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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

The last few years have brought many changes to the way in which elections are conducted in Liberia. For the next several years, the pace of change promises to be even more intense as a result of rapid advances in technology, legislative change and evolving expectations on the part of our citizens and other stakeholders.

The National Elections Commission (NEC or Commission), guided by its Strategic Plan for the period 2012-18, has so far successfully met most of the challenges of this electoral cycle, with the conduct of the 2014 Special Senatorial Election and the reform of the election laws as a result of the focus provided by the first part of the Strategic Plan.

However, having now reached more than half way in its implementation, the scope of our Strategic Plan needed to be reappraised to ensure that it remained relevant to the evolving needs of our institution, our stakeholders and the Liberian electors. Consequently, in the last months we have conducted a series of consultations and held internal discussions to reassess the purpose of our Commission, analyze the external environment in which we operate and determine our current challenges and opportunities.

The result of these multiple efforts is our Revised Strategic Plan (Plan). It builds upon the work we have undertaken over the past four years to envision our strategic direction for the period 2012-18 and upon the achievements we have realized in implementing the first part of this Plan. This document also reflects a consensus on the re-alignment of the major areas where we believe the NEC must focus its attention and build on the significant progress already made in meeting the goals for improved service and innovation.

Through the revision of its Strategic Plan, the Commission has harmonized the key objectives and the related broad strategies that we expect the NEC to pursue over the period 2016-18, outlining a revised strategic direction on how we intend to achieve these objectives and how we will measure progress of our performance.

Our Revised Strategic Plan outlines several of the key challenges we will face and how we intend to overcome them. It describes what we believe are the key operational, legislative, technological and other trends that will influence the NEC's performance over the next two years and it also highlights the improvements that will be required in our organization and operations to respond to these trends.

Accordingly, our realigned strategy unfolds on two parallel levels:

- Internally, we are committed to valuing and developing our people and their professional skills, engendering a culture of excellence, fairness, respect and collaboration, with the aim of being recognized as an outstanding organization.
- Externally, we have reaffirmed our commitment to the people of Liberia for the conduct of impartial and independent elections and the promotion of public awareness of electoral matters, with the aim of fostering public confidence and participation in future electoral processes. At the

same time, we are committed to engaging professionally and transparently with our stakeholders, striving to understand and anticipate their needs, build long-term relationships and foster good communication.

Centered on these strengthened pillars, we see our Revised Strategic Plan as a navigational chart designed to systematically guide the NEC in the attainment of its goals to further improve the planning, management and delivery of credible elections and referendums and, by doing so, continue to nurture and strengthen the democratic process in Liberia.

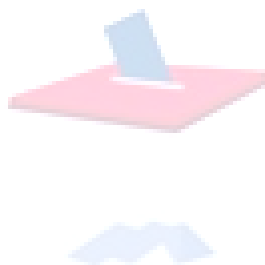
I trust that our ability to adapt and respond to the challenges we will be facing over the next two years will be bolstered by this revised version of our Strategic Plan, which aims at maximizing the National Elections Commission's opportunities to improve its performance in administering future electoral processes in Liberia.

Through the full implementation of our Revised Strategic Plan, we are committed to ensuring that the NEC continues to strengthen itself as a modern, professional and innovative electoral management body.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jerome G. Korkoya".

Jerome G. Korkoya, J.D.

CHAIRMAN



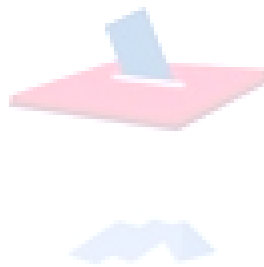
ACRONYMS

AfT	Agenda for Transformation
BoC	Board of Commissioners
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
CRM	Compliance and Risk Management
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CVE	Civic and Voter Education
DED	Deputy Executive Director
ECOM	Election Commission
EMB	Electoral Management Body
EVD	Ebola Virus Disease
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIS	Geographic Information System
GoL	Government of Liberia
IBI	International Business Initiative
IEC	Information, Education and Communication
IFES	International Foundation for Electoral Systems
IPCC	Inter-Party Consultative Committee
LASS	Liberia Administration & Systems Strengthening Project
LEPT	Liberia Electoral and Political Transition
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NEC	National Elections Commission
OMR	Optical Mark Recognition
PwD	Persons with Disabilities
PRC	Progress Review Committee
PRS	Poverty Reduction Strategy
SSE	Special Senatorial Elections
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNMIL	United Nations Mission in Liberia
VRU	Voter Roll Update

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Board of Commissioners (BoC) of the National Elections Commission (NEC) expresses its profound appreciation to the Government of Liberia (GoL), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the European Union (EU), the UNDP election project unit through funds provided by EU, the International Foundation for Elections Systems (IFES), the Liberia Electoral and Political Transition (LEPT) funded by USAID, and the International Business Initiative – Liberia Administrative and Systems Strengthening (IBI-LASS) Program, also funded by USAID for providing the logistical and technical support to prepare this Revised Strategic Plan.

The BoC also extends its gratitude to the Executive Director, Deputy Executive Directors, as well as all senior and technical staff members for their tireless efforts in contributing to the development of this plan.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The National Elections Commission (NEC), being a professional election management body (EMB), regularly redefines its direction and priorities in view of changing realities. In doing so, the Commission prioritizes actions and activities to stimulate achievement of its goals and objectives. From this backdrop, the NEC formulated a Strategic Plan in July 2012 to guide the direction and operations of the Commission from July 2012 – June 2018.

After four years of implementation, the Commission undertook a mid-term review of its Strategic Plan in order to reassess priorities for the remaining two years, with the intention to realign the NEC's direction and priorities with emerging realities. The Plan, as expressed in the statements of vision and mission, as well as the expressed core values, blends futuristic thinking, objective analysis and evaluation of goals and priorities. Importantly, the NEC reaffirms and highlights its commitment to gender equality and adopts gender mainstreaming as a strategy in promoting women's electoral and political participation. The NEC Gender Mainstreaming Policy will guide the Commission in taking forward its mainstreaming work. These considerations will help to chart future courses of action that will ensure the long-term vitality and efficacy of the Commission.

An analysis of some of the most important factors in both the internal and external environments of the Commission indicates that while there are a number of opportunities and strengths available to the NEC, there are also some weaknesses and threats. Thus, there is a need to find a "fit" between the opportunities/threats and the strengths/weaknesses.

In order to execute its mandate of "managing all public elections in Liberia" in an equitable and informed manner, the Commission has reinforced its initial five pillars. Gender equality has been duly prioritized; and a system for monitoring and evaluation has been elaborated in the plan. This Revised Strategic Plan represents the strategic direction the Commission has purposefully chosen to pursue over the next two years (July 2016 – June 2018). The Plan seeks to achieve the following strategic goals and objectives and to undertake the following strategic actions. A separate Operational Plan has been developed, containing all the relevant activities for the identified strategic actions.

Legal Framework: To strengthen the legal framework ensuring that clear guidelines and regulations are provided, which defines how the Commission operates; enhance stakeholders' understanding of the laws, regulations and guidelines that inform effective management of elections. To achieve these goals, the Commission, in collaboration with electoral stakeholders, intends to review and revise the elections law and guidelines as the need arises; review voters' registration requirements especially as they relate to where eligible citizens can register and vote; and review, rationalize and strengthen the complaints and hearing mechanisms and all other required regulations and guidelines, ensuring that stakeholders are aided and not confused. Gender will be taken into account in the revisions and strengthening of the laws and policy framework.

Electoral Stakeholders Engagement: To engage the participation of stakeholders in the electoral process and to enhance cooperation between the NEC and electoral stakeholders thereby strengthening the integrity of the electoral system. To achieve these goals, the Commission, in partnership with stakeholders, aims to strengthen the institutional capacity of political parties, and cultivate the trust of political parties, civil society organizations including representative groups from women and other disadvantaged groups and the citizenry in the electoral process. These undertakings will be supported by sustained engagement and continuous education outreach.

Civic and Voter Education (CVE), and Public Information: To strengthen Information, Education and Communication (IEC) services of the Commission and enhance citizens' understanding of the electoral process; increase voters' participation in elections; mainstream gender in the CVE processes; and increase the participation of the media in CVE campaigns. To achieve this multidimensional goal, the Commission, in continued partnership with its stakeholders, seeks to increase public participation in elections and empower voters to exercise their democratic rights, with keen attention to women, youth and persons with special needs such as the elderly, persons with disability, those who cannot read and write, etc.

Institutional Strengthening: To strengthen the Commission's human capacity, strengthen its management and information systems, and mobilize resources for the purpose of delivering free and fair elections. To achieve this goal, the Commission aims to continue to work with international technical partners, including International Business Initiative–Liberia Administrative and System Strengthening (IBI-LASS), International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Their financial support and technical assistance will enhance the capabilities of the Commission to develop policies and procedures for human resources, financial management, procurement, logistics, fleet management, and information management.

Election Operations: To deliver free, fair and credible elections in support of the sustenance of peace, stability, and democracy. To achieve this ultimate mandate, the Commission, working in concert with stakeholders, will refurbish its local offices in the counties; plan, organize, conduct voter registration; conduct a national referendum on proposed amendments to the Constitution; plan, organize, and conduct the 2017 General Elections, and local elections, as well as by-elections that may be called by the Legislature.

The mechanism for assessing the performance of the Strategic Plan has been carefully considered. Higher level results (expected outcomes) and indicators have been incorporated in the strategic framework. Also, operational plans, with main activities, have been developed at department levels, reflecting measurable performance targets. The Commission, through its Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Section will regularly assess the performance of the Strategic Plan. Utilizing a decentralized approach, the M&E Section will coordinate these efforts.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Revised Plan is a continuation of the NEC six-year (2012-18) Strategic Plan, mapping out how the Commission will complete the remaining two years (2016-18). Under the five pillars, the Plan presents the Commission's strategic goals, actions and objectives for the period, and establishes a cogent agenda to achieve them. It represents the collective vision, and deliberates the commitments of the BoC and the staff of NEC to make the Commission a more responsive, effective and efficient electoral management body (EMB).

1.1 Overview of the Strategic Plan 2012-18

Following the 2011 General Elections, which also concluded the first six-year strategic plan (2006-12), the NEC, in 2012, organized a lessons learnt conference to take stock of all that went into the electoral process and to determine what lessons were learned to prepare for future planning. Consequently, a second electoral cycle-based strategic plan (2012-18) was developed after a series of consultations with electoral stakeholders.

In the Commission's 2012-18 Strategic Plan, five pillars were identified, namely: Elections Law and Guidelines, Political Parties and Trust in the Electoral Process, Civic Education, Institutional Capacity Building, and Elections. As an overarching goal, the Commission sought "to contribute to the consolidation and nurturing of Liberia's nascent democracy through the consistent and effective delivery of free, fair and credible elections at national and local levels."

While some of the key actions in the 2012-18 Strategic Plan such as electoral law reform, Voter Roll Update (VRU) and the Special Senatorial Elections were successfully achieved, there were other major strategic actions including the local elections and national referendum that were not realized in the first four years of the Plan as scheduled. The framework of the Revised Plan realigns some of the actions to enable successful completion of the remaining two years. Importantly, it highlights the NEC's commitment to gender equality and adopts gender mainstreaming as a strategy to ensure that gender considerations are taken into account in the management of elections, and efforts are made to promote women's participation as voters, candidates, electoral officers and observers, among others. Although it appears unlikely that a national referendum and local elections will take place in the next two years, the Plan incorporates these actions in order to prepare the Commission for any eventuality.

1.2 Achievements

The achievements below represent accomplishments of the Commission as a result of the implementation of the first four years (2012-16) of the NEC's Strategic Plan. Key among the numerous achievements are:

1. Planned, organized and conducted the 2014 Special Senatorial Elections (SSE), including successfully updating the voter roll and conducting civic/voter education in the wake of the deadly Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) outbreak.

2. In collaboration with electoral stakeholders, facilitated reform of the electoral law and ensured the amendment of certain provisions of the 1986 Elections Law which include enhancement of the financial autonomy of the NEC and the power of the Board of Commissioners to appoint the Executive Director of the Commission.
3. Ensured the development and signing of a memorandum of understanding with, and among political parties under the umbrella of the Inter-Party Consultative Committee (IPCC). This platform smoothens the process of engaging and consulting with political parties on the one hand, and also provides an opportunity for political parties to consult among themselves.
4. Undertook internal structural reforms in the establishment of a Monitoring and Evaluation Section, and Compliance and Risk Management Section, and the development of an Administrative Manual.
5. Initiated implementation of gender-focused activities to promote women's participation, as well as the participation of other disadvantaged groups.
6. Succeeded in changing the mindset of cynics about the neutrality of the Commission by managing the 2014 Special Senatorial Election, and four by-elections in free, fair and transparent manner, with equal opportunities for all competing candidates.

1.3 Process of the NEC Strategic Plan Review

In reviewing the Strategic Plan, the NEC has used a broad-based, internal consultative approach. As a first step, the Commission constituted a Technical Committee involving the Board of Commissioners, NEC departments, sections, and units' heads, and international partners, including IBI-LASS, UNDP, and IFES.

The process of reviewing the Strategic Plan was guided by three important features – the first included reviewing the organizational effectiveness and/or limitations; the second involved assessing actual progress in the implementation of the Plan; and the third considered envisioning new goals, objectives or actions to be included in the Plan, in preparation for successful elections in 2017 and immediately thereafter.

A comprehensive desk review was carried out regarding the performance of the 2012-18 Strategic Plan. In addition to the desk review, two workshops were held by the NEC: one on Senior Management Strategy at the Palm Spring Hotel in Monrovia; the other on general review of the Plan's main components – such as the strategic pillars, goals, actions and objectives - in Buchanan City. These exercises, followed by departmental strategic planning sessions, culminated in the development of the Revised Strategic Plan. Finally, an operational plan was developed from the revised strategic framework, inclusive of activities, performance targets, implementation timelines, and indicative budget.

2. THE NATIONAL ELECTIONS COMMISSION

This chapter highlights the mandate, legal framework and organizational structure of the NEC, as an EMB that has legal responsibility to manage all elements essential for the conduct of elections and other elements of democracy such as referendums.

2.1 NEC Mandate

The NEC is an autonomous public commission that is responsible to conduct elections for all elective public offices and to administer and enforce all elections laws throughout the Republic of Liberia. The NEC accentuates the need to deliver elections that reflect the trust and collective will of the Liberian people. Although funded by the government, the Commission is a fully independent body. It is accountable to the people of Liberia and reports through the Executive and Legislative Branches of the Government.

The Commission partners with all electoral stakeholders, including political parties and civil society organizations, as well as the international community, in ensuring the holding of free, fair and credible elections at all levels of governance.

The primary duties of NEC include administering and enforcing all laws related to the conduct of elections throughout the Republic of Liberia. Besides, NEC may propose to the National Legislature to change provisions of the Elections Law that are found in need of said reforms. The Commission further provides accreditation to, and registers all political parties and independent candidates who meet the requirements set by the Commission. Based upon the judicial determination by a court of competent jurisdiction, the registration and accreditation of an existing party can be revoked by the Commission.

2.2 The Legal Framework

The NEC has its origin in the Constitution of Liberia. At its inception, NEC was called the Elections Commission (ECOM), deriving its constitutional mandate from Chapter X, Article 89(b).

By statute, ECOM was then composed of five members called commissioners. However on December 27, 2002 an Act of the National Legislature was passed increasing the number of commissioners to seven. This increment was upheld by the August 18, 2003 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) on Liberia, signed in Accra, Ghana. Also, Article XIX of the CPA gave rise to the current National Elections Commission in February 2004.

Specifically, the authorities of NEC, inherited from its predecessor, ECOM, are enshrined in Chapter 2, Section 9, and Sub-sections a-x of the New Elections Law of 1986.

2.3 Organizational Structure of the NEC

The NEC is composed of a seven-member executive Board of Commissioners (BoC) including a chairman, co-chairman and five commissioners - all of whom are appointed by the President of

Liberia, with the consent of the Senate. Each commissioner serves a tenure of seven years and can be reappointed for a second term. The BoC provides policy direction for the Commission, as well as oversees the work of the Secretariat.

The Secretariat is a technical and administrative structure that manages the day-to-day general administration and implements the policies, programs, projects, and activities of the Commission. The Secretariat is headed by an Executive Director who is assisted by three Deputy Executive Directors (DED): Administration, Operations, and Programs, specifying the three operational departments of the Commission.

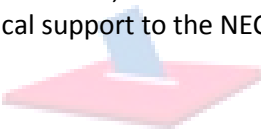
There also exist several other independent units, including: Legal Affairs, Hearing, Internal Audit, Monitoring and Evaluation, Compliance and Risk Management (CRM), Finance, and Communications.

The current workforce of the Commission stands at 300 staff, twenty-two percent of whom are women while seventy-eight percent are men. This number includes eight policy makers, 52 senior staff, 76 junior staff and 164 support staff. The credibility of the NEC, and the experience gained in elections management by its staff over the years are key capacity assets of the Commission.

2.4 Key Stakeholders of the NEC

The primary stakeholders of the NEC are the Liberian people who have the stake in deciding key democratic questions such as the leadership of the country, including other issues necessary for the smooth functioning of the state. As shown in the table below, the stakeholders of the NEC are divided into different categories, with varying roles and expectations.

STAKEHOLDER	ROLES IN ELECTORAL PROCESS	EXPECTATIONS
■ Electorate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Registering as voters Voting during elections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Right to freely exercise civic and political rights Be informed about the electoral process
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Political parties ■ Election candidates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Register as legal political entities and candidates in elections Run political organizations in accordance with the laws of Liberia Canvass for votes Ensure peaceful conduct of elections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Right to freely exercise civic and political rights Be informed about electoral process

STAKEHOLDER	ROLES IN ELECTORAL PROCESS	EXPECTATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Civil society organizations ■ Community-based organizations ■ The media ■ Faith based organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in civic and voter education • Ensure peaceful conduct of elections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right to freely exercise civic and political rights • Be informed about the electoral process
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Women, youths, organizations of persons with disability, and other special needs groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Register as voters • Vote in elections • Participate in civic and voter education • Advocate for equitable inclusion in the electoral process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct of free, fair and credible election • Equitable political participation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ International Partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lend technical, financial and political support to the NEC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professionalism of the NEC • Strengthened capacity of the NEC to conduct of free, fair and credible election • Political and economic stability of Liberia • Regional and sub-regional economic integration

3. SITUATION ANALYSIS

The NEC is responding to unique electoral challenges in Liberia, within the context of its mandate. It is a purposeful response that takes into account the call of political parties for electoral reforms and demands imposed by the citizenry and the international community for the consistent delivery of free, fair and credible elections. Thus, in responding to these calls, the Commission undertook an exercise of institutional self-assessment, and an environmental scanning of the Commission's operating environment. These analyses considered the political, socio-economic, electoral and demographic contexts for elections management in Liberia.

3.1 Political Context

Liberia is marking 13 years of peace and stability since the civil war ended in 2003. The Country continues to enjoy a stable and democratic government following two General Elections in 2005 and 2011, and a Special Senatorial Election in 2014. President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf will remain in power until the next General Elections slated for October 2017, and her successor is expected to be inaugurated in January 2018.

Political attention is now focused on the 2017 General Elections, which will be held in a complex political, social-economic and demographic climate, marked by the aftermath of the deadly EVD outbreak, a sharp decline in the prices of rubber and iron ore, and the drawdown of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL). On June 30, 2016, the multinational peacekeeping force officially hands over national security responsibilities to the Government of Liberia and substantially reduces its presence on the ground.

In the face of these realities, the Liberian political stage remains polarized and replete with mistrust and distrust. Liberia is divided into 15 political sub-divisions, but there are currently 22 registered political parties with many more whose applications are being processed for registration. The number of parties was 30 after the 2011 elections, but 15 were de-certificated, but more new parties are being formed. Many Liberians and friends of Liberia agree that the multiplicity of political parties is unwholesome for a country with a population of less than five million people.

In addition to the proliferation of parties, many of the political parties are perceived as weak: many are not national in character and orientation; many do not follow their own constitutions and by-laws in a professional manner; many maintain inadequate headquarters facilities in Monrovia; many do not have presence "on the ground" in the counties across the country; many are constantly engaged in internal leadership power struggles; and many have no seats in the national legislature. Despite their often dismal performances in elections, they contest elections over and again, in the name of democracy and at cost to taxpayers.

Collaterally, the issue of corruption has become a major political issue as we progress to the much anticipated elections in 2017, and it is anticipated that these issues will become even heightened as the electoral process unfolds. The NEC is aware that care must be taken in handling all of these political situations given their security implications.

3.2 Socio-Economic Context

The Lift Liberia Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS), spanning 2008-11, placed Liberia on the path of recovery. Under this strategy, the country saw tangible gains in the areas of peace, national security, stability and infrastructure development, among others. The PRS was replaced with the Agenda for Transformation (AfT), which is an important step toward fulfilling the government's commitment to lift Liberians out of poverty to prosperity (Government of Liberia, 2012).

However, according to the World Bank (2015) situation report, Liberia's economy deteriorated in 2015, with Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth of 0.3%, further down from 0.7% in 2014. The country is struggling to recover from the twin shocks of the Ebola crisis and the sharp decline in commodity prices, which led to business closures, and consequent job losses and reduced revenues. Substantial downside risks remain, which challenge the government's recovery efforts and plans to diversify the economy to mitigate the impact of any future shocks.

The continued terms-of-trade shocks and the reversal in private investment inflows due to the outbreak of the EVD, have prolonged Liberia's post-Ebola economic recovery. The mining sector, which was one of the key drivers of economic growth declined by 17%, followed by 1.1% decline in the agriculture sector. The economy was however salvaged by a relatively resilient services sector, which grew by 5%, attributable mainly to the recovery in construction, hotels and trading services. Furthermore, revenues are projected to decline by 12%, based on the original forecast of US\$474 million. This will necessitate expenditure cuts by Government in order to maintain the already high fiscal deficit target of 8.5% of GDP in fiscal year 2016/17 (World Bank, 2015).

Social capital (trust, unity, solidarity) is in short supply. There are too many vexing social and ethnic issues to be attended. The proportion of people above 15 years old who cannot read and write in any language is approximately 41%. Unemployment is widespread and poverty remains pervasive: approximately 56% of Liberians live on less than United States 1 dollar per day (LISGIS, CWIQ Survey, 2011).

The implications of these socio-economic realities on the electoral process could be profound. First, a reduced national revenue intake could adversely lead to reduction of the budgetary appropriations for the 2017 elections. This could have negative impact on the quality of the elections. Second, economic hardship may engender voters' apathy or the 'selling of votes.' Third, rising levels of unemployment mainly among youths may render them vulnerable to being easily mobilized for violent activities during the electoral process.

3.2 Electoral Context

Historically, Liberia has suffered inadequately organized elections: one of the triggers for the 14-year civil conflict that destroyed not only lives and infrastructure of the nation, but also reversed the political growth and development of the country. From its independence in 1847 to the Rice Riot of 1979 and then the military coup of 1980, Liberia had been a de facto one party state. The five years following the military coup witnessed the militarization of the country, and the hope of pluralistic democratization was further dampened. An election organized in 1985 by the then military

government did little in enhancing pluralistic democracy. The elections were considered by many, including the international community, as not being free, fair and credible.

Tensions heightened and the democratic space became compromised. Civil war broke out in December of 1989 and lasted intermittently until August, 2003. The General Elections of 1997 ushered in the Charles Taylor administration. After the collapse of the Taylor administration, a new elections commission was set up in 2004, as a result of the Accra CPA, to, inter alia, stabilize the nation and hold all-inclusive democratic elections in 2005. Since its establishment, the NEC has successfully conducted two general elections, 14 by-elections and one SSE. These successes are indicative of the fact that Liberia's democracy is maturing and the 2017 elections, in which the sitting president will not contest, will be a major test case for the NEC in particular, and Liberia in general, to sustain the 13 years of peace and stability.

3.3 Demographic Context

According to World Bank (2014) estimates, Liberia has a population of 4.4 million people and an area of 99,067 square kilometer (38,250 square miles). The country is divided into 15 political subdivisions called counties. However, for the purpose of electoral administration, there are 19 election magisterial areas. In terms of political representation in the national legislature, there are 30 senators (two per county) and 73 single-member electoral districts for members of the House of Representatives. The total number of registered voters was 1,903,229 (52% men and 48% women) in 2014; however, the NEC targets 2.5 million people to register for the 2017 elections, with emphasis on outreach to the first-time eligible persons.

As with previous elections, a major challenge for the 2017 elections would be reaching out to the rural voting population due to the fact that 53% of Liberia's population resides in rural communities which are largely inaccessible during the rainy season when electoral activities are scheduled, as required by the constitution.

3.4 SWOT Analysis

Prior to the desk-review process of the 2012-18 Strategic Plan, authorities of the NEC, with technical support from its international partners engaged in a series of consultations, and organized visioning and planning workshops to identify both internal and external influences that have the potential to affect the work of the NEC. Below is an outline of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) recognized by the BoC and the Strategic Planning Committee.

3.4.1 Strengths

- Cohesive management (BoC and Secretariat)
- Staff with meaningful experience in election management
- Appropriate and adequate election materials and machinery
- The NEC's ability to inform the electorate in all 15 counties
- Organized electoral structures in all 15 counties
- Available technology infrastructure

3.4.2 Weaknesses

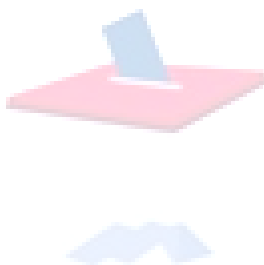
- Personnel with limited technical skill.
- Low capacity of temporary staff contracted during the elections

3.4.3 Opportunities

- Favorable/stable political environment for elections
- Positive relationship with political parties
- A favorable legal framework guaranteeing the right to vote
- Available technical support from partners
- Strong political will of the Commission to be inclusive, and gender responsive

3.4.4 Threats

- Weak justice system and the undermining of the legal framework by various actors(judicial interference) and acts by losing parties to question the integrity of NEC
- Inaccessible geographic areas in all 15 counties, including poor roads
- Illiteracy level of voters
- Many and weak political parties
- Unemployment, poverty and low social capital among citizens
- Funding not always received in timely manner



4. REALIGNED STRATEGIC DIRECTION (2016-2018)

Strategic plans are informed by clearly articulated missions, visions, and core values. This chapter presents the mission, vision, and core values of the NEC that collectively drive and guide its strategy, interactions and relationships with key stakeholders. The overarching goal of the Commission is *to contribute to the consolidation and nurturing of Liberia's nascent democracy through the consistent and effective delivery of free, fair and credible elections at national and local levels*. The chapter also outlines the five pillars, with relevant goals, strategic actions, objectives, expected outcomes and indicators. The NEC is enhancing its gender mainstreaming strategy to ensure that gender concerns are factored into the work of elections, and to promote participation of women as well as other disadvantaged groups in the electoral processes.

4.1 Vision

The NEC will be a credible electoral authority managing public elections for the Liberian people in line with the Laws of Liberia and international best practices.

4.2 Mission

As an independent electoral management body, created by the constitution, we are committed to strengthening democracy and sustainable peace by managing free, fair and transparent elections for the Liberian people.

4.3 Core Values

In performing its mandated functions, the NEC is committed, at all times, to the following core values:

CORE VALUES	
Independence	We will take decisions and implement actions without the influences of any person, group of persons or authority.
Professionalism	We strive to be a knowledgeable and skilled electoral workforce that exhibits the right attitude to its responsibility.
Integrity	We are committed to deliver elections based on the democratic principles of universal suffrage and political equality as reflected in the Liberian Constitution, international standards and agreements – managing elections professionally, impartially and transparently throughout the electoral cycle.
Consistency	We stand to ensure uniformity in applying the provisions of the elections law at all levels of election administration in Liberia and at all times.

4.4 Strategic Pillars and Goals

The strategic plan review identified several operational processes and management practices as areas that should be given priority within NEC over the next two years. Gender mainstreaming is one of the strong focus areas for the Commission and is reflected accordingly in the revised strategy. The revised strategic pillars, goals and actions are interlinked, and together they guide the NEC in the preparation of relevant operational plans to help better carry out its constitutional mandate.

The vision guiding the realigned Strategic Plan is informed by the Commission's understanding of the expectations of the Liberian people – a credible and impartial EMB. This realization is viewed with keen consideration of the strength, weaknesses, opportunities and threats available to, or faced by the NEC. The Revised Plan will pursue the following strategic goals and objectives by undertaking a number of strategic actions and activities under each pillar.

4.4.1 Pillar 1: Legal Framework

Liberia's elections laws were conceived and promulgated under a military regime and modified in a post-conflict era. Laws ought to respond to the dynamic nature of the societies or the domains which they are meant to impact. The socio-economic and political contexts of Liberia are evolving fast, ushering new realities, including evolving democratization needs and tendencies. Hence, there are growing indications that the current elections laws need to be revised regularly to make them more responsive to the changing environments of the country.

The electoral guidelines are meant to give effect to the electoral laws. While these guidelines are formulated by the Board of Commissioners and can be changed more easily than the elections laws, they too need to be responsive to the changing situations in the national environment, particularly the political and electoral domains. There is equally a need to revise these guidelines on regular basis to ensure their rationality and effectiveness.

Given these considerations, Liberia's existing electoral laws and guidelines need to be re-examined with the view of strengthening them to address current conditions and circumstances and lessons learned from the nation's recent past experiences. Accordingly, the legislations will be contextualized by proposing measures to address the concerns of women and men, and other disadvantaged groups.

As indicated in the table below, the Legal Framework Pillar contains two strategic goals and six strategic actions.

GOALS	STRATEGIC ACTIONS
1. To strengthen the legal framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the new Elections Law • Propose amendments for legislative approval • Revise existing guidelines/regulations and code of conduct, including gender perspective, for BoC adoption

GOALS	STRATEGIC ACTIONS
2. To increase stakeholders' understanding of the electoral laws and guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance NEC staff and all electoral stakeholders knowledge on amendments to the new Elections Law and revised electoral guidelines/regulations • Promote gender awareness to educate women, youth and other disadvantaged persons with disability about changes in the electoral laws and guidelines • Strengthen the NEC gender policy/strategy to compliment the broader policy framework

4.4.2 Pillar 2: Electoral Stakeholders' Engagement

The citizenry, as represented by civil society organizations and political parties, should have full confidence in the EMB and the processes it manages. This means that the people, broadly, ought to recognize and accept that the NEC is administering the Elections Law in a transparent, fair, consistent, effective, and efficient manner. Accordingly, beyond free and fair elections, the credibility of elections, as perceived by both the national and international communities, is of paramount importance.

In spite of the tremendous achievements the NEC has made in ensuring a free, fair and transparent electoral process, there are still concerns by segments of the population that the elections managed by the NEC may not have been free and fair. While this may be a problem of perception, the situation has the propensity to undermine the credibility of the Commission, the electoral process and the resultant legitimacy of the results it produces.

Collaterally, the way and manner in which the Legislature handled the threshold issue following the 2008 National Housing and Population Census and the subsequent 2011 Legislative Elections that were based on the decisions of the Legislature, partly undermined the integrity of the electoral process in the eyes of the international community. This problem must be attended to, as Liberia moves forward to consolidate and deepen her nascent democracy.

The public response to consistent enforcement of the elections law and guidelines has been mixed. On the one hand, there are citizens who called for accommodation "for the sake of peace." On the other hand, there are those who believe that true democracy demands that all actors play by the rules, and as such, accommodations undermine the very essence of democratic elections. Whether real or perceived, there is a problem of trust in the electoral process and the Commission that manages it. This must be addressed in meaningful ways.

Legitimacy is about acceptance. A government is legitimate when most of the people accept it. When a large portion of the population questions the validity of the process that brings a government into power, the government becomes less legitimate, in real terms.

The below table outlines the three strategic goals and six actions defined under the Electoral Stakeholders' Engagement Pillar.

GOALS	STRATEGIC ACTIONS
1. To increase participation of stakeholders in the electoral process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educate stakeholders on amended elections law and regulations/guidelines
2. To enhance cooperation between the NEC and electoral stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with stakeholders (political parties, CSOs, media, women's advocates, observers etc.) Strengthen capacity of political parties Enhance compliance and enforcement of relevant laws
3. To enhance collaboration for promoting gender equality among electoral stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen mechanism to engage with gender electoral stakeholders Engage with political parties, observer organizations and media for gender responsiveness

4.4.3 Pillar 3: Civic and Voter Education and Public Information

Against the background of high rates of illiteracy, unemployment, and poverty, civic and voter education is a challenge in Liberia. Many Liberians neither appreciate their civic responsibilities to the state, nor understand the huge civic authority that resides in them collectively. Accordingly, many Liberians are apolitical and passive about issues that should demand their patriotism.

Within this passive socio-political terrain, the Commission is saddled with the responsibility of informing, educating, and communicating electoral decisions, schedules, and processes with the electorate. This is necessary in order to increase citizens' awareness to enable them make informed electoral decisions. The effectiveness of the Commission has often been impeded by the limitation of resources and the demands of other tasks such as logistics management. To attend to some of these challenges, the NEC has often had to forge operational partnerships with an array of local and international organizations to assist with civic education. Some of these organizations have their own electoral agendas, while some simply lack the necessary capacities. As a result, there has been varying quality of services provided by these organizations.

While the Commission recognizes a responsibility to inform the people on elections matters, particularly voter education, it does not believe it should take on the full responsibility of civic education. In other countries, there are civic education commissions responsible for managing national civic IEC programs.

The issue of voter apathy in Liberia, a country wrought with distrust for politicians and political office holders, is an old age problem that needs sustained and prolonged civic engagement. These efforts are needed especially at the grassroots level in order to acculturate the generality of the Liberian society to basic democratic norms. In the absence of a civic education commission in Liberia, the responsibility for motivating and incentivizing voters to fully participate in elections and electoral activities rests mainly with the NEC, with support from civil society and political parties/candidates.

As listed in the below table, four strategic goals and ten strategic actions were identified under the Civic and Voter Education and Communication Pillar.

GOALS	STRATEGIC ACTIONS
1. To enhance citizens' understanding of the electoral process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop CVE operational plan • Provide elections education among youth • Conduct civic education • Engage local communities and leaders
2. To increase voters' participation in elections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote voters' awareness in schools and local communities • Involve local authorities, community and traditional leaders in voter's education • Enhance service providers involvement in CVE campaigns
3. To enhance the media's participation in CVE campaigns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen the capacity of the media to support CVE campaigns
4. To mainstream gender in the CVE process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage women advocates and representatives from minority groups in the electoral process • Ensure women's equal participation in electoral processes (CVEs, poll workers, electoral supervisors, gender mobilizers, etc.)

4.4.4 Pillar 4: Institutional Strengthening

The Commission has a number of internal institutional challenges. Knowledge of these challenges was obtained from the SWOT analysis.

The organizational structure needs to be reviewed and possibly revised to reflect current institutional realities and accommodate emerging organizational needs. For example, the NEC during the 2011 elections established a Gender Unit to address gender-specific electoral issues, followed later by the establishment of a Security Unit and Geo-Information Service (GIS) Unit. Also, the need for a quality assurance mechanism within the NEC structure has been highlighted by different institutional assessments, triggering the establishment of M&E and Compliance and Risk Management (CRM) Sections in 2013 and 2015 respectively. Additionally, lines of responsibility between the BoC and the Secretariat are being further clarified to ensure better coordination.

There is also a need to continue the process of instituting formal policies and procedures to improve the management of key administrative functions such as finance, human resources, procurement and logistics, as well as facilities management, among others. Work on the formulation of these policies and procedures are ongoing with facilitation by the Commissions' technical partners.

Efforts are underway to strengthen the system for human resources planning, recruitment, deployment and retention so that it follows a standard "merit-based approach" that takes into account staff performance, work quality, productivity, effectiveness and efficiency. Another key

management function that the plan seeks to strengthen is information management system, as it relates to information flow and general communication coordination. Concerted efforts will be dedicated to resource mobilization from external partners, realizing that the current economic situation in the country may engender national budget constraints that would affect elections spending. The Institutional Strengthening Pillar outlines five strategic goals and twelve strategic actions as detailed in the below table.

GOALS	STRATEGIC ACTIONS
1. To enhance human capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote staff professional development Implement performance management Strengthen policies/strategies for gender equality in human resource development Incorporate gender perspective/component in all trainings provided to electoral officials/workers Organize focused gender trainings for staff and policy makers
2. To strengthen the management systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update the management policies, processes and procedures Set up an integrated management system
3. To improve the information systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen the internal communication capabilities of the NEC Enhance record management system Strengthen the cooperate image of the NEC
4. To improve the NEC procurement system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen the procurement capabilities of the NEC
5. To mobilize resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen mechanism to mobilize resources

4.4.5 Pillar 5: Election Operations

Since the rollout of the 2012-2018 Strategic Plan, the Commission has successfully managed four by-elections and the 2014 Special Senatorial Election. In spite of the many challenges occasioned by Liberia's post-conflict environment and the deadly Ebola Virus Disease that engulfed the nation, these elections were generally considered free and fair by most Liberians and the international community.

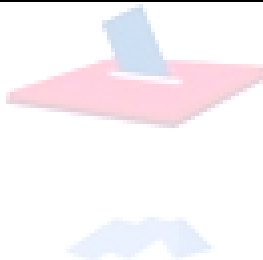
Meanwhile, the much anticipated 2017 General Elections are expected to present novel set of challenges, especially in the area of voter registration. The Commission will continue to use the traditional Optical Mark Recognition (OMR) technology of voter registration.

To achieve this ultimate mandate under this Revised Plan, the Commission, working in concert with stakeholders, will refurbish local offices; plan, organize, and conduct voter registration; conduct a national referendum on proposed amendments to the constitution; conduct the 2017 General Elections and local elections, as well as by-elections that may be called by the Legislature. The Commission will promote gender equality throughout the electoral cycle.

The magnitude of electoral operations for these upcoming elections presents a “tall order” agenda for the Commission. Although the plan reflects the referendum and local elections, there is growing uncertainty that both actions will be undertaken during this period.

The pillar on Elections Operations has one goal and five strategic actions as depicted in the below table.

GOAL	STRATEGIC ACTIONS
1. To deliver free, fair and credible elections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refurbish magisterial offices and warehouses and HQ warehouse • Register voters • Administer general elections • Administer referendum • Administer local elections



5. STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK 2016-2018

PILLAR 1: LEGAL FRAMEWORK (JULY 2016 – JUNE 2018)						
PILLARS	GOALS	STRATEGIC ACTIONS	OWNERSHIP	MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES	EXPECTED OUTCOMES	OUTCOME INDICATORS
1. Legal Framework	1.1 To strengthen the legal framework	1.1.1 Review the new Elections Law	LEGAL	To harmonize all conflicting provisions in the new Elections Law by Feb 2017	Consistency of the provisions in the new Elections Law	Number of complaints filed against the NEC by aggrieved parties
		1.1.2 Propose amendments for legislative approval	LEGAL			
		1.1.3 Revise existing guidelines/regulations and code of conduct, including gender perspective, for BoC adoption	LEGAL	To harmonize all conflicting provisions in the electoral guidelines/regulations and codes of conduct by Jan 2017	Better understanding of the electoral guidelines/regulations among stakeholders	Percentage of recognized political parties/candidates adhering to the electoral guidelines and regulations
	1.2 To increase stakeholders' understanding of electoral laws and guidelines	1.1.1 Enhance NEC staff knowledge on amendments to the new Elections Law and revised electoral guidelines/regulations	OPERATIONS	To increase awareness on the amendments to the new Elections Law and revised electoral guidelines/regulations	Gender responsiveness of the electoral legislations and policy framework	Number of laws, policies, and procedures updated to include gender perspective
		1.1.2 Promote gender awareness to educate women, youth and disabled about changes in the electoral laws and guidelines	PROGRAMS			
		1.1.3 Strengthen the NEC gender policy/strategy to compliment the broader policy framework		To create a policy framework for gender mainstreaming in elections work		

PILLAR 2: ELECTORAL STAKEHOLDERS' ENGAGEMENT (JULY 2016 – JUNE 2018)						
PILLARS	GOALS	STRATEGIC ACTIONS	OWNERSHIP	MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES	EXPECTED OUTCOMES	OUTCOME INDICATORS
2 Electoral Stakeholder's engagement	2.1 To increase participation of stakeholders in the electoral process	2.1.1 Educate stakeholders on amended elections law and regulations/guidelines	PROGRAMS	To disseminate information to all stakeholders on electoral procedures and guidelines up to elections day	Increased stakeholders awareness on electoral procedures and guidelines	Percentage of political parties and candidates that comply with registration procedures
	2.2 To enhance cooperation between the NEC and electoral stakeholders	2.2.1 Collaborate with stakeholders (political parties, CSOs, media, etc.)	PROGRAMS	To increase public trust in the electoral system by June 2018	Broad acceptance of the elections results by stakeholders	
		2.2.2 Strengthen capacity of political parties	PROGRAMS	To increase to 75% the proportion of political parties that meet the NEC reporting requirement by Dec. 2017	Strong political parties with organized internal institutional systems	Percentage of political parties whose annual reports meet NEC requirements
		2.2.3 Enhance compliance and enforcement of relevant laws	PROGRAMS			
	2.3 To enhance collaboration for promoting gender equality among electoral stakeholders	2.3.1 Strengthen mechanism to engage with gender electoral stakeholders	PROGRAMS	To create 15 gender in elections coordination group at county level	Increased participation of women in the leadership of institutions/groups of key electoral stakeholders	Percentage of political parties leaders/candidates who are women
		2.3.2 Engage with political parties, observer organizations and media for gender responsiveness	PROGRAMS	To promote adoption of gender related recommendations by political parties, observers and media		

PILLAR 3: CIVIC/VOTER EDUCATION & PUBLIC INFORMATION (July 2016 – June 2018)						
PILLARS	GOALS	STRATEGIC ACTIONS	OWNERSHIP	MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES	EXPECTED OUTCOMES	OUTCOME INDICATORS
3 Civic/Voter Education and Public Information	3.1 To enhance citizens’ understanding of the electoral process	3.1.1 Develop CVE operational plan	PROGRAMS	To reduce to 2% the share of invalid votes in elections conducted by the NEC	Enhanced citizen participation in the electoral process	Percentage of valid votes cast Voters turnout Percentage of women voting in elections
		3.1.2 Provide elections education among youth	PROGRAMS	To increase by 50% the share of first time voters on the voter roll		
		3.1.3 Conduct civic education	PROGRAMS			
		3.1.4 Engage local communities	PROGRAMS			
	3.2 To increase voters’ participation in elections	3.2.1 Promote voters’ awareness in schools and local communities	PROGRAMS	To increase to at least 80% the share of registered voters that turnout to vote in the 2017 elections	General acceptance of the election results	
		3.2.2 Involve local authorities/community leaders in voter’s education	PROGRAMS	To increase the participation of local community and traditional leaders and CSOs in the electoral process		
		3.2.3 Enhance service providers involvement in CVE campaigns	PROGRAMS			
	3.3 To enhance the media’s participation in CVE campaigns	3.3.1 Strengthen the capacity of the media to support CVE campaigns	COMMUNICATIONS	To increase public awareness of the electoral process		

PILLAR 3: CIVIC/VOTER EDUCATION & PUBLIC INFORMATION (July 2016 – June 2018)						
PILLARS	GOALS	STRATEGIC ACTIONS	OWNERSHIP	MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES	EXPECTED OUTCOMES	OUTCOME INDICATORS
	3.4 To mainstream gender in the CVE processes	3.4.1 Engage women advocates and representatives from minority groups in electoral process	PROGRAMS	To promote equal participation of women in elections work	Increased participation of women as election workers	Percentage of NEC permanent and temporary staff who are women
		3.4.2 Ensure women's equal participation in electoral processes (CVEs, poll workers, electoral supervisors, gender mobilizers, etc.)				

PILLAR 4: INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING (July 2016 – June 2018)						
PILLARS	GOALS	STRATEGIC ACTIONS	OWNERSHIP	MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES	EXPECTED OUTCOMES	OUTCOME INDICATORS
4 Institutional Strengthening	4.1 To enhance human capacity	4.1.1 Promote staff professional development	ADMINISTRATION	To strengthen the technical capacity of NEC staff by mid-2018	Enhanced staff competence in delivery of electoral services	Percentage of staff who express confidence in their ability to perform their duties and responsibilities
		4.1.2 Implement performance management	ADMINISTRATION			
		4.1.3 Strengthen policies/strategies for gender equality in human resource development	PROGRAMS	To promote equal opportunities for women employment among NEC staff		
		4.1.4 Incorporate gender perspective/component in all trainings provided to electoral officials/workers	PROGRAMS	To increase gender sensitivity in the planning, implementation and evaluation of elections	Enhanced understanding of gender in elections work	Percentage of NEC staff who incorporate key concepts/ perspectives of gender in their work
		4.1.5 Organize focused gender trainings for staff and policy makers	PROGRAMS			
	4.2 To strengthen the management systems	4.2.1 Update the management policies, processes and procedures	ADMINISTRATION	To standardize the NEC policies, processes and procedure by June 2018	Functional internal operational systems to support effective management of elections	Timeliness of reports from NEC departments and magisterial offices
		4.2.2 Set up an integrated management system	ADMINISTRATION	To automate relevant NEC management functions via an integrated electronic platform		

PILLAR 4: INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING (July 2016 – June 2018)						
PILLARS	GOALS	STRATEGIC ACTIONS	OWNERSHIP	MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES	EXPECTED OUTCOMES	OUTCOME INDICATORS
						Percentage of elections budget financed by external partners
	4.3 To improve the information systems	4.3.1 Strengthen the internal communication capabilities of the NEC	ADMINISTRATION	To improve the internal and external communication system of the NEC by mid-2018	Improved information flow and feedback mechanism	
		4.3.2 Enhance record management system	OPERATIONS			
		4.3.3 Strengthen the cooperate image of the NEC	COMMUNICATIONS			
	4.4 To improve the NEC procure ment system	4.4.1 Strengthen the procurement capabilities of the NEC	ADMINISTRATION	To enhance NEC’s compliance with PPCC guidelines and regulations	Increased funding support of external partners for elections operation	
4.5 To mobilize resource s	4.5.1 Strengthen mechanism to mobilize resources	BoC	To secure 10% of elections budget to complement GOL commitment			

PILLAR 5: ELECTIONS OPERATIONS (JULY 2016 – JUNE 2018)						
PILLARS	GOALS	STRATEGIC ACTIONS	OWNERSHIP	MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES	EXPECTED OUTCOMES	OUTCOME INDICATORS
5 Electoral Operations	5.1 To deliver free, fair, credible elections	5.1.1 Refurbish magisterial offices and warehouses and HQ warehouse	OPERATIONS	To improve the conditions of 19 magisterial offices and warehouses by the end of the third quarter of fiscal 2016/2017	Sustained peace and stability	Incidence of elections-related violence
		5.1.2 Register Voters	OPERATIONS	To register 100% of eligible voters by the end of the VR process	Enhanced public confidence in the credibility of the NEC	Percentage of eligible voters registered
		5.1.3 Administer the general elections	OPERATIONS	To hold presidential and representative elections by the end of 2017		Percentage of registered voters who are register to vote for the first time
		5.1.4 Administer referendum	OPERATIONS	To hold national referendum by June 2017	General acceptance of elections results	Nature of reports from election observers
		5.1.5 Administer local elections	OPERATIONS	To hold local elections by June 2018		Proportion of electoral cases filed with the NEC that reaches the Supreme Court

6. MONITORING AND EVALUATION MECHANISM

Monitoring and Evaluation remains an integral part of the Plan, ensuring a continuous process of learning from experience. As indicated in the strategic framework, higher level results and indicators have been integrated into the Plan, along with relevant measureable objectives. At departmental levels, main activities, performance targets and timelines have been included in the operational plan, which complements this Strategic Plan.

The M&E Section will coordinate a decentralized M&E strategy, whereby it will support each implementing unit to take responsibility for tracking the results of its work. This strategy involves the identification of M&E focal persons by all implementing sections and units to lead internal M&E activities. While the M&E Section is responsible for tracking overall progress, and assessment of the extent to which objectives have been achieved, the CRM Section will assess the level of compliance with applicable laws, policies, procedures and guidelines instituted to strengthen the management system of the NEC.

To facilitate implementation of the M&E strategy, a result-based M&E Plan will be developed to capture relevant data on identified indicators, including reporting frequencies, data sources, data collection methods, etc. In addition to regular monitoring of project outputs through periodic reporting by the relevant implementing units, there shall be a final evaluation of the revised strategic plan. Semi-annual progress review sessions will be conducted to track progress.

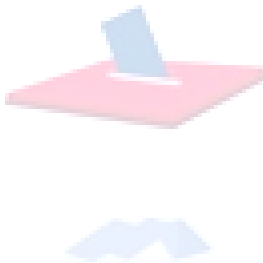
Also, an inter-departmental Progress Review Committee (PRC) to oversee and monitor the implementation of the Plan will be established, under the leadership of the Chairman of the NEC. These efforts will be coordinated by the Monitoring and Evaluation Section. The PRC provides leadership in the Plan implementation, tracking targets and timelines, evaluating progress in the implementation of activities, and resolving implementation challenges. It also holds various sections and units accountable for agreed actions, timelines and deliverables.

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