CASE 2015 REPORT
CONTENT AGGREGATION SYSTEM FOR ELECTIONS

Observing Nigeria’s elections in real time

SHEHU MUSA YAR’ADUA FOUNDATION
MAY 2015
The Shehu Musa Yar’Adua Foundation was established by the friends, family and associates of Shehu Yar’Adua to honour the legacy of one of Nigeria’s foremost contemporary leaders.

Through its facilities and programmes, the Foundation endeavors to further the ideals of Shehu Yar’Adua; his commitment to national unity, good governance and to building a just and democratic society for all Nigerians.

The Foundation’s Public Policy Initiative encourages the formulation and implementation of sustainable public policy through investment in the use of new media as a tool for driving good governance.
# CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Executive Summary</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The CASE 2015 Team</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner Organizations</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Media Tracking Center</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcomes and Impact</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Elections</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Elections</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The CASE 2015 Platform</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordination and Training</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Media Promotion</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feasibility Study</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ekiti Pilot Test</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusions and Recommendations</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Improving transparency and openness in Nigerian elections through the collaborative use of technology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Federal</th>
<th>State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>2015 Election Reports</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggie</td>
<td>2,009,655</td>
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<td>Twitter</td>
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<td>RSS Feeds</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peak Report Rate</td>
<td>14,000 per minute</td>
<td>10,000 per minute</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Content Aggregation System for Elections (CASE 2015) is a technology-enabled, multi-stakeholder election observation system designed to improve the scope and detail of information available to civil society and citizen stakeholders during and beyond elections.

CASE 2015 was envisioned to provide election stakeholders with relevant and meaningful information about the progress of elections in real time.

CASE is comprised of a social media aggregation software (Aggie), a platform for aggregating and analyzing traditional observer reports (ELMO) and a mobile app for sending reports. The incident management process created an important connection between unverified social media reports and trusted observers deployed in the field.

The Foundation brought together thirteen civil society organizations and two technology partners who worked over a period of sixteen months to improve the quality, scope and effectiveness of election observation.

During the 2015 election period, the platform retrieved more than 2.6 million micro reports from social media and received over 11,000 reports from registered observers in the field. These reports enabled volunteers to identify 1,542 critical incidents that were escalated to INEC and relevant security agencies in a timely manner.

The impact of CASE 2015 on the 2015 elections has demonstrated that beyond the mere adoption of technology for reporting, its collaborative use by a community of election observation stakeholders to aggregate and analyze reports holds even greater promise in improving the scope and quality of election observation information available to stakeholders during and after elections.

Challenges faced and lessons learned during the elections are included in this report as recommendations for future technology based election observation.

Support for CASE 2015 was generously provided by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA), the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and the Canadian Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI).
Elections are a critical pillar of democracy and good governance the world over. When free, fair and transparent, they confer legitimacy and acceptance. In Nigeria, elections have too often been a sour point of our democracy. Incidences of fraud, rigging, vote buying and blatant results manipulation have undermined the credibility of this important process, resulting in low public confidence in the outcome. If Nigeria’s young democracy is to be sustained, openness, transparency and credibility must be institutionalized as part of the culture of electoral processes.

One of the many highlights of the Nigerian 2011 elections was the role that technology played in empowering civil society organizations to organize, collaborate and mobilize around the elections. The Foundation’s Social Media Tracking Center (SMTC) aggregated 500,000 micro election reports from 70,000 new media users, providing a richer, more insightful perspective on the conduct of elections than any single election monitoring attempt.

Since 2011, Nigeria has experienced a population explosion on social media. Nigerians above the age of 18 on Facebook grew from less than 3 million to over 14 million in 2015. As a result, social media has become a significant contributor of information to election observation.

The Yar’Adua Foundation has been at the forefront of promoting transparency and accountability in Nigeria’s election process through the adoption of new media technologies to address some of the unique challenges of Nigeria’s election process. Our experience in 2011 pointed to the feasibility of developing an innovative technology-driven approach to address and overcome challenges encountered by civil society organizations.

The Content Aggregation System for Elections (CASE 2015) was envisioned as a pioneering technology platform to facilitate nationwide civil society collaboration in election observation.
THE CASE 2015
TEAM

Project Coordinator
Jacqueline Farris
Jackie was responsible for overall management of the project, including reporting, facilitation of meetings and managing relationships with CASE 2015 partners.

Content Developer
Sayo Samuel
Sayo created training content and manuals. She was also responsible for project-related research and report writing.

Software Architect
Amara Nwankpa
Amara was responsible for concept development and system design. He managed platform development activities implemented by CASE 2015 technology partners.

Admin & Documentation
Ekate Williams
Kiki was responsible for day to day project administration and interaction with CSO observer groups.

Coordination Officer
Marianne Ejiofor
Marianne was responsible for collating and processing information required for coordination and deployment planning.

Training Officer
Anyalewa Ejila
Lewa conducted training sessions for lead trainers and provided assistance to CSOs during step-down observer training.
PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

7,087 useful reports were submitted during federal elections and 4,319 reports during state elections.

CASE 2015 was a maiden attempt to implement a standardized, technology-driven election observation system in Nigeria. CSOs were surveyed to determine what features were required in order to adopt CASE as their primary reporting tool for elections.

A centralized observer deployment plan allowed groups to indicate where they planned to deploy observers and the number to be deployed in each state, enabling CASE 2015 and its partners to identify gaps and overlaps in geographic coverage. Partner groups registered 9,619 field observers on the CASE platform, though a number of organizations experienced operational challenges that resulted in their inability to deploy at full strength.

PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

- Centre for Information Technology and Development (CITAD)
- CLEEN Foundation
- Election Monitor
- Nigeria Federation of Muslim Women Associations of Nigeria (FOMWAN)
- Human Rights Monitor (HRM)
- Justice, Peace and Development Commission (JDPC)
- Nigerian Women Situation Room
- Nigerian Women’s Trust Fund
- ReclaimNaija
- Stakeholder Democracy Network (SDN)
- The African Centre for Leadership, Strategy and Development (Centre LSD)
- Transition Monitoring Group (TMG)
- Youth Initiative for Advocacy, Growth and Advancement (YIAGA)
The Social Media Tracking Center was co-located with the Nigerian Civil Society Situation Room to maximize collaboration and information sharing with key CSO stakeholders. The CASE team provided quantitative data to inform and support public statements issued throughout the election period.

The Situation Room is a coordinating platform of over 60 civil society organizations that vary in composition and core values but have in common an ideology of promoting good democratic governance and ensuring its sustainability. It was established in 2010 ahead of the 2011 general elections in response to the need to enhance civil society coordination and ensure constructive and proactive engagement of the election process.

“CASE 2015 has paved the way towards integrating technology at the heart of election observation and analysis, not just here but in other countries.”

Clara Barnett | Governance Adviser | Governance, Security and Social Development Team | DFID
“This strategic technology enabled real time data collection and monitoring, leading to innovative forms of information sharing. CASE helped to foster public trust by assuring voters of INEC’s resolve to handle issues arising during the electoral process.”  Fatu Ogwuche, ICC Manager

The INEC Citizens Contact Center created an interface between the Commission and voters on election day. Real time information and reports were constantly exchanged between the INEC Situation Room and the CASE Social Media Tracking Center. The Contact Center relied on the CASE team to verify reports received from voters across the country. Access was also granted to the Aggie interface which projected reports from accredited observers, making it easy to cull verified and false reports that were subsequently shared with the public on INEC’s social media pages.

The Yar’Adua Foundation was instrumental in the concept and design of the ICCC, which provides information channels for direct incident reporting by the general public.

INEC hashtag #NigeriaDecides received 134,736 contributions and generated 825,478 tweets with 2,512,397,059 timeline deliveries.

The Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA) Crisis Center for the 2015 Election found CASE highly effective and complimentary to existing intelligence gathering systems employed during the elections. The ONSA Crisis Centre acknowledged CASE escalation as the origin for not less than 20% of incident reports it treated in real time.
CASE went live at 6.00pm on March 27th and continued to aggregate reports until 10.00pm on March 29th. The platform was also deployed for state elections at 6.00pm on April 10th and received aggregated reports until 7.00pm on April 12th.

The tracking center team featured twenty five young, tech savvy volunteers representing civil society organizations and the general public who worked round the clock to process and escalate reports from field observers and social media sources.

Delegates from international media and observer missions, including William Sweeney, President and CEO, International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), USAID, DFID, NDI, the World Bank and Reuters visited the tracking center.

For more information:
www.CASE2015.org
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z7O551vXsnw
The CASE 2015 platform aggregated 2.6 million relevant reports in real time. More than 1,500 unique incidents were identified and escalated for action to INEC, the Situation Room and security agencies.

Relevance Team
Reviewed social media reports in real time, identifying those containing information relevant to CASE 2015 stakeholders. Incident reports were created using information extracted from retrieved reports.

Veracity Team
Responsible for determining the veracity of incident reports originating from social media. For each incident created by the relevance team, a veracity team member contacted field observers stationed in proximity to reported incidents to confirm if the incident had occurred as reported.

Escalation Team
Coordinated with external stakeholders, including the Civil Society Situation Room, INEC and the ONSA Crisis Center to ensure that confirmed incidents originating from both social media and field observers were responded to as quickly as possible.
The Digital Bridge Institute served as technology partner to the Yar’Adua Foundation for the development and deployment of CASE 2015. DBI, in addition to helping customize and integrate the aggregation software for the CASE platform, also provided support for effective training of observers. DBI was established in 2004 as a government funded institution to build information technology capacity in Nigeria.
A number of locations rallied from a late start to be back on schedule by the commencement of voting.

**Outcomes and Impact**

**Timeliness of INEC Officials**

Percentage of locations where INEC officials arrived by 7:30am

**Arrival - Nationwide**

Performance of INEC officials varied greatly by state. In 52% of locations, officials were reported to have arrived by 7:30am. In **Osun State**, officials had arrived their Polling Units by 7:30am in over 86% of locations. In **Delta State**, this was true for only 13% of locations.

**Recovery**

A number of locations rallied from a late start to be back on schedule by the commencement of voting.

**Accreditation started before 9am**

**On schedule by 1pm**

- 51%
- 68%
Accreditation Process
Start Times Nationwide

- 7% Before 8am
- 44% Between 8am and 9am
- 37% Between 9am and 12 noon
- 8% 12 noon or later

Process Performance
Despite opposition from many quarters, INEC introduced biometric card readers to accredit voters for the first time during the 2015 elections. The adoption of this new technology produced mixed results. Widespread challenges forced INEC to suspend compulsory use of card readers mid-way into accreditation for federal elections.

Process Fault reports related to Accreditation Process

- 56% Locations reported that voters with PVC’s were denied Accreditation

“The card reader was only successful for 80 voters while 139 voters did manual accreditation.”

Observer Remark: PU 001, Ward 5, Esan North East, Edo State
Security

Order at polling units

Some disorder but order was eventually restored

Orderly 76%

Disorderly 6%

Conduct and Presentation

22% Locations with No Security Officials Present

9 in 10 Security Officials were easily identifiable

70 Number of Incidents where Security Officials were complicit in misconduct (7%)
Election Incidents
Volume of Incidents by Category

**Polling Logistics**
- Abduction, Arson, Destruction of Property, Disorderly Conduct, Intimidation, Killing, Shooting, Physical Assault, Threats, Chaos from Disagreements over Results (32%)

**Violence**
- Abduction, Arson, Destruction of Property, Disorderly Conduct, Intimidation, Killing, Shooting, Physical Assault, Threats, Chaos from Disagreements over Results (24%)

**Electoral Misconduct**
- Political Parties Campaigning, Under-Age Voting, Vote Buying, Ballot Stuffing, Voter Disenfranchisement, Falsified Results, Multiple Thumb Printing (21%)

**Process Faults**
- Denial of accreditation to entitled voters, Accreditation of voters without valid voters card, Voters fingers were not marked with ink, Voters names were not checked in the register, Voters cannot find name in register, No ticking of names in voters register, Voting without showing voters card (23%)

**Incidents Nationwide**
- 1,073

15
Possible Inflation of Voter Turnout

Civil society stakeholders have alleged that in spite of the application of card readers for accreditation, official results published by INEC suggest an inflation of voter turnout compared to what was observed on the ground. For instance, Quick Count, a parallel vote tabulation initiative by the Transition Monitoring Group, suggests that turnout inflation in the South South zone could have been as high as 15.3%. Aggregated estimates of voter turnout by CASE 2015 observers are in line with this opinion.
Gender Participation

38% of voters were women

“Two important factors resulting in low voter turnout of women were: 1) violence and the threat of violence that resulted in the temporary relocation of women and children to their states of origin and 2) the inability of women to obtain their permanent voters cards.”

Ayisha Osori, CEO
Nigerian Women’s Trust Fund

2 in 5 Election Officials were female
STATE ELECTIONS

Timeliness of INEC Officials
Percentage of locations where INEC officials arrived by 7:30am

Arrival - Nationwide

In 69% of locations, INEC officials were reported to have arrived by 7:30am. Performance with regard to timeliness varied greatly by state. In Sokoto, INEC officials had arrived their Polling Units by 7:30am in over 88% of locations. In Ekiti State, this was true for only 17% of locations.

Recovery

Most locations rallied from a late start to be back on schedule by commencement of voting.

Accreditation started before 9am
81%
On schedule by 1pm
90%
Accreditation Start Times Nationwide

- **Before 8am**: 14%
- **Between 8am and 9am**: 67%
- **Between 9am and 12 noon**: 16%
- **12 noon or later**: 3%

Card Reader Performance

Increased familiarity with the biometric card reader during the federal election resulted in a much improved accreditation experience during state elections. However, there are still many challenges that INEC must work to resolve if this new technology is to become a permanent feature of Nigeria's electoral process.

- **Locations where Card Readers worked as expected**: 80%
- **50% of Card Reader Failures were due to rejection of voters fingerprints**

"Card reader not configured for today's polls, displaying figures from previous polls"

Observer Remark:

PU 005, Ward 11, Ezeagu LGA, Enugu State
CASE Aggregated Turnout Estimates By Geopolitical Zone - State Elections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ZONE</th>
<th>TURNOUT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North Central</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North East</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North West</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South East</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South South</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South West</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Pre-eminence of National Politics over Local Politics

CASE 2015 observers reported a significant reduction in voter turnout for the North West, North Central and South West regions when compared to federal elections. This is ironic given that outcomes of local politics tend to have a greater impact on the quality of life of voters than do national politics.

Female Voter Participation

33% of voters were women
Existing open source software was leveraged to customize and deploy an aggregation platform consisting of hardware and software that collated and analysed real time reports from traditional observers, crowd sourced citizen observers and social media. The aggregation platform gathered information from these various sources to present a status dashboard of the elections.

Visualization Platform Design (CASE Viz)
CASE Viz is a visualization platform designed to display relevant election data in informative charts and map views. Authorized partners were required to enter a username and password to access the main visualization area.

Aggie
Aggie is an online content aggregation software developed by Georgia Tech University and the Yar’Adua Foundation for the Nigerian 2011 elections and subsequently deployed in Ghana, Liberia and Kenya for election monitoring. Aggie combs through social media sources, online feeds and other web data, aggregating relevant crowd-sourced reports for analysis. For the purposes of CASE 2015, Aggie was overhauled to incorporate Incident Management Features. The new version, Aggie 2.0, also incorporated a new visual interface.
ELMO

ELMO is an Election Monitoring data collection and reporting system, relied upon by The Carter Center election observation missions around the globe to analyze data and assess broader political processes. Observers are able to submit reports in real time via tablets, SMS, or directly online. CASE 2015 adapted ELMO to include improved SMS and User Management Features.

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ELMO

ELMO is an Election Monitoring data collection and reporting system, relied upon by The Carter Center election observation missions around the globe to analyze data and assess broader political processes. Observers are able to submit reports in real time via tablets, SMS, or directly online. CASE 2015 adapted ELMO to include improved SMS and User Management Features.
Mobile Application
The CASE 2015 mobile app enabled the collection and relay of data to the platform. Process reports, updates and incident reports were collated and analysed at the backend and displayed through a web portal and other online spaces. Two versions of the app were developed to run on the most commonly owned handsets in Nigeria (Java and Android). To make reporting to the CASE 2015 platform even easier, an SMS helper app eliminated the need to type long and tedious codes.

The CASE 2015 app featured six forms with drop down menus and options sets that automatically composed and transmitted SMS codes corresponding to user reports. Offline capacity enabled the app to store input on the handset in the event of irregular network connectivity. Reports were then transmitted to the server once the phone had access to a network connection.

Coordination and Training
Train-the-trainer workshops were conducted in Lagos, Ado-Ekiti, Port Harcourt, Yenagoa and Abuja. The CASE 2015 team provided content and training support to ensure that step-down training was as effective as possible.

Three tutorial videos detailing an overview of CASE 2015 SMS and mobile app reporting were developed to remediate gaps identified during training. Videos were made available to partner groups and their field observers via a download link and flash drives to serve as a guide on personal handsets.

An estimated 7,670 field observers from 13 civil society organizations were trained in preparation for elections.
Field Guide
Field guides served as a reference tool to guide observers on the use of CASE 2015 reporting tools. It contained information on the election day timeline and schedule when observers were to submit reports.

SOCIAL MEDIA PROMOTION

Ad campaigns on Facebook and Twitter featured illustrated flashcards

Facebook Campaign
A Facebook page, VoteAndShareNG, was created to encourage social media savvy voters to share their election experience. Facebook ads ran for two weeks prior to elections and reached over 100,000 Facebook users. More than 14,000 users liked the ads, 89% of which were male and 11% female.

Twitter Campaign
A twitter account, @VoteAndShareNG, was created for voters to share information about the election. An ad campaign ran for one week prior to the March 28 election and was followed by 1,329 twitter users. The campaign resulted in 201,218 impressions and was re-tweeted 707 times.
FEASIBILITY STUDY

GATHERING REQUIREMENTS

To design the most appropriate content aggregation system for civil society groups, the CASE 2015 team conducted interviews with 18 organizations to gather requirements.

1 INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS

- Organizations were interested in gathering election day performance
  - 16/18

- Organizations were interested in gathering incident reports
  - 18/18

2 SOURCING INFORMATION FROM OTHERS

- Organizations relied on incident reports from others
  - 8/10

3 REAL TIME REPORT TRANSMISSION & ANALYSIS

- Observers that planned to send SMS Reports directly from the field during elections
  - 94%

- Observers that planned to send Social Media reports directly from the field during elections
  - 41%

- Observers that planned to observe elections in real time
  - 100%

- Observers that planned to use some form of automated process to analyse field reports in real time
  - 5%
In preparation for full scale deployment of the technology in 2015, a pilot test was conducted during the Ekiti State gubernatorial election to determine the effectiveness of CASE technology and identify areas requiring improvement. The pilot test provided an important opportunity to expose people, process and technology components of CASE 2015 to the rigors of Nigerian elections.

**Project Team**

Community Life Project (ReclaimNaija): deployed 167 volunteer observers to all 16 Local Government Areas of the state. 77 observers tested the mobile app on new handsets while 85 observers used their personal phones. The CASE team managed and processed reports.

**Processes**

- Observation Planning
- Training
- Aggregation Planning
- Observer Reporting
- Incident Management
- Observer Debrief

**Technology**

- Initial Release of Aggie 2.0
- Generic version of ELMO
- Generic version of mobile app, ODK Collect
LEVERAGING TECHNOLOGY TO REPORT ON ELECTIONS IS NOW THE NORM
CASE 2015 has demonstrated that beyond the mere adoption of technology for reporting, its collaborative use by a community of election observation stakeholders to aggregate and analyze reports holds even greater promise in improving the scope and quality of election observation information available to stakeholders during and after the elections.

SOCIAL MEDIA IS A SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTOR TO ELECTION OBSERVATION
Nigeria has experienced a population explosion on social media. The number of Nigerians on Facebook over the age of 18 grew from less than 3 million in 2011 to over 14 million in 2015. The platform retrieved over 2.6 million micro reports from social media sources compared to 500,000 during the 2011 elections. These reports contributed to the identification, verification and escalation of 1,542 election related incidents to the appropriate authorities.

The growing popularity of social media in Nigeria, however, presents its own problems. The sheer volume of retrieved reports made it nearly impossible to filter and analyze reports in real time. Improved technologies will be required to filter and analyze social media posts quickly and effectively for future elections. A larger Social Media Tracking Team will also be required to manage social media feeds.

A denial of service attack was launched against ELMO during the federal elections which made it unresponsive between 9am-12pm on March 28, 2015. Our technology partners worked diligently to identify the hacker’s IP address and restore the system.

VERIFICATION OF SOCIAL MEDIA REPORTS IS IMPERATIVE
The CASE 2015 Incident Management Process created an important connection between unverified social media reports and trusted observers deployed in the field. The SMTC identified 401 unique incidents on social media, of which observers in the field were able to verify 136 as true and 84 as false. This experience illustrates that social media incident reports can provide important intelligence to traditional observer groups and act as leads for further investigation. Feedback from veracity checks on social media incident reports can also combat misinformation and harmful election propaganda.

CIVIL SOCIETY STAKEHOLDERS REQUIRE OPERATIONAL CAPACITY
Collaborative planning and coordination in the recruitment, training and deployment of observers for elections in Nigeria presents a critical opportunity to improve the independent assessment of election performance. Many groups, however, require support to build capacity in planning their operations and managing information in a structured manner.
INT’L DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS CAN INCENTIVIZE COLLABORATION
International Development Partners play an important role in influencing the quality of election observation in Nigeria. Timely provision of grants can help CSOs avoid the current ad-hoc approach to observer recruitment and deployment. Strategic grant components can also be incorporated to incentivize collaboration with other CSOs, reducing duplication and improving overall information gathering.

INEC MUST RESTRUCTURE THE OBSERVER ACCREDITATION PROCESS
INEC observer accreditation can be a bottleneck, or at worst, a point of failure in election observation missions, introducing unnecessary uncertainty in observer deployment plans. This uncertainty makes it difficult for CSOs to sufficiently plan observer deployment and reduces the number of projected observers that are successfully deployed in the field.

RECOMMENDATIONS

IMPROVE CASE TECHNOLOGY FOR FUTURE ELECTIONS
- Enhance visualization interface of election dashboards
- Strengthen social media report filtering and analysis capacity to cope with extraordinary volumes
- Upgrade mobile app to ensure compatibility with a wider range of mobile operating systems and improved usability for field observers

INCREASE EFFECTIVENESS OF SOCIAL MEDIA TRACKING CENTER
- Recruit a larger and broader team to manage social media reports
- Improve the incident management process to better track the impact of escalated reports

ENHANCE ITC CAPACITY OF CIVIL SOCIETY OBSERVER GROUPS
- Build capacity to utilize technology in each aspect of election observation
- Recruit and train observers comfortable with the use of technology tools

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS
- Structure election observation grants to require grantees to collaborate and share information
- Provide support to build capacity for structured information management and deployment planning – essential for CSO collaboration

INEC
- Improve logistics of the INEC observer accreditation process to ensure that every registered observer receives valid credentials at least one week before the elections.