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**WEST AFRICA ELECTION OBSERVERS NETWORK (WAEON)**

**NEWSLETTER**

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(October – December, 2018)

**Introduction**

WAEON’s Newsletter provides news and information on activities undertaken by the Secretariat and Network members in their respective countries, as well as updates on elections and governance issues occurring in the West Africa sub-region. This last edition for 2018 covers developments which took place between October and December.

**WAEON Member Organizations’ Activities**

**Transitional Monitoring Group (TMG), Nigeria**

Transition Monitoring Group (TMG) in November launched a nationwide program to demand accountability from candidates in the upcoming February 2019 Nigeria presidential and general elections. The program known as [Citizens Charter Movement](file:///C:\Users\m.dumenu\Desktop\CDD%20PC%20OFFICIAL%20FILES\Mawusi%20(21-08-2016)%20PC\WAEON\Newsletter\2018\October%20-%20December%202018\WAEON%20NEWSLETTER%20October%20-%20December%202018_Draft1.docx) will help address the problem of disconnection between political party promises and the desire of Nigerians.

**Institute for Research and Democratic Development (IREDD), Liberia**

On October 30, 2018, the Institute for Research and Democratic Development (IREDD) released a [monitoring report](http://iredd-lr.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Legislative-Monitoring-Press-Statement-October-2018.pdf) on the First Session of the 54th Legislature of Liberia. The report covered the period from January 15 to September 14, 2018. The report broadly touched on lawmaking, representation, and oversight functions of legislators. However, it gave more emphasis to all these core areas in relation to the political party affiliation of legislators and the counties they represent.

**National Civil Society Consultation of Togo (CNSC-Togo), Togo**

CNSC-Togo with support from Hanns Seidel Foundation organized a workshop for 21 representatives of CNSC-Togo member organizations to build their capacities in monitoring national and local government budget execution, conducting budgetary analysis and evaluation of public policies. The workshop was held in Lomé on October 5 & 6, 2018.

***Coalition of Domestic Election Observers (CODEO), Ghana***

The Coalition of Domestic Election Observers (CODEO) as part of its objective of promoting electoral transparency, accountability and credibility towards peaceful outcomes deployed 50 observers to observe a referendum held in Ghana on December 27, 2018 in respect of the creation of 6 additional regions in the country.

In its [preliminary findings](http://www.codeoghana.org/assets/downloadables/PRESS%20STATEMENT%20-%20CODEO%20Findings%20on%20Observation%20of%20the%20Referendum.pdf), CODEO observed that the process was generally calm. However, a number of anomalies such as the high incidence of manual verification of voters were observed in some polling stations which also had unusually high voter turn-out rate thereby raising serious questions about the integrity of the polls.

**Elections and**

**Governance Related News**

***Togo: Highlights of the December 20, 2018 Parliamentary Elections***

Despite boycott by the Coalition of Fourteen Parties of the Opposition (C–14), on allegations of skewed playing field, the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI) of [Togo held the parliamentary elections on December 20, 2018](https://www.voanews.com/a/togo-president-s-party-wins-majority-in-parliament/4713975.html). Below are highlights of the election:

* 850 candidates representing 12 political parties and independents participated.
* According to provisional results, the ruling party, Union for the Republic (UNIR) won 59 out of 91 seats in the National Assembly.
* UNIR previously held 62 seats and fell short of the 73 seats required to make unchallenged laws that will ensure that the sitting President Faure Gnassingbe runs for office again in 2020 and 2025.
* Official voter turn was 60 percent.

**Upcoming Elections in the West African Sub-Region**

***Nigeria: 2019 Presidential and General Elections***

February 16, 2019 is scheduled as the election day for Nigeria’s sixth Presidential and General elections since the country returned to multi-party democracy in 1999.

With a voter registered population of [73,944, 312 registered voters](https://www.brookings.edu/blog/africa-in-focus/2019/01/22/what-to-expect-from-the-2019-presidential-election-in-nigeria/) as of January 2018, candidates from 73 political parties will be taking part in the presidential elections. In spite of the large number of candidates being fielded, the main contenders are the sitting President, Muhammadu Buhari of the All Progressives Congress (APC) and a former Vice President from 1999 to 2007, Alhaji Attiku Abubakar of the People’s Democratic Party (PDP).

***Senegal: 2019 Presidential Elections***

Senegal considered as one of Africa’s stable democracies will go to the polls on February 24, 2019 to elect a president. This will be the eleventh Presidential elections since the country gained independence in 1960.

From a tall list of about 81 aspiring candidates, [the Senegalese Constitutional Council on January 14, 2019 published a final list of 5 candidates](https://www.cnbcafrica.com/news/west-africa/2019/01/21/why-macky-salls-strongest-challengers-wont-run-for-senegals-presidential-elections/), including the incumbent President Macky Sall who is seeking re-election on the ticket of Benno Bokk Yaakar (BBY). The other candidates are Issa Sall of the Party of Unity and Coming Together (PUIR); Ousmane Sonko of the Patriots of Senegal for Work, Ethics and Brotherhood (Pastef); Madické Niang of the Senegalese Democratic Party (PDS); and Idrissa Seck of Rewmi.

**Upcoming Project Activities**

WAEON with support from the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) is undertaking a project on [*“Engaging WAEON Members on the Increasing Role of Technology in Election Administration”*](http://www.waeon.org/assets/downloadables/WAEON%20-%20NED%20Elections%20Tech%20Workshop_Final_Formatted.pdf). The project seeks to stimulate discussions among WAEON members and election stakeholders in West Africa on the challenges of technology – driven elections; and to also develop guidelines to help WAEON member groups to effectively observe the changing dynamics of technological elections.

As part of project activities, a workshop on election technology will be organized for WAEON members and other electoral stakeholders in March 2019 (tentative). Details of the program and a confirmed date will be communicated to WAEON members in the coming weeks.

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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 at the end*

*of March 2019. Please send your entries to:*[*info@waeon.org*](mailto:info@waeon.org)