

**GUIDELINES RELATING TO NATIONAL
NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS
INVOLVED IN
CIVIC AND VOTER EDUCATION
FOR ELECTIONS IN
LIBERIA
2010**

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PREAMBLE:

Whereas, Article 89 of the January 6, 1986 Constitution of the Republic of Liberia established the Elections Commission as an autonomous Public Commission;

Whereas, the Legislature consistent with the powers granted said body by the constitution enacted the New Elections Law of 1986 for the governance of the Commission;

Whereas, Chapter 2, Section 9, Subsection (a) of the New Elections Law of 1986 empowers the National Elections Commission (NEC) to formulate and enforce guidelines controlling the conduct of all elections for elective public offices in Liberia;

Whereas, Voter Education is a cardinal aspect of the work of any electoral body with the National Elections Commission being no exception;
Realizing the importance of Civic and Voter Education, the National Elections Commission in its six year strategic plan of 2006 listed Civic education as the first of its four strategic programs;

NOW THEREFORE,

Pursuant to its authority herein above stated, the National Elections Commission hereby promulgates the following guidelines:

CHAPTER I: GENERAL PROVISIONS

Section 1: CITATION

These guidelines may be cited as guidelines relating to National non-governmental organizations involved in Civic and Voter Education for Elections in Liberia.

Section 2: DEFINITIONS

2.1 In these guidelines, unless the context otherwise requires:

a. “Commission” means the National Elections Commission, (NEC);

b. “Constitution” means the Constitution of the Republic of Liberia of January 6, 1986;

c. “Civic and Voter Education “means dissemination of general information on elections as contained in manuals produced and / or approved by NEC, mobilization of the Liberian people for popular participation in national and local electoral processes for elective public offices;

d. “National non-governmental organization “means a National non-governmental organization that is accredited by the National Elections Commission to engage in activities specified in Section 2.1 (c) herein above

CHAPTER 2: NATIONAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Section I: CATEGORIES OF NATIONAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

- I. For the purpose of these guidelines, groups that may be permitted are,
 - a. Organizations from religious institutions;
 - b. Organizations from non-political interest groups;
 - c. Community based organizations;
 - d. Civil society organizations; and
 - e. Organizations from non-partisan institutions

Section 2: SCOPE OF DUTIES AND FUNCTIONS

The Scope of duties and functions of accredited National non-governmental organizations are as follows:

- a. To disseminate information based on syllabus contents and topics approved by the Commission;
- b. To use additional materials not inconsistent with the Constitution of Liberia, the Laws, guidelines, code of conduct and manuals;
- c. To adhere to the constitution, elections laws, and NEC guidelines;
- d. To disseminate information based on Civic and Voter Education Plan of NEC, and
- e. To disseminate unbiased and non-prejudicial information.

Section 3: NATIONALITY

Only Liberian citizens 18 years of age or above who are members of, or employed by accredited organizations may be allowed to participate in civic and voter education.

Section 4: REQUIREMENTS AND PROCEDURES

Any organization desiring accreditation to conduct civic and voter education for national public office purposes shall submit application for accreditation and meet the following Requirements

- a. give the full name of the organization;
- b. Submit its Articles of Incorporation;
- c. Submit its By-Laws and Constitution;
- d. Provide list of officers;
- e. Declaration of non-partisan activities prior to and during the electoral process;
- f. Give the aims and objectives (general and specific) of the organization;
- g. Provide list of its field staff;

- a. Show indication of its capacity to participate in the electoral process (qualification, training, expertise, etc.);
- b. Declaration to perform after accreditation; and
- c. Provide a statement indicating that such organization and its members shall abide by the laws of the Republic of Liberia, including but not limited to, regulations, guidelines and code of conduct of NEC.

Section 4.1 ACCEPTANCES OR REJECTION

After receipt of an application along with its accompanying documents from the organization, NEC in the exercise of its authority shall either accept or reject the application. If the application is accepted, NEC may issue an official accreditation to such organization. If rejected, NEC shall inform the rejected organization of its rejection. However, after accreditation any CSO/CBO found to be politically aligned will be penalized by the revocation of their accreditation status by the NEC.

Section 5: ACCREDITATION AND RECOGNITION

Accreditation and recognition of organization for civic and voter education purposes for elective public offices shall be done only by NEC.

Section 6 : IDENTIFICATION AND BADGE

- a. All accredited organizations shall create and issue identification cards for their members who are involved in civic and voter education activities, and forward their listing of its field staff to the office of NEC for information and records;
- b. It is compulsory that members of such organization involved in civic and voter education use identity cards and common badges while performing their duties at all time;

Section 7: RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES OF ACCREDITED ORGANIZATIONS

- a. To enjoy freedom of movement throughout the country without prior permission or notification;
- b. To interact in a non-partisan way with all political parties, alliances, coalitions and independent candidates as well as other legitimate social and political organizations of the country;
- c. To have access to information transmitted by NEC and its officers; and

- d. To open up offices throughout the country in order to guarantee effective performance of their functions.

Section 8: OBLIGATIONS

Accredited Staff shall have the following obligations:

- a. To respect the Constitution and laws of Liberia;
- b. To exercise their roles with impartiality, it may be misconstrued and abused and objectivity;
- c. To identify themselves immediately, whenever necessary to NEC, and at all times wear or otherwise permanently display the prescribed identification badges issued by their organizations;
- d. Not to interfere in, or impede the normal course of the electoral process;
- e. To refrain from issuing bias statements about the electoral process to the media; and
- f. To abide by all NEC's Guidelines, Regulations, and Code of Conduct.

Sections 9: ACTS, COST AND FUNDING

Guidelines:

- a. All organizations duly accredited shall be solely responsible for their own acts and the acts of their adherents and all costs in the performance of their duties; the NEC shall not be responsible for any such acts and costs.
- b. To ensure transparency and avoid partisanship, such organizations must indicate their source of funding and must notify the NEC about their source of funding.
- C. NEC shall assist in identifying potential sponsors.

Section 10: AMENDMENT AND REVISION

When the need arises, these Guidelines and Code of Conduct may be revised or amended at any time and published by the Commission. All amendments and / or revisions shall become effective upon publication.

Done This 8th Day of December 2010 under our hand and Seals

~~Leong M. Taylor~~ *Leong M. Taylor* / Program Assistant
Representative/Pro-Democracy Groups

Agnes Eforwa

Representative/Physically Challenged Groups

Sheikh Idris Sura

Representative/Religious Groups

Leveria C. Cole

Representative/Women Organizations

JAMES A. B. BROWN / *James A. B. Brown*

Representative/Youth Organizations

James M. Fromayan / *J.M. Fromayan*

Hon. James M. Fromayan

CHAIRMAN

National Elections Commission