identification of election hotspots
- 2. Strategic, collaborative deployment planning
- 3. Observer recruitment and training
- 4. INEC observer accreditation
- 5. Observer registration through CASE 2019 platform

IDENTIFICATION OF HOTSPOTS

The services of a Security Analyst were engaged to identify and map areas vulnerable to election violence and malpractice and develop a strategic deployment plan that ensured adequate observer coverage.

The assessment focused on the risks of violence in the context of responses by security agencies and identified mitigating factors that could reduce the potential risk of electoral violence in the country. The deployment plan and coverage strategy ensured adequate flexibility to redeploy in response to emerging threats and proposed mitigation strategies.





COORDINATION ROUNDTABLES

A series of coordination roundtables held with representatives of civil society organizations, international development partners, INEC and security sector consultants.



Participants at the November 23, 2018 Roundtable Meeting

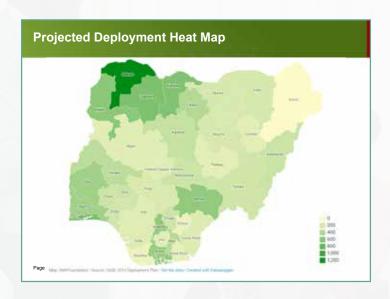
	OBJECTIVES
September 25, 2018	 Secure commitments from CSOs for collaboration around information gathering, observer coverage and technology tools during the 2019 elections
November 23, 2018	 Solicit feedback from CSOs on Framework and Strategies Document and secure commitments for inclusive and effective coverage of polling areas, especially locations vulnerable to electoral malpractice or violence Introduce INEC web-based observer registration and
	 accreditation platform and ensure CSO participation Review processes, protocols and interfaces for CSO liaison with INEC and Security Agencies
February 5, 2019	 Facilitate collaboration, coordination and synergy around observer deployment and information sharing
April 11, 2019	 Review performance of 2019 elections and share lessons learned

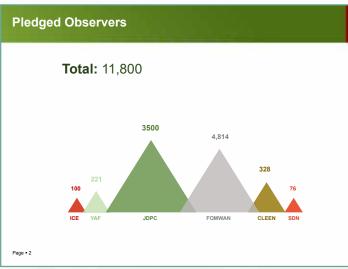


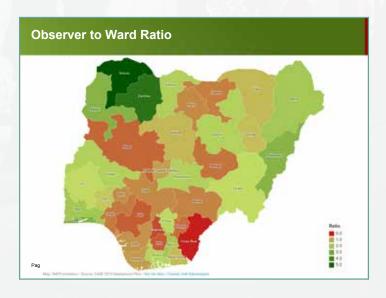
OBSERVER DEPLOYMENT

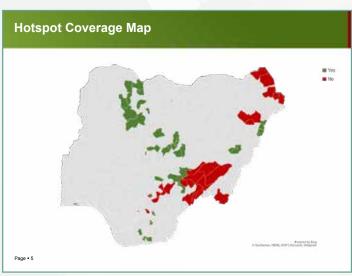
Deployment partners nominated a cumulative 11,800 observers to participate in CASE 2019 election reporting but only 3,581 were registered on the platform. Registered observers were assigned to wards and polling units in line with the coverage and deployment strategy.

Observers were whitelisted before they were able to file reports to the platform.











TRAINING

Three training sessions were held in Lagos, Port Harcourt and Abuja to increase CSO capacity to conduct effective, technology-enabled election observation using CASE 2019. A total of 113 lead trainers representing seven Civil Society Organizations across the country participated . Fifty-one percent (51%) of participants were female.

Training ensured that lead trainers possessed adequate knowledge of CASE processes and reporting tools to enable them to step-down training to field observers. A simulation process was integrated into the training framework to enable trainees to report on scripted scenarios. Simulations provided an opportunity to evaluate real-time responses in order to identify and bridge training gaps prior to step-down training for field observers.

Training Manual

The Foundation developed a manual containing information and guidelines for using CASE 2019 reporting tools (Mobile app and SMS), an observation schedule, reporting process and security protocols.

CASE 2019

Content Aggregation System for Elections
Training Manual



Shehu Musa Yar'Adua Foundation December 2018



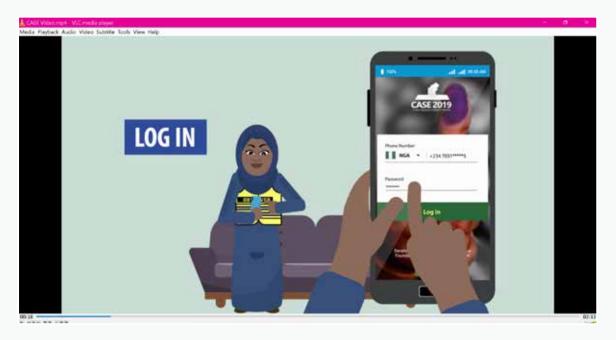


Field Guide

A field guide was created as a reference tool to guide observers on the use of CASE 2019 reporting tools (Mobile app and SMS reporting) on election day. The guide features an election day timeline which illustrates an ideal election schedule and processes for observation reporting. It also includes a description of observer forms, SMS codes and incidents which must be reported when observed. 10,000 field guides were printed and distributed to lead trainers following training sessions.

Training Video

A training video was produced to provide end users with instructions for reporting via the Mobile app and SMS codes. The video also provided a brief for the process timeline of election day activities to serve as a guide for field observers to file reports. The video can be accessed at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lbdebmd0Qvq





Training Sessions

DATE	VENUE
December 3, 2018	Ibis Hotel, Ikeja, Lagos
December 7, 2018	Swiss International Mabisel Hotel Trans Amadi, Port Harcourt
December 10, 2018	Shehu Musa Yar'Adua Centre, Abuja

Participation

Three Sessions	Highlights
Lagos - 19 participants	Participants extremely receptive
Port Harcourt - 38 participants	Participants found field guides and video engaging
Abuja - 55 participants	SMS reporting significantly improved since 2015

Civil Society Organizations

Lead Trainers
Trained

98.8% of Participants found CASE 2019 useful

51% of Participants were Female

Training Locations	Attendance			Number of States Represented
	Male	Female	Total	
Abuja	27	28	55	17
Port Harcourt	22	17	39	10
Lagos	6	13	19	8
Grand Total	55	58	113	35

Partner Organizations	Participants
CLEEN Foundation	5
 Federation of Muslim Women Associations in Nigeria (FOMWAN) 	25
Initiative for Credible Elections (ICE)	7
Justice Development and Peace Commission (JDPC)	58
Nigerian Women's Trust Fund (NWTF)	1
Stakeholder Democracy Network (SDN)	7
Youth Alive Foundation (YAF)	7
Total	113

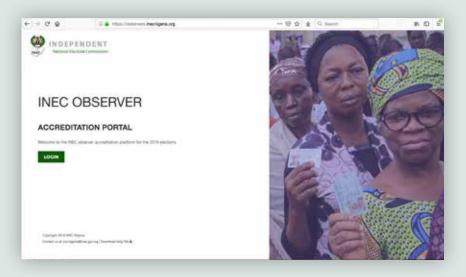
Training Outcomes

- Participant feedback was useful in bridging system gaps identified during training sessions prior to deployment of CASE for the 2019 elections.
- All participants improved their understanding of the CASE election observation process and roles on election day.
- The SMS reporting tool was a big win. Participants indicated that the mobile app was easy to use, but they showed more interest in using the SMS reporting tool. This is in consideration of limited network connectivity in most locations across the country on election day. They also indicated that SMS reporting was a more discreet option for reporting incidents on election day.

5 TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT FOR INEC

INEC Observer Accreditation Platform

An online observer accreditation portal (http://observers.inecnigeria.org) was developed for INEC to facilitate online registration and accreditation of observers for the 2019 elections. Integrated with the INEC voter database, the platform eliminated the need to gather and process thousands of paper-based forms and passport photographs from prospective observers – greatly improving the number of applications INEC can successfully process in preparation for elections.



Homepage - INEC Observer Accreditation Portal

Adoption

The INEC Elections and Party Monitoring Committee (EPM) adopted the portal for use during the 2019 elections and included the portal in its newspaper and online advertisement inviting civil society groups to apply for accreditation to observe the 2019 general elections.

INEC December 25-27, 2018

INDEPENDENT NATIONAL ELECTORAL COMMISSION Plot 436, Zambezi Crescent, Maitama District, P.M.B 0184, Abuja

2019 GENERAL ELECTIONS: APPLICATION FOR ACCREDITATION AS DOMESTIC OR FOREIGN ELECTION OBSERVERS

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) hereby invites registered Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and other interested Stakeholders, whose activities are focused on Democracy, Governance and Elections and who wish to observe the 2019 General Elections scheduled to hold on 16th February 2019 and 2nd March, 2019 to apply for

Election observation supports the quest for greater transparency towards enhancing the credibility of elections. Therefore, setting criteria for the accreditation of observers is aimed at allowing credible external state of the conduct of particular elections. Towards this end, it is imperative to ensure election Observers singularly or collectively, have no interest other than to see improvements in the electoral processes and procedures.

Therefore, only organizations whose mandate is relevant to the work of INEC will be considered for accreditation while organizations with history of partisanship or the promotion of ethnic and religious bigotry will not be considered.

MODE OF APPLICATION

Interested Observer groups are to visit the URC(http://www.inecnigeria.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12 INECEPHC-01-FORM/pgh.to download and complete the application form EG-14-A(2) and submit it along with other required documents to Election and Party Monitoring Department, INEC Headquarters, Maitama, Abuja.

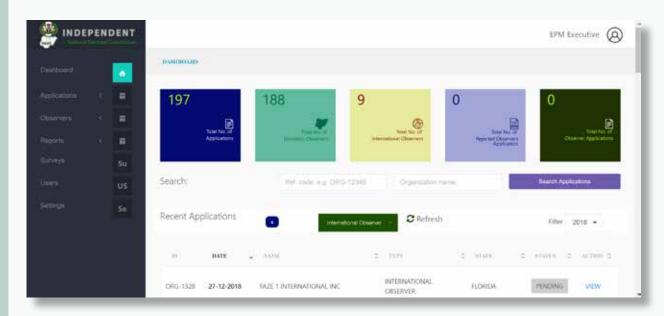
Alternatively, applications can be completed online, (http://observers.inecnigeria.org) attaching all the required documents. Observer groups should, particularly, note that all information including relevance of the organization's mandate to the functions of INEC, legal status, office location and address, source of fund, Federal Inland Revenue Service (Medium Tax Office) Certificate for NGOs, evidence of past election observation as well as evidence of registration with the Civil Society Division at INEC Headquarters, Abuja are attached to the applications.

The submitted application forms will be reviewed, assessed and scored based on the documentation submitted with the application forms.

All observer groups will be contacted after assessment, and the status of their applications will be revealed – either successful or rejected.

The list of all successful observer groups will subsequently be published in National Newspapers and on the Commission's website at the close of the period for receipt of application(s).

Four EPM and three ICT staff were trained to manage the online observer accreditation portal.



Admin Dashboard - INEC Observer Accreditation Portal

Total Number of Applications	65
Domestic Group Applications	56
International Group Applications	9
Number of Approved Applications	11

MyINEC App Redesign

A Hackathon for collaborative design of new features for the MyINEC mobile app held on September 13, 2018. Twenty-five young technology enthusiasts contributed ideas for features and interfaces to make the mobile app appealing and useful to young voters. Representatives from INEC, software programmers and mobile app developers participated.

A host of features and functionalities were suggested by participants. Most validated initial design decisions made by the Foundation and its technology partner. Additional features incorporated in the app design included:

- Badges for user participation
- INEC Recruitment
- INEC performance rating
- Integration with Voter Identification Number (VIN) database
- Forum and comment section
- Scheduling of INEC biometric registration

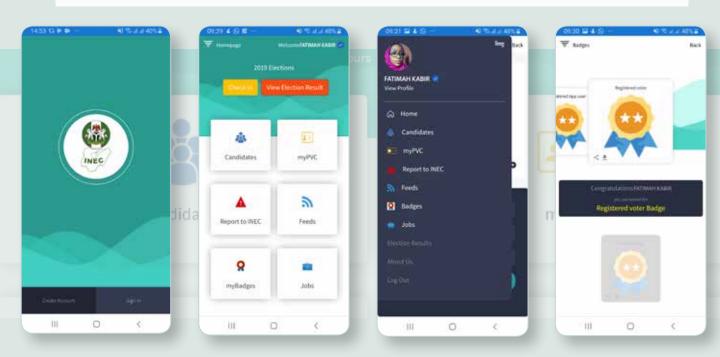
- Filtered candidate profiles
- Endorse a candidate
- Candidate performance rating
- GPS directions to user's polling unit
- Push notifications
- Voter education
- Personalised newsfeed
- Comprehensive election information

Following the Hackathon, the Foundation developed an upgraded version of the MyINEC app, including personalised content and features designed to appeal to young voters and improve responsiveness, service delivery and civic engagement.



Features

- Information regarding PVC distribution and tracking (e.g. track PVC, lost PVC, re-issue PVC)
- Initiation of changes to existing voter registration (e.g. change location/polling unit information)
- Aggregation and presentation of content based on relevance to the voter:
 - > Civic education
 - > Candidate profiles
 - > News feeds
 - > INEC alerts and notifications
- Employment opportunities
- Participation badges for various categories of end-users
- Social media integration
- Support for Android and IOS smartphones
- Support for web-based access



MyINEC Mobile App

6 TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

Content Aggregation System for Elections (CASE)

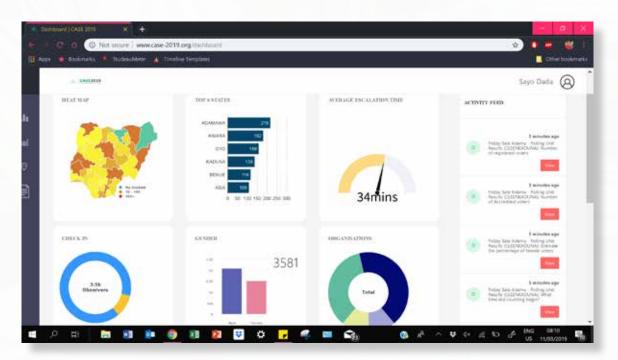
CASE is an open-source, multi-stakeholder technology platform developed by the Yar'Adua Foundation to facilitate real-time reporting and incident escalation to INEC and security agencies. The platform is comprised of a mobile app and SMS codes to send reports, social media aggregation software and a visualization platform for analysis.

Fourteen civil society partners nominated 3,581 field observers to be registered on the CASE 2019 platform. During the general elections, 1,073 of these observers filed approximately 52,000 real time reports. The Nigerian Civil Society Situation Room collaborated with the Yar'Adua Foundation for social media promotion and incident verification.

Civil Society
Partners

3,581
Field observers nominated

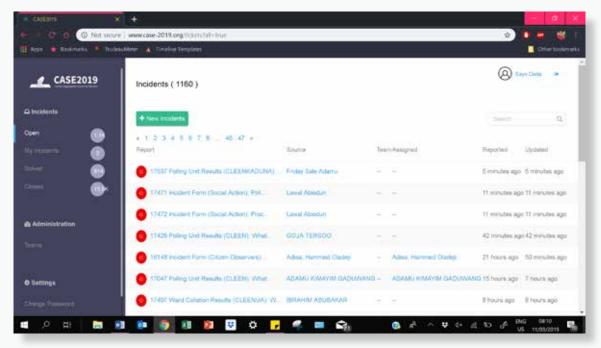
52,000Real time reports



CASE Visualization Platform

Features include:

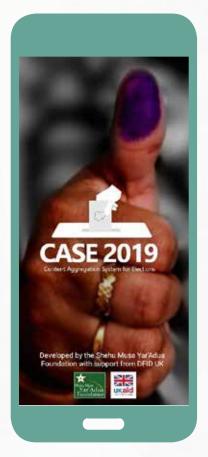
- **Visualization Dashboard:** Overview of information regarding incident management and observer activity on the platform.
 - > Heat Map
 - > Incident Chart
 - > Average Escalation Time
 - > Live Activity Feed
 - > Observer Turnout
 - > Observer Gender
 - > Organizations Reporting
- Incident Management Module: Allows users to create, manage and assign incidents to relevant team members. Incidents were also assigned to field observers for verification via the mobile app. Verified incidents were escalated to INEC and security agencies who accessed the platform through admin accounts.

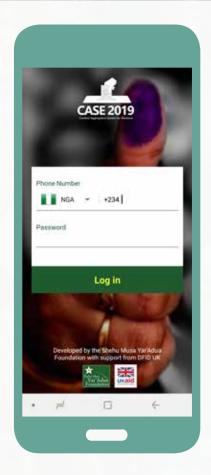


CASE Visualization Platform

- **User Management Module:** Provided functionality for user creation and management by CSO partners and administrators. Members of the Social Media Tracking Centre (SMTC) Relevance, Veracity and Escalation teams interacted with the backend through this module.
- **Aggie:** The social media component of the CASE platform aggregated 83,672 unique reports from social media sources and online feeds. Aggie provided functionality for the relevance team to create incidents from social media reports.

The CASE visualization platform can be accessed at https://www.case-2019.org/





CASE 2019 Mobile App



CASE 2019 MOBILE APP

An upgraded version of the CASE mobile app was developed and deployed to the Google Play Store. A user-centred design approach was employed to ensure app interfaces and features were intuitive and user-friendly. As a result, end users required minimal assistance to operate the CASE 2019 mobile app. New features include:

- Personalised user experience: Users received alerts relevant to their assignment or organization.
- New inbox feature: Real time status updates on incident reported by user
- Simplified forms: Easier and faster reporting of incidents

The CASE mobile app is available at:

- https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.case2019&hl=en
- https://case-2019.org/Case2019.apk



7 ELECTION DAY

Social Media Tracking Centre

The social media tracking centre facilitated real time management and escalation of reports from civil society and citizen observers deployed across the country on election days. CASE went live at 7.00am on Saturday, February 23, 2019 for the Presidential and National Assembly elections. The platform was similarly deployed during Governorship and State House of Assembly elections on Saturday, March 9, 2019.



Zainab Iliyasu, Tayiwa Koji, Sayo Samuel-Dada Yar'Adua Foundation



Amara Nwankpa with Usman Bugaje



Ademola Adewuyi, CLEEN Foundation with Kudirat Ali Hakeem, FOMWAN



Aubrey McCutcheon, NDI and Antonette Grant, DfID



Incident Management Process

Relevance Team

Filtered incoming reports using AGGIE software, reviewed social media reports in real time and assigned incidents to the veracity team.

Veracity Team

Contacted field observers stationed in proximity to reported incidents to confirm if the incident had occurred as reported.

Escalation Team

Coordinated with external stakeholders, including the Civil Society Situation Room, INEC and the ONSA Crisis Center to ensure that confirmed incidents originating from both social media and field observers were responded to in a timely manner.

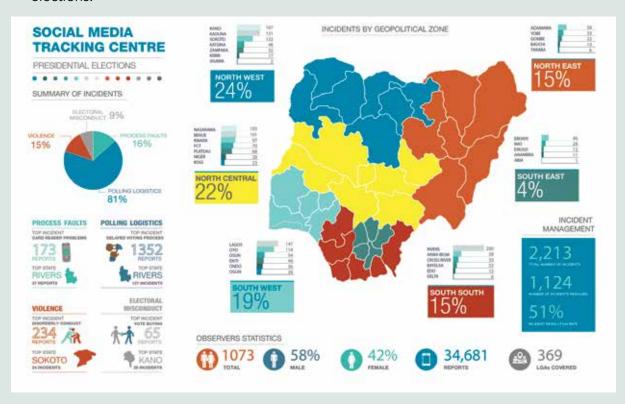
INEC Situation Room and ONSA Crisis Centre

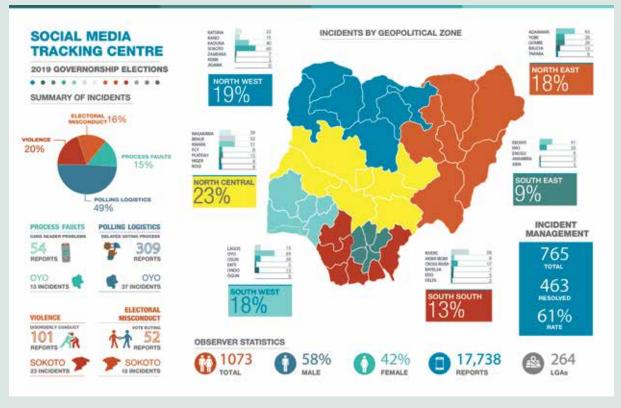
The ONSA Crisis Centre and INEC Situation Room adopted the CASE 2019 platform to receive and respond to security threats and process faults. The platform improved the capacity of security agencies and INEC to effectively respond to incidents in real-time.

65% of 2,900 unique incidents reported on election days were resolved by the Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA) Crisis Centre and the INEC Situation Room in real time. ONSA commended the Yar'Adua Foundation for its significant contribution to the ONSA Crisis Centre during the 2019 elections.

8 OUTPUTS

CASE 2019 retrieved over 52,000 structured reports from 1,073 trained observers in 369 local government areas and 83,000 unique social media reports during the presidential elections.





9 POST ELECTION ASSESSMENT

The Foundation hosted a roundtable on April 11, 2019 to review the performance of the 2019 elections and share lessons learned.

Reports from international and domestic election observers concluded that the 2019 elections fell below the threshold for free, fair and transparent elections. The election was marred by violence, security lapses, results manipulation by compromised INEC officials and interference by partisan security operatives. In a significant number of locations guidelines for accreditation and voting were not followed.



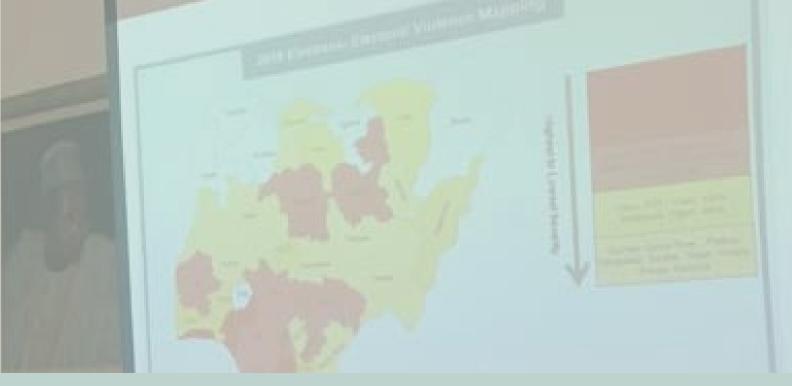
Professor Kuna with a representative of JDPC Sokoto



Amara Nwankpa with a representative of Caritas Gboko

Lessons Learned

- There is no incentive for political class to drive electoral reform.
- Election outcomes could potentially improve if more resources are channelled to preelection activities rather than election day.
- Collaboration between CSOs is fundamental to the success of Nigeria's elections. The inability of CSOs to collaborate and coordinate is embarrassing.
- CSOs need partnerships beyond the civic space. CSOs can only pressure government to do what is right. They do not have power to force the political class to conform.
- CSOs and the international community demonstrate a strong prefernce for stability over credibility when it comes to questioning election outcomes. This is very much a part of the problem.
- Development partners hug headlines, creating division and making it impossible for CSOs to work together.
- We should never have to doubt where INEC stands. In 2019 however, there was cause to doubt INEC's neutrality.
- CSOs need to understand the constituency we represent. Poverty is a critical factor that makes people sell their votes.
- INEC is only one of many election stakeholders. Other elections stakeholders need to be held accountable for their actions.
- Nigeria's elections are too expensive.
- There is need for an independent and transparent post-election audit.
- CSOs must work together to review and advocate for required electoral reform in preparation for 2023.





Mrs. Kemi Okenyodo, Security Analyst Partners West Africa-Nigeria



Udo Jude Ilo, OSIWA

Roundtable Recommendations

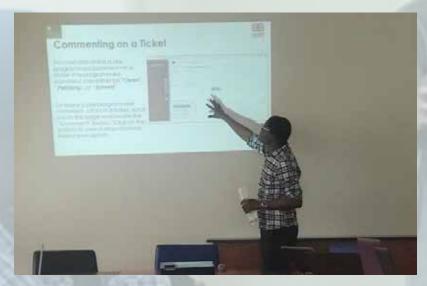
- INEC must reduce the risk of results manipulation during collation by transmitting and publishing vote totals directly from polling units.
- Parties must improve their internal democracy. New, strategic approaches are required to reform Nigeria's political culture.
- Political leaders must inspire faith by implementing the Electoral Act that governs the conduct of elections.
- Collective action, driven by evidence-based advocacy, is critical in order to redress Nigeria's imperilled democracy.
- INEC should be more transparent in their actions and appointments of ad-hoc staff, security agencies and observers.
- INEC should hold individuals accountable for each role and make the information available to the public.
- INEC and security agencies should take responsibility for the poor outcome of the elections, not just politicians.
- INEC should improve the effectiveness of card readers.
- Campaign messages by political parties should promote peace.

10 TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER

The Yar'Adua Foundation hosted a two-day technology transfer workshop to build the capacity of CSO partners to institutionalize and domicile the use of CASE technology within their organizations. Nominated representatives were taught how to design technology-driven data gathering projects. The workshop also provided practical instruction to enable them to independently deploy the CASE platform and use it to monitor off-cycle elections and other governance processes.



Tayiwa Koji, Yar'Adua Foundation



Tochukwu Okorie, VaultNoir Limited

11 OUTCOMES

CASE 2019

- CASE 2019 is an effective open-source platform for election incident management in Nigeria. The platform provided election stakeholders with information about the progress of elections in real time, facilitating the escalation of 2,978 incident reports from field observers as they occurred.
- The platform improved the capacity of security agencies and INEC to effectively respond to incidents in real-time. The ONSA Crisis Centre and INEC Situation Room adopted the CASE 2019 platform to receive and respond to security threats and process faults. ONSA and INEC resolved 65% of escalated incidents.
- ONSA commended the Yar'Adua Foundation for its significant contribution to the ONSA Crisis Centre during the 2019 elections.
- Nigeria's civil society has increased its capacity to conduct technology-enabled election observation as a result of training for 113 lead trainers from seven civil society organizations to adopt CASE 2019 technology. 98.8% of participants considered the platform and its components user-friendly and useful to their election observation initiatives.
- Strategic deployment planning improved recruitment and participation of women and youth in technology-enabled non-partisan election observation.
- The initiative established improved processes for CSO liaison with INEC and security agencies for incident resolution and election administration.

INEC

- Deployment of the Observer Accreditation Platform gives INEC the capacity to receive and process applications for accreditation electronically.
- INEC has the capacity to improve its observer accreditation process through the use of the online accreditation portal thereby improving election administration.
- A redesign of the MyINEC mobile app has the potential to improve INEC responsiveness, service delivery and voter engagement.

12 CONCLUSIONS

Challenges

- The delay in receipt of project funds introduced challenges and constraints in the development of technology elements.
- The Foundation experienced resistance from the INEC Voter Education and Publicity Department which prevented the deployment of the upgraded MyINEC App before the elections.
- A number of CSO partners experienced funding challenges. This affected the deployment capacity of observer groups who used CASE for observation reporting.
- A principal deployment partner, JDPC, with its compliment of 3,500 observers, decided at the last minute to report directly to the civil society situation room who provided stipends for pledged observers.

Lessons Learned

INEC and Security Agencies

- Collaboration with INEC is possible when champions within INEC drive efforts.
- Beyond buy-in from the Chairman's office, securing buy in of INEC's internal departments is critical to the success of capacity building initiatives
- Collaboration with INEC and security agencies was essential to the success of the project.
- Key processes around election management can be automated to improve efficiency and effectiveness. A single incident management platform shared by all election stakeholders can improve incident resolution by security agencies and INEC.

Civil Society

- CASE 2019 created historical information that can inform future election observation.
- CSOs are willing to collaborate with INEC and security agencies, especially in the area of inclusiveness and enhanced participation.
- Effective deployment planning can improve strategic coverage of areas prone to election violence and malpractice.
- Deliberate action can improve inclusiveness and participation of women and youth in election observation.

Recommendations

Civil Society

- Institutionalize real time incident management technology as part of election observation.
- Observer deployment planning should include strategic objectives for youth and women inclusion as well as coverage of vulnerable and rural areas.

International Development Partners

- International development partners can do more to encourage collaboration among CSOs observing elections in Nigeria.
- Improved information sharing among international development partners regarding funding activities can reduce overlaps and improve CSO synergy.

INEC

- INEC should be more open, transparent and accountable.
- INEC's leadership should ensure that departments support each other, rather than working in silos.

Security Agencies

Security and law enforcement agencies need to sustain collaboration with CSO groups around election incident management.

