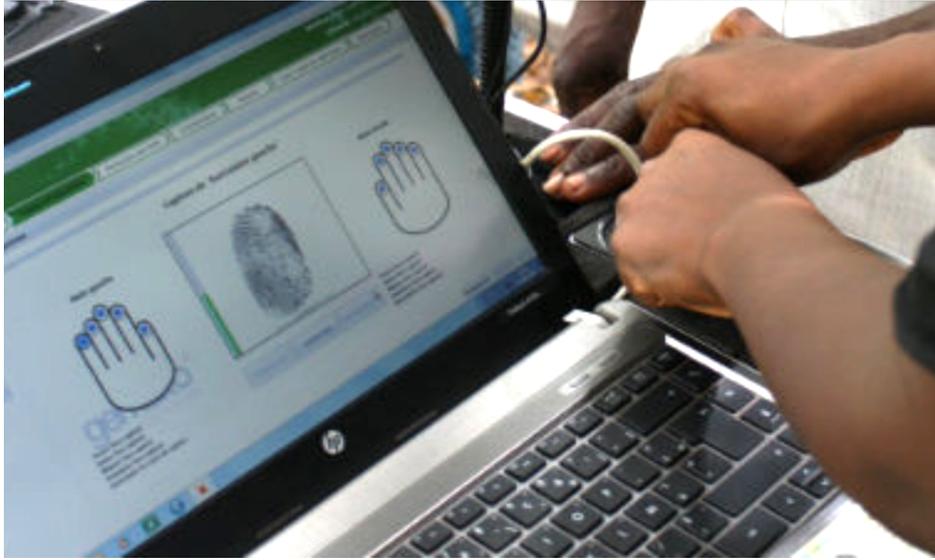


MATERIALS FOR PROFESSIONAL ELECTION OBSERVATION:

OBSERVING TECHNOLOGY-DRIVEN ELECTIONS



A FIELD GUIDE FOR WEST AFRICA ELECTION OBSERVERS NETWORK (WAEON)

2019



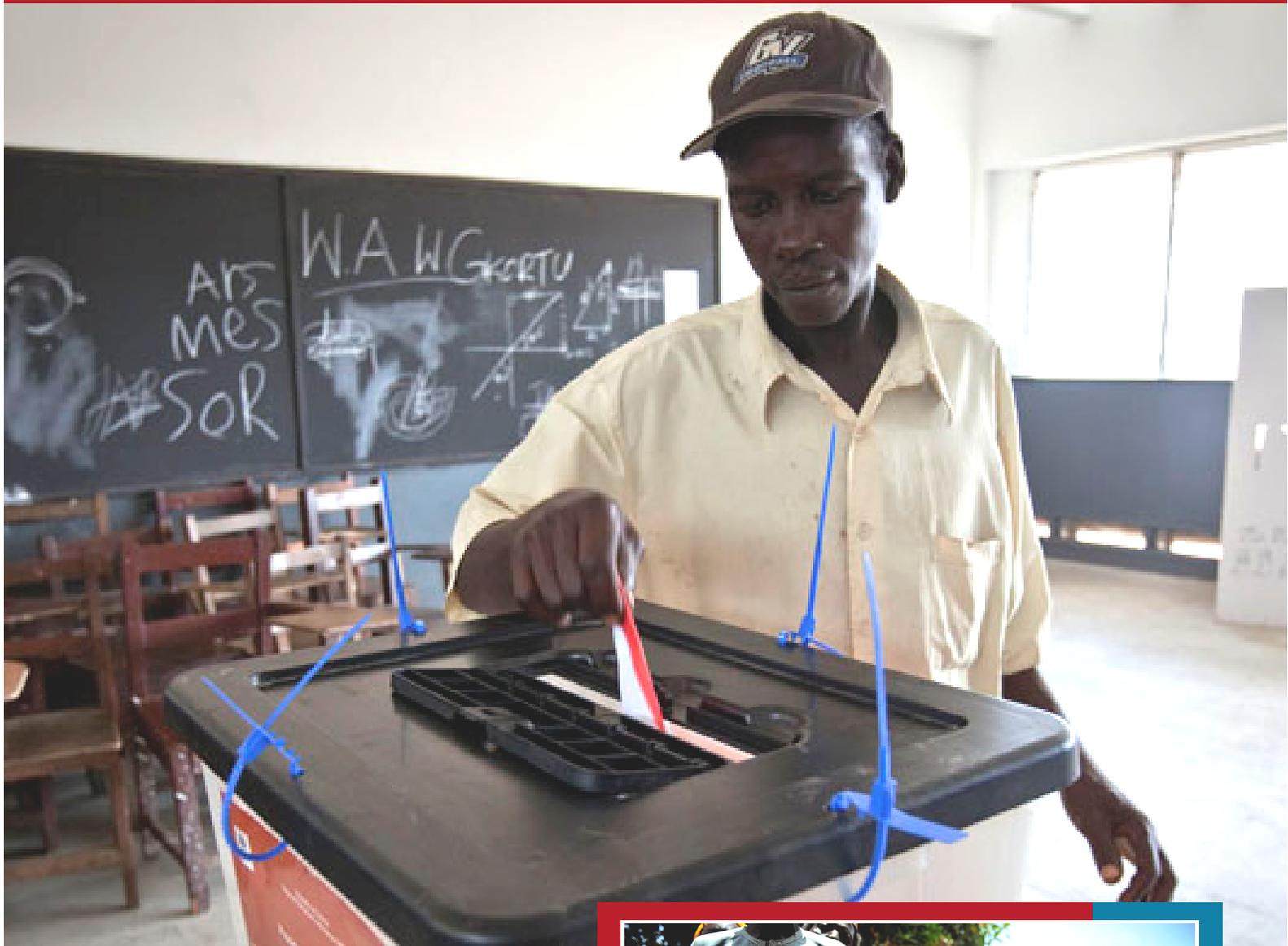
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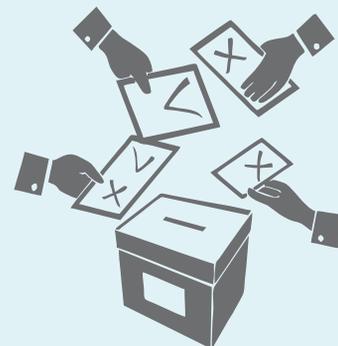
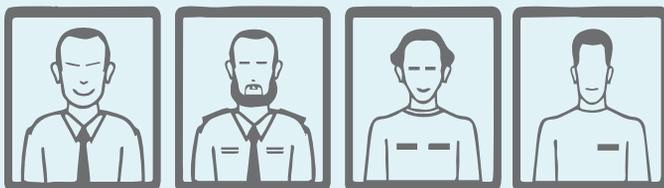


PREFACE

The growing use of technology in election administration, including election results tabulation, electronic storage of voter rolls and retrieval of electoral data, among others, require the attention of domestic election observer groups. In many countries in Africa, technology has increasingly been adopted by Election Management Bodies (EMBs) to compile the voter register, to demarcate electoral boundaries, manage and train polling officials, and to display the voter roll to the public. EMBs have also used technology to print ballot papers, conduct voter education activities, validate voters on election day, count, tally and record votes cast, and to publish election results. Indeed, technology is being used in virtually every aspect of the electoral process. Besides EMBs, independent and non-partisan citizen election observation

groups in Africa have also increasingly incorporated technology in their work, particularly in transmitting/reporting observation findings and verifying election results.

But despite the several advantages that the technology brings to the electoral process, it has become evident that technology is not an end in itself. With the increasing application of technology in election administration, questions have arisen, for example, how can the work of election observers be strengthened to respond to the changing trends of elections? What best mechanisms and strategies exist, or can be introduced to support citizens' observer groups to meet the increasing demands of technology-driven elections.



This practical field guide provides a general overview on the introduction of technology in the electoral cycle. It sets out to provide information on key aspects of technological innovation introduced into elections management across Africa. This field guide is primarily designed for use by the West Africa Election Observers Network (WAEON). The overall objective of this guide is to enhance the capacity of WAEON members as well as other domestic election observer groups in Africa and elsewhere to effectively engage electoral processes in an era of increasing application of technology to election administration. The field guide is intended to aid the user in election observation.

The guide is divided into three sections – pre-election, election and post-election phases. The first section addresses preparatory activities in the pre-election phase: the legal framework, the cost and procurement of technology, voter registration and the exhibition/display of the voter register. The second section focuses on the actual election phase and comprises: the nomination of candidates;

accreditation of candidates, agents and observers; campaigning, voting; transmission of results; declaration and publication of election results. The third section provides information on the post-election phase of the electoral cycle: election results dispute resolution and electoral reform. The information provided in this guide may not be exhaustive. Nevertheless, it is a critical attempt to harmonize key issues and technicalities on technology-driven elections across different countries. It is our hope that this will contribute towards increasing knowledge of observers in the face of enhanced use of technology in election administration.

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ABOUT THE FIELD GUIDE

The increasing application of technology in election administration and its attendant challenges informed the development of this field guide for domestic election observer groups. This practical field guide provides a general overview on the introduction of technology in the electoral cycle. This guide mirrors generally the key aspects of technological innovation introduced into elections management across Africa. While, it is primarily designed for use by the West Africa Election Observers Network (WAEON), it is equally intended to serve as a guide for citizens' election observer groups in general. The guide seeks to contribute to strengthening the capacity of citizens' observer groups to complement the work of Election Management Bodies (EMBs) in delivering credible election outcomes.

This guide adds to other existing WAEON Field Guide Series, including the following:

- Systematic Methods for Advancing Election Observation
- Outreach and External Communication
- Materials for Professional Election Observation: Designing Forms, Manuals and Training

This field guide, as with the previous ones, is published in English and French, and is available on WAEON's website: www.waeon.org.

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INTRODUCTION

WHY THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY IN ELECTIONS?

Elections are the means by which citizens exercise their legal right to choose who governs them, while determining the priorities of their government. Democratic elections give people the opportunity to express their sovereignty through the ballot to confer legitimacy on their government, renew its mandate if necessary or withdraw from it the authority to govern. This is one of the basis of accountable government. The task of accomplishing this goal lawfully is a collective duty shared by the Election Management Body (EMBs), the Government, voters, candidates, and the international community.

The increasing acceptance of regular democratic elections in Africa must be acknowledged as positive for Africa's democratization agenda. Yet, the quality and non-transparent nature of most of these elections remain a recurring concern for many. The conduct of elections in Africa continue to face challenges, including inaccurate voter registers, voter identification problems, mistrust between political parties and of EMBs, and associated election-related violence, among many others. In an attempt to respond to some of these challenges, which undermine election integrity, EMBs in Africa have resorted to technology in the administration of elections. Essentially, election technology refers to software and electronic equipment, such as computers, printers, scanners, bar code readers and the internet employed in election administration.

It should be noted that, technological innovation is often welcome in nearly every sphere of human life. This is so, not only because of the change it presents, but also

because of its ability to facilitate improvement in various processes to achieve desirable outcomes. Technology is thus applied in election administration to enhance the quality of the process and to facilitate the general acceptability of election outcomes. Many EMBs in Africa appear to increasingly rely on technological solutions in the administration and management of elections. This includes the application of technology in voter registration processes through to the transmission and declaration of election results. The application of technology is expected to enhance election administration and the electoral process by improving administrative efficiency, reduce cost and improve electoral transparency. It is also expected to address electoral malpractices including multiple voting and voting by unqualified persons and to ultimately promote electoral peace. In Africa, election-related technological solutions are therefore considered as one of the most important panacea to the many operational and integrity challenges associated with electoral activities on the continent.

Despite the tremendous benefits, technology-driven elections present challenges that may offset the goals of reliability, transparency and efficiency in election administration. In deploying technology in the electoral process, Election Management Bodies (EMBs) are often compelled to address issues pertinent to cost, human rights, technical capacity of polling staff, and limited supporting infrastructure for deploying technology in the electoral process. These challenges sometimes constitute significant sources of tension among electoral stakeholders and can undermine electoral integrity. Election observers therefore need to pay attention to these pertinent issues related to the deployment of electoral technology. The following sections focus specifically on what election observers must pay attention to, along the electoral cycle in the deployment of election-related technology.

SECTION ONE

Observing technology-driven elections: Pre-election Phase

1) The Legal Framework

Within the framework of the law, observers should inquire whether the Election Management Bodies (EMBs) have conducted feasibility studies to assess the suitability of the technology to be deployed to local context and whether elections rules have been designed to take into account the deployment of such technology. Legislation on the type of technology to be deployed should be comprehensive, flexible and applicable.

The legal framework must consider the services to be provided and the electorate's trust in the new technology. In other words, the legislative framework must be prepared and adopted in a manner that guarantees:

- Inclusion
- Transparency
- Public trust and confidence

The electoral regulation must be adequate and comprehensive to regulate all aspect of the electoral processes and take into consideration issues of data protection, data security and the protection of individual rights.



2) Cost

Elections constitute one of state priorities and as such, must be owned and financed by the State. EMBs are to adopt a strategic planning approach in budgeting for the purposes of acquiring, updating and maintaining technology. Election observers must pay attention to the following cost-related indicators associated with the procurement of electoral technology.

Observable indicators

- Election Authorities conducted needs assessment
- Consideration of the cost elements
- Cost –benefit analysis
- Adherence to public procurement laws
- Prudent procurement process to achieve value for money
- Understanding of initial financial outlay
- Review of the track record of the technology if has been used elsewhere
- Robustness and durability of technology
- Consideration of local climatic conditions
- Infrastructural support for full deployment of technology
- Technical capacity of EMB staff

3) Stakeholder Involvement

The non-involvement of stakeholders in the deployment of technology can create mistrust and suspicion. Accordingly, broader stakeholder engagement must be pursued by EMBs in the process of procuring new technologies for electoral management. Stakeholders must be encouraged to take part and own the electoral process at all levels in order to reinforce the integrity and sustainability of the process.

Effective stakeholder engagement particularly of key actors such as political party executives as well as grassroot engagement through civic education can be critical to diffusing and dealing with tension, mistrust, and misrepresentation associated with the deployment of new technological solutions. Observers must note, that for an election to be successful, key actors in the electoral process must be engaged on the following:

Observable indicators

- *Stakeholders' knowledge of and accessibility to technology installations*
- *Stakeholder briefing on how the equipment functions*
- *Practical demonstration of new technological solutions including expected input and outcomes to stakeholders*
- *The training, deployment and movement of consumables and the deployment of the technology*
- *Fairness in the application of the technology to all applicants*

4) Voter education and training

Comprehensive voter education on the deployment of the technology helps to promote attitude and behaviour changes that make elections genuine and peaceful. In transparent electoral processes, the election management body must take necessary measures to provide the public and interested stakeholders with timely and complete information about the procedures for effective participation in technological deployments.

Observable indicators

- The registration, exhibition or voting process
- The identification/validation/accreditation process using technology
- How to vote using electronic voting machines
- Availability of voter help-lines and digital platforms to assist voters and the general public with information about the new process, and solutions in case they encounter any difficulty

The use of social messages and links to animation sites that show short sketch of the voting procedure to voters are the modern outreach approaches.

Technology for voter education may not be limited to mobile phones, electronic bill boards and signage. Irrespective of the technology being used, the information it carries must consider the following:

- Eligibility criteria
- Registration and voting procedures
- Primary identification document if any
- Working hours and location of the officials
- Deadlines for participation

5) Sensitization and awareness creation

Technology at this stage of the electoral process is mainly for sharing materials on voter awareness, sometimes in collaboration with credible Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and the media. Bulk SMS, Social Buzz, social media handles and e-mail for extensive messaging are sent via service providers to prospective voters by EMBs and candidates alike.



Observable indicators

- Use of bulk SMS
- Hotlines and official email
- Large/electronic bill-board

6) Training of Poll Officials

Quality Assurance in operational issues also relates to the caliber of personnel recruited, level of ICT knowledge of temporary staff, the level of training content and hours impacted. EMBs are adopting rigorous recruitment and training standards including online application to ensure competition in recruitment and placement to make poll workers more effective and efficient.

The average poll worker needs an adequate number of days and hours for hands-on training on the technology being deployed. Adequate training is needed before an official could be tasked to serve in any capacity within the election management chain.

Again, commitments and professional ethics of permanent and temporary officials must attract the attention of observers; these indicators may include:

Observable indicators

- Application window for recruitment
- Screening and selection of poll workers
- Level of supervision on the data capturing process is highly critical
- Functions and scope of responsibilities
- Hands-on-training for election officials to acquire the necessary skills to obtain a better understanding of the processes and procedures of the task
- Inculcation of the principles and values of transparency

7) Technology in voter registration

Registering to vote is the first step towards becoming an active and engaged voter. Voter registration offers the opportunity to enhance public confidence in the electoral process and, therefore, a transparent, inclusive and accurate voter registration process allows eligible voters to exercise their fundamental civil right to vote, while serving as a safeguard against attempts to manipulate the process. Holding democratic elections devoid of a defective register is an important tool for conflict prevention and resolution. The voter list informs voters of the specific location where they can go to vote. At the same time, a voter list should ensure that every voter is able to vote only once and prevent those who are ineligible from casting a ballot.

In many countries, the standard procedure for a person applying for registration is to present a/some document(s) as a form of identification. In many circumstances, two duly registered voters may stand as guarantors in the absence of the required documents. The registration of voters using technology can be a complex and sensitive process. However, accurate, credible and efficient elections facilitated by technology should safeguard the human liberties of all eligible voters and the freedom of expression in all aspects of the electoral processes.

The cardinal objectives underlying technology in voter registration could be to:

- Eliminate multiple registration and voting
- Eliminate voter substitution (ghost voting) and ease data management by providing a means of identifying voters uniquely– e.g. by using fingerprints, facial image recognition or identification documents
- Eliminate human intervention and error
- Achieve speed and accuracy in the compilation of the register and results.
- Automate and create user friendly methods of data usage
- Audit trail of data capturing, processing, access and security
- Lay the foundation for a system that would allow for the continuous registration and regular update of the register

Given that registration of voters is an important aspect of the electoral cycle, that ensures equal and universal participation of eligible voters in an election, it imposes some obligations on the Elections Management Bodies to:

- Establish simple procedures
- Ensure easy access to registration facilities
- Fully publicize the registration exercise
- Provide eligibility criteria that should not disqualify eligible persons
- Institute an appeal process for persons who may initially be denied registration

Available voter registration technologies are fast and efficiently programmed for direct data capture of voter records, thereby allowing registers to be produced on site with enhanced information security. Technology application for voter registration in the West Africa sub-region can be viewed in two broad ways:

- Medium-tech using Optical Mark Recognition (OMR) for registration
- High-tech using the hybrid or sophisticated system of combining biometric technology, electronic identification, verification and authentication

The classification is specifically centered on the level of technology involved in the capturing of data, compilation of the register and public display of the register for scrutiny. Human right issues in data capturing and individual data protection should be paramount.

Biometric technology for voter registration could be done online or offline but in all cases the applicant must appear in person for the purposes of capturing their biodata. Biometric technology involving both facial and fingerprint identification could be done in two ways:



On the left side is an image of an ABISS, iris recognition scanner; and on the right side is an image of a biometric optical fingerprint scanner

- Through the use of Automated Biometric Identification Systems(ABISS)
- Or the Automated Fingerprints Identification Systems(AFISS)

The ABISS matches and authenticates the detailed personal data provided by the individual for the system and generates reports, which may include facial outlooks- the dimensions on vertical and horizontal measures.

The AFISS scans, matches and authenticates the texture, algorithms, loops, arch, whorl, circles and lines of the individual, finds central points in the finger image and centers on that to generate reports which, in most cases, are unique.

The unique identity of the person matched could be exported onto a barcode technology or a microchip embedded in the individual or on a card.

The AFISS and the ABISS technology increases accuracy by comparing a previously stored template of fingerprint/data against an applicant for authentication. It allows simultaneous validation and verification, because fingerprints are globally unique.

Observable indicators

- How the system guarantees data security and credibility of the electoral system in general
- How the voter registration technology is configured – registration center specific or open
- Critical attention should be given to the type of accessories used in collecting the biometric data
- Means of transporting or exporting the data and storage processes to ensure security. These processes should not be shrouded in secrecy
- The legal framework for the introduction of a biometric technology should adequately consider what and how to capture the data and in what form
- Voter assurance in respect of the confidentiality of the data collected should be paramount
- Privacy, protection of individual rights and information, storage and the mode of information sharing must be clearly outlined
- In addition, efforts must be made to avoid the use of discretion by the EMBs and other agencies involved in the implementation of the technology
- Note that using technology is not foolproof; the legal framework should be flexible enough to accommodate the exigencies and intricacies that come with these technologies
- Technology should not be promoted at the expense of the fundamentals of a good election
- Whether key actors are allowed to scrutinize the registration process-the process should not obviate scrutiny by election officials, party agents and observers
- The system should ensure high level of accountability and credibility.
- The extent to which polling officials, political parties, voters and candidates are acquainted and understand the processes should be determined
- Mechanisms for resolving grievances concerning the voter register

8) Data capturing using technology

The data entry equipment could be a laptop/an Android tablet, a fingerprint scanner, a digital camera (webcam) and a color pointer for signing. This equipment could be referred to as registration kit, completed by some form of consumables. Registration forms may be completed at the initial phase of the registration where applicants may be required to present proof of eligibility. Any grounds for deprivation of voting rights should be objective, reasonable and within the scope of the law.

At the registration stage, direct data entry equipment may be used to capture the personal details of the applicant. This could be either at the registration center, polling stations or the local office of the EMB.



An image of a biometric work station kit

The data capturing process may involve the following processes: interviewing of applicants and completion of registration form online or by hardcopy papers

- Applicant's confirmation of data captured
- Scanning of the applicant's finger prints
- Photo capturing of the applicant using a webcam with the required resolution/quality capturing the iris or facial image of the applicant
- Applicant's endorsement of his/her application using a stylus or pen
- Editing of data collected
- Production of voter's card (temporary/ permanent card)
- Storage of biometric data of the applicant
- Continuous back up data on an internal or external storage device
- Encryption of data for security purposes
- Consolidation and transmission of data to the central data site and data recovery units

Biometric registration technology should provide an interface for searching and editing applicants' records when the system is authorized to do so. This allows for immediate corrections to be made on personal information fed into the system as well as for confirmation and verification.

At the registration point, data could be stored into an embedded chip, encrypted into barcode format or (Quick Response) QR code and a unique number generated to reflect the identity of the voter. This is a crucial stage in the registration process that observers must scrutinize. Defects in many systems may result in generating the same identity number for different voters or duplicating same data for different voters.

During registration of voters, observers should look out for the provision of daily registration summaries specifying the number of people registered within a given period. Provision should also be made for hardcopy backup methods. This allows for an audit trail of registrants captured at any given period.

Observable indicators

- Citizens' turnout
- The level of reliability and performance of the technology
- User-friendliness of the technology
- The number of successful registrations versus the number of rejected registrations
- The appropriateness and the level of actors' understanding of the process
- Existence of a window for the scrutiny of the provisional figures captured during the registration
- Number of complaints from voters and actors
- Places and number of violent incidents related to the registration

Observers should also focus on how the registration process affords citizens and other stakeholders the opportunity to file challenges/objections against unqualified persons.

9) Exhibition/Display of the Register to the Public

Public scrutiny of a provisional voter register usually takes place at points where the data are captured. During the Exhibition/Display of the register period, registered voters are permitted to verify their details (data) as captured during the registration and can request for amendments of details where necessary.

Citizens who have registered are allowed to challenge or object to the names of unqualified persons on the provisional register. Voter Management Systems (VMS) are deployed to facilitate correction or insertion of personal details in the central database as permitted by law. Similarly, authentication or validation devices are often deployed at various levels during the Exhibition stage for the purpose of verification, accreditation and confirmation of voting points.

Observable Indicators

- Availability of the preliminary voters register for inspection
- Number of missing names from register
- Incidence of inaccurate voter details in register
- Incidence of multiple registration and excluded names on the register
- Public response to voter exhibition exercise
- Opportunity created for corrections, objection or challenge of unqualified persons in the register
- Procedures for challenging unqualified persons in the register
- Efficiency of technology in authenticating/verifying voters
- Presentation/arrangement of voter lists
- Ease of locating voters' details in register

SECTION TWO

Observing technology-driven elections: Election-Day Phase

1) Nomination of Candidates/Lists

Nomination is a formal process of validating a person to contest in an election. Any person desiring to be a candidate for an election should meet the prescribed requirement and qualifications. After nominations, names of validly nominated candidates are published.

In many jurisdictions in West Africa, no voter is allowed to support the nomination of more than one candidate in an election. Considering the number of supporters required to validate a candidature, technological mechanisms (voter information management systems) are used to scan, validate and confirm details of candidates, proposers and supporters of the nominee.

Candidate's nomination software is used to verify nominees submitted to the Election Management Body.

In many instances, the candidate's nomination software has components for centralized and localized administration, for capturing and accessing candidate data as well as for processing the preparation of the ballot paper(s) for printing.

In essence, these technologies prevent swapping of candidates on ballots, ensure accuracy and reduce the time for processing nominations. The software enables election officials to verify compliance of the candidates as required by law.

Observable Indicators

- Valid identification of candidates and voters
- Support for the nomination by the required number of voters
- Payment of the prescribed nomination fees on or before the date set for the delivery of nomination papers
- Duly completed nomination form and declaration of compliance to the electoral code
- Confirmation and right placement of nominees on the list for the election

*Observable challenges
with these technologies*



Some of the observable challenges with these technologies could be network connectivity, power problems, the level of training offered to the end-user and availability of technical support.

2) Validation/Verification of voters –Election-Day stage

A free and fair election gives credence to the idea that the people are sovereign and have a right to maintain or vote out their government. The introduction of technology in the election management at all levels should not infringe on the goal of having a free and fair election on the polling day.

Verification/validation is the process of establishing and or confirming the identity of each voter by using the device provided by the EMBs at the polling points/stations. Technology can be used to identify voters by verifying their finger prints or facial features.

Observable Indicators

- Whether voters are required by law to present an identification card to vote
- Availability of the voter identification/validation/accreditation device
- Availability of a voter register
- Availability of a functioning fingerprint/facial scanner/ card reader for cards with chips
- Confirmation of identity by scanning the QR code/barcodes on the card/ on the register
- Voters' reception of an immediate response during the validation process
- Waiting time for verification per voter at the polling station
- Whether device provides automatic counts of number of successful validation
- Alternative but legal method of validating registered voters to prevent disenfranchisement
- Non-discriminatory application of the procedures to all participants in the electoral process
- Simplicity of verification procedures to help voters' understanding and participation in the election
- The number of complaints relating to the voting process

3) Printing/ Display of ballot papers using technology

Typically, a form of medium-level technology is used for typesetting details of candidates. It may involve computer software applications, scanners and medium to giant printers to print ballot papers for an election.

Observable indicators

- Are the contestants fairly placed on the ballot paper as by law or convention?
- Assess whether all the contestants have their photographs and details correctly captured on the ballot
- Do voters know the positions/offices the candidates are contesting for on the ballot?
- What is (are) the criteria/mark for making the correct choice on the ballot paper?

4) Voting

In highly technical environments, Touch-Screen Voting System (TVS) with counting and results transmitting device functions are some of the latest handy but highly secured equipment deployed for elections management. Such technology verifies access control of voters, checks the voting status of the voter, allows voting and automatic counting and has in-built security enhancement features.

Observable Indicators

- Whether the device uses secured digital (SD) cards
- Whether the voter is instantly confirmed and verified by the system
- Whether the identity of the voter is displayed on the screen for agents' confirmation and voter access
- Whether the right information (pictures of candidates) is displayed on the screen for selection by the elector
- Whether the secrecy of the ballot is guaranteed
- Whether there's a system that de-activates the voter immediately a candidate is selected on the screen
- Does the system allow for spoiled ballots?
- Availability of a parallel system to check the automatic counting process.

5) Electoral Irregularities

The application of technology in elections is not fool-proof and may be characterized by some irregularities. An irregularity is an all-embracing term and it refers to anything that is not done in strict adherence to the laws, rules, regulations and procedures governing an election. Examples include late start, failure to lock the ballot box properly, and giving election materials to unauthorized persons. Challenges and irregularities that occur on the polling day normally have irreparable effects. Some irregularities which observers must look out for include:

Observable Indicators

- Performance lapses
- The non-supply of SD cards containing the voter roll
- Genuine mistakes
- Lack of backup equipment/device
- Deliberate wrongdoing such as frequent booting of the devices to delay the process

Observers should consider the pattern and distribution of the irregularities. For example,

- Are they isolated instances or widespread cases?
- Persistence of occurrence
- Frequent occurrences: these may include reported malfunctioning of the device
- The pattern of the irregularities: are the irregularities random or systematic
- If systematic, does the pattern favour a particular candidate or party?

6) Counting of votes and tallying of the results

Counting of votes and results tallying is highly sensitive and could be vulnerable to manipulation if not checked. In many instances, it could be subject to human error and that could put some parties at a disadvantage. It must be established whether these irregularities were out of human error or deliberate acts. To help eliminate some of the numerous human errors that come with vote count, real-time sorting and counting devices have been introduced in election administration to facilitate the process.

The Precinct Count Optical scanner and the Central Count Optical Scanner are high performing ballot paper counting machines which scan and count at least 150 ballot papers per minute. These technologies, introduced in election management, are meant to prevent double counting, counting errors and detect fake ballot papers. The systems scan various ballot paper sizes from A3-A6 (regular and irregular ballot), store scanned images, encrypt and transmit election results.

Observable Indicators

- Is the counting of votes done publicly?
- Are candidates' agents permitted to observe the counting of votes and tallying process?
- Is there provision to request for a recount of vote?
- Is it mandatory for agents to validate the results for confirmation of the poll?
- Are candidates' agents issued with copies of the results?

7) Results Transmission Technology

Result Transmission Systems (RTS) technologies are used to facilitate the electronic transmission of election results from various levels in the electoral divisions: the polling station, county, constituency or district to tallying or national collation centers for consolidation and declaration. Result Transmission Technology eases public anxiety, enables real-time display and availability of election result, improves integrity of the results, minimizes chances of results falsification and provides verifiable results that could be drilled down from Polling Stations, State level, County, Constituency to National level.

RTS technologies are polling center specific-that is, they are customized to a polling point/unit in such a way that the RT device requires diagnostic scanning of the polling center QR code, log in code of the Presiding Officer for confirmation and installation. Once the voting process is closed, the RT device operator scans the results sheet into the PDF format and keys in the results. The Presiding Officer is required to authorize the transmission. Once the result is transmitted, the system deactivates the type of election result.

Observable Indicators

- Stakeholder consensus on the use of technology on results transmission
- Security of the manual and electronic transmission systems
- Professionalism of officials manning the results transmission devices
- Capacity of technology to achieve efficiency
- Accuracy of the inputs and outputs
- Standardization on the methodology, device and flow of data to be transmitted from different levels
- Real-time counts and results displayed voter turnout
- Transmission processing time
- Ease of use (flexibility of both manual and electronic transmission)

- Adequacy of Results Transmission training: hands-on training and practical field experience of officials, network difficulties, and the quality of ICT skills at the polling points
- Any delays in the announcement or declaration of the results
- The number and geographical locations experiencing the delays
- The reasons for the delays
- Level of trust among political actors in the result management process
- The level of transparency in the election result transmission management at various levels
- Visible mechanisms for reliable transmission of accurate and transparent results to the public
- Official and observable data map of regions, counties, districts, constituencies and polling stations for which results are delayed

SECTION THREE

Observing technology-driven elections: Post-Election Phase

1) Election Dispute Resolution

After the polls and declaration of results, election observers should also follow the handling of complaints and the appeal systems. There should be effective legal remedies for misgivings on election results.

At the post-election phase, the regulations should stipulate how the electoral process could be audited. Such audit may include tracking data of officials, tracking sheets of ballots printed, distribution and movement. The technology deployed must have print-outs of persons who voted as well as the time they voted.

Allegations about serious flaws in the process supported with evidence could be cross-checked from an audit trail of the systems if properly mechanized.

2) Electoral Reform

Digital technologies can be used in many ways in election management but their introduction into the electoral process should not be rushed through. This is because although new technology facilitates progress, it also has pitfalls. It is recommended that any review of an electoral process should not result in the immediate adoption of new technologies in the elections following the review as there's the potential to narrow focus on specific aspects of the electoral process to, the neglect of the broader political environment. In addition, electoral efficiency should not be equated to electoral transparency. While technology could help achieve both objectives, it tends not to be implemented in a way that promotes the two equally. Deliberate measures must be taken by stakeholders, particularly EMBs and observers to help address this.

Observable Indicators

- Long term sustainability of the technology
- Broader management structure to support the deployment of the technology
- Level of improvement in logistics handling
- Whether there is improvement in technological application in terms of performance
- Transparency of electoral process
The extent to which the technology will impact the performance of EMBs (institutional strengthening and professional development)
- Legal reforms and EMB reforms
- Review, audit and evaluations
- Improvement in the quality of democracy after the introduction of the technology

ABOUT WAEON



The West Africa Election Observers Network (WAEON) was formed in 2010 and is an independent, non-partisan, and non-religious network of election observation/monitoring citizen organizations in West Africa dedicated to the promotion of free, fair, transparent and peaceful elections in the sub-region. The Network currently consists of 13 member organizations respectively representing Burkina Faso, Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, Gambia, Guinea, Ghana, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo. WAEON has its headquarters in Accra, Ghana, under the auspices of Ghana Center for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana) which serves as the Secretariat.

Mission

WAEON strengthens and supports citizen election observer groups through the exchange of best practices for effective participation in electoral and democratic processes in West Africa, electoral reform advocacy and election observation and monitoring.

WAEON's objectives are as follows:

- To promote the adoption and implementation of international and regional norms on elections, democracy and good governance
- To strengthen the capacity and independence of member organizations to undertake election observation and monitoring initiatives, research and advocacy on electoral processes based on the highest ethical standards and best practices
- To support member organizations to strengthen capacity on election observation and monitoring, civic and voter education and other election-related processes
- To facilitate information publication and dissemination of materials among network members related to elections and democratic processes, best practices and the application of technology
- To promote solidarity and partnership among network members and other stakeholders to support the conduct of democratic elections in the region





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