



WEST AFRICA ELECTION OBSERVERS NETWORK (WAEON) NEWSLETTER

Volume 4, Issue 1
(January-March, 2019)

Introduction

WAEON's Newsletter provides news and information on activities undertaken by the Secretariat and Network members in their respective countries. The Newsletter further provides updates on elections and governance issues occurring in West Africa. This first edition for 2019 covers developments which took place between January and March.

WAEON Member Organizations' Activities

National Election Watch (NEW), Sierra Leone

The National Election Watch (NEW) has appointed Mr. Salieu Kamara as its spokesperson. The WAEON Secretariat congratulates Mr. Kamara on this appointment.

Convention De la Société Civile Ivoirienne (CSCI), Ivory Coast

Convention De la Société Civile Ivoirienne (CSCI) held its 5th Ordinary Congress which took place from the January 11 to 12, 2019 in Ivory Coast.

Nearly 300 people participated in the congress. The outcome of the congress was eight (8) general policies that were adopted by CSCI, some of which were:

- The continuation of advocacy to influence public policy to benefit the poorest within the population;
- Enhancing members' capacity;
- Increase visibility and legibility of CSCI activities.

Coalition of Domestic Election Observers, (CODEO)

CODEO publicly released the [Final Observation Report on Ghana's 2016 Presidential and Parliamentary Elections](#)

Elections and Governance News

Ghana: Ayawaso West Wuogon Constituency By-Election.

Due to the passing of the Member of Parliament (MP) for the Ayawaso West Wuogon Constituency in the Greater Accra region a by-election was held on January 31, 2019 to elect a new representative for the constituency. The Coalition of Domestic Election Observers (CODEO) deployed observers for by-election on election day.

CODEO's main observations contained in the [close of polls statement](#) included a low voter turnout, the poor security coordination for the by-election, and the heavy and intimidating security presence at some polling stations observed. The election was also characterized by shooting incident within the constituency which temporarily disrupted the voting process at a nearby polling station.

Following the shooting incident at the Ayawaso West Wuogon Constituency by-election, a Commission of inquiry, and chaired by Justice Emile Short, former Commissioner of Ghana's Human Rights and Administrative Justice and international jurist, was set up by the President of Ghana, Nana Akuffo Addo on February 6, 2019 to investigate the violent incident. The

Short Commission has since concluded its work and submitted the report to the President on March 15, 2019.

Sierra Leone: Tonko Limba- Ward 196 By- elections

On the March 9, 2019, NEW observed the Tonko Limba Chiefdom - Ward 196 re-run by-elections. [NEW's main observations](#) revealed that there were some major irregularities that undermined the election process. Some of these irregularities observed were:

- Multiple persons caught with pre-marked ballots;
- Rejection of several Result Reconciliation Forms; and
- Discrepancies in tally results from several polling stations.

Nfa Conteh was declared the winner for the Tonko Limba Chiefdom- Ward 196 By-Election.

Nigeria General Elections

On February 23, 2019, Nigeria held General Elections, which included the Presidential elections, House of Representative elections and the Senate elections. Results for the two leading contenders were as follows:

- Muhammadu Buhari - 55.60%

- Atiku Abubakar - 41.22%

Voter turn-out was 33%.

The **Transitional Monitoring Group (TMG)**, along with the Human and Environment Developing Agenda, hosted the Election Observation Platform to observe the elections.

TMG deployed 633 non-partisan citizen observers, 33 mobile supervisors and 600 stationary observers. These observers were assigned to polling stations across the 36 States and the Federal Capital Territory.

[Preliminary assessment](#) from the field observers revealed that voter turn-out was encouraging and that the election processes were mostly adhered to in a secure, peaceful and orderly manner.

However, a few challenges were observed:

- Late arrival of election officials
- difficulty with authenticating some registered voters due to malfunctioning smart card readers.
- Attempts to disrupt voting by thugs, people dressed in military/police uniforms and political party agents.
- Voting irregularities, such as unaccredited voters voting, multiple voting, snatching and

burning of election materials and underage voting were observed.

Senegal Presidential Elections

On February 24, 2019, Senegal held Presidential elections with five (5) candidates contesting the election. They included Macky Sall (incumbent President), Idrissaa Seck, Ousmane Sonko, Issa Sall and Madické Niang. Macky Sall was re-elected as the President of Senegal with a majority of the votes cast. The [election results](#) are highlighted below:

- Macky Sall – 58.27%
- Idrissa Seck – 20.50%
- Ousmane Sonko – 15.67%
- Issa Sall – 4.07%
- Madické Niang – 1.48%

The elections were peaceful with no major issues reported. Voter turnout was 66%.

Upcoming Project Activities

WAEON Conference on technology-driven elections and election observation

WAEON with support from the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) is organizing a 2-day conference on the theme “*The Increasing Role of Technology in Election Administration: Implications*”

for election observer groups” in Accra, Ghana from May 13 – 16, 2019.

The Conference is part of activities under the project titled [“Engaging WAEON Members on the Increasing Role of Technology in Election Administration”](#). The conference seeks to stimulate discussions among WAEON members, election experts and election stakeholders in West Africa on the challenges associated with observing technology – driven elections; and to also validate draft guidelines developed to help WAEON member organizations to effectively observe the changing dynamics of technologically-driven elections in their quest to inject credibility and transparency into electoral processes. Details are as follows:

- May 13, 2019 – Arrival of participants;
- May 14, 2019 – Day 1 of conference;
- May 15, 2019 – Day 2/end of conference; and
- May 16, 2019 – Departure of participants

WAEON Executive Council Meeting

Ahead of the conference, WAEON’s Executive Council will meet to hold discussions on various issues that

concerns the development of the Network.

Date: Monday, May 13, 2019

Venue: WAEON Secretariat, Accra, Ghana

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Note to WAEON Members

WAEON Network members are encouraged to submit news entries to the Secretariat for inclusion in the WAEON Newsletter. Kindly send us with your views, comments and suggestions on what could be done to improve the network. The next edition will be released after the end of June 2019. Please send your entries to: info@waeon.org