



Funded by the European Union

European Union Support to Democratic Governance in Nigeria (EU-SDGN) Phase II

Component 6

Support for Civil Society Organizations Programme Profile

Overview

The European Union Support to Democratic Governance in Nigeria (EU-SDGN) is the EU's flagship democracy support programme in Nigeria. The programme is designed to complement the efforts of the Nigerian government to improve and strengthen democracy.

Background

Nigeria has held six consecutive General Elections since 1999, with varied outcomes. The 1999 and 2003 elections were flawed, and the 2007 election fell far short of international and regional standards for democratic elections, leading to condemnation. The 2011 and 2015 elections showed strong improvement due to large-scale reforms by the Independent

National Electoral Commission (INEC). However, the elections of 2019 and 2023 were viewed as missed opportunities to consolidate the gains made in 2011 and 2015. Nigeria's ability to play a positive role in governance, security, and stability in the West Africa sub-region and the African continent depends on the unity, representativeness, and health of its democracy. Improving governance structures, democratic institutions, and increasing the limited participation of the majority of the population, particularly women and youth, in governance and decision-making processes is crucial.

The implementation of the EU-SDGN programme fulfills the EU's continued interest in supporting the process of democratic and electoral reforms in Nigeria, with the aim of enhancing the capacity of the country's national institutions.

Thematic Focus

The EU Support to Democratic Governance in Nigeria (EU-SDGN) is articulated through six components, which are:



Component 1: Support to the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC)



Component 2: Support to the National Assembly and Judiciary



Component 3: Support to Political Parties



Component 4: Support to Media



Component 5: Support to Women, Youth, and Persons with Disabilities



Component 6: Support to Civil Society Organisations

The EU-SDGN programme has a cohort of 16 organizations, each with a specific role and focus within the programme.

Objective

Empower civil society organizations and relevant agencies to demand greater transparency and accountability in the electoral and decision-making processes, and promote increased citizen participation.

Beneficiaries

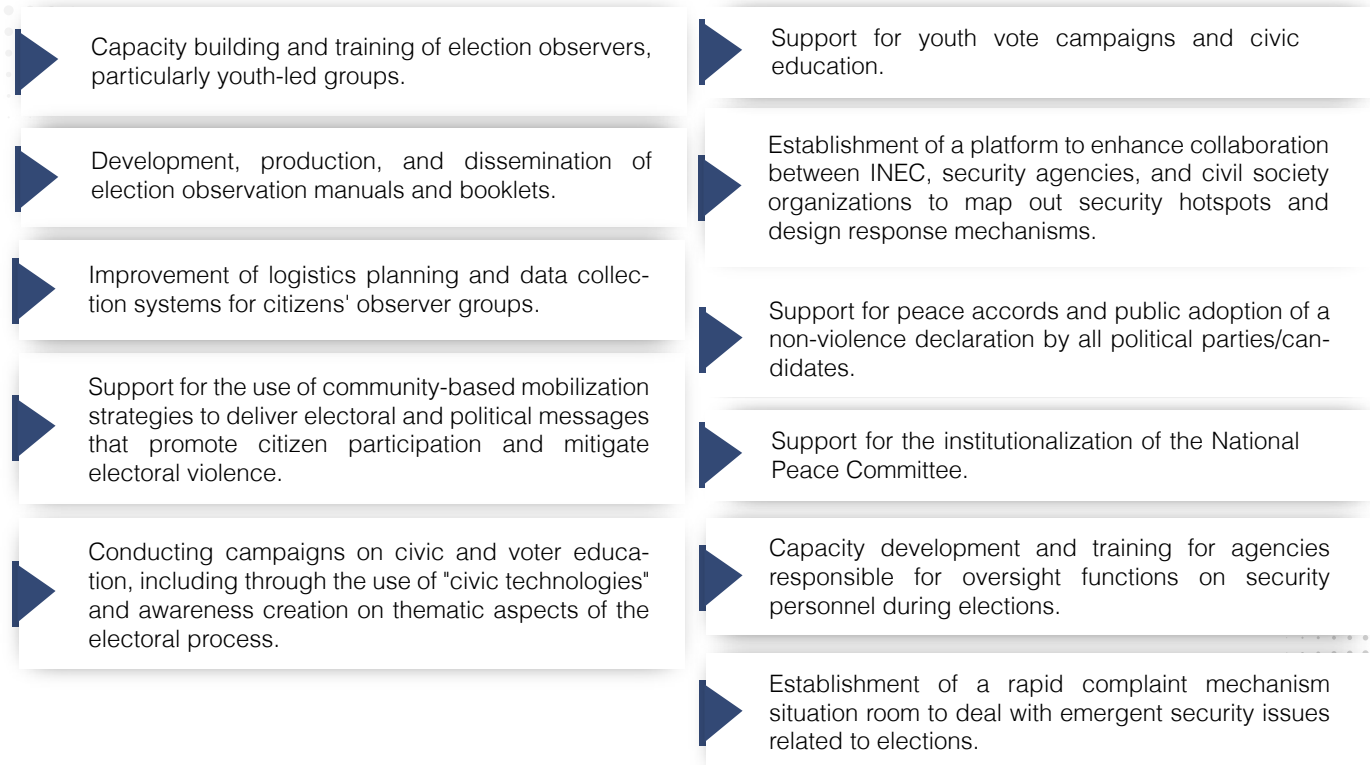
Civil Society Organisations: Non-state actors' engagement is crucial for promoting transparent and peaceful elections in Nigeria. CSOs are active in various areas, including electoral reform, voter education, and promoting transparency, but rely on external resources to sustain their activities. The program aims to deepen engagement with CSOs to promote transparency and accountability throughout the electoral process, as the actions of non-state actors during elections are limited to Election Day observation due to a lack of government funding. The EU EOM report recommends allocating resources directly to grassroots CSOs for better results, and this is in line with NDICI regulations and the Civil Society Roadmap's

need for structured engagements with CSOs to promote democratic consolidation.

National Peace Committee: The National Peace Committee (NPC), consisting of eminent Nigerians led by a former Head of State, employs a mixed methodology to facilitate peace accords at national and subnational levels, resolving political tensions and contributing to peaceful coexistence in Nigeria. The NPC's convening power and influence over leading political actors and stakeholders make it a unique contributor to peace during elections, as evidenced by its successful interventions in the 2015 and 2019 elections. However, challenges such as the perceived partisanship of some members and the need to include younger and women voices require the Committee to review its membership, standard operating procedures, and strengthen the role of the Secretariat to continue effectively addressing political challenges with a sense of national ownership.

Approach

Support will be extended to the beneficiaries across the following areas:



The following outcomes are expected to be achieved through the component:

Support for civil society initiatives to promote a peaceful and non-violent electoral process

Strengthened platforms for civil society engagement with key stakeholders, including state and non-state actors, to promote democratic reforms and monitoring.

Implementing Partners: This component is implemented by seven partners, which include:

- The Kukah Centre
- Justice and Peace Initiative
- Justice, Development & Peace Makers Centre
- Justice, Development and Peace Movement
- SOS Children's Village
- Civil Society Legislative Council of Nigeria
- Corporate Accountability and Public Participation for Africa

IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS