KEY FINDINGS OF REPORTING PERIOD TWO
October 2 – October 19, 2017

INTRODUCTION
The Anambra 2017 Governorship election represents the fifth off-cycle governorship election after the 2015 general elections. The Youth Initiative for Advocacy Growth and Advancement (YIAGA) is conducting a comprehensive, long-term pre-election observation of Anambra’s 2017 Governorship election under the Watching the Vote (WTV) project. This report is the second in a series of four (4) to be released by YIAGA in the build-up to the November 18 election. The report highlights observations from the first reporting phase, September 27, 2017 to the end of the second phase October 19, 2017 and offers recommendations on steps for guaranteeing credible and peaceful elections. YIAGA’s goal in collecting this valuable information is to enhance the integrity of the electoral process as well as facilitate evidence-based election planning and programming.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS:
1. Compared to the first reporting period, there is a moderate level of preparatory activities undertaken by INEC in all 21 local government areas (LGAs) of Anambra.
2. There is low visibility of voter education programs or campaigns by three (3) major electoral actors: Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), National Orientation Agency (NOA) and civil society organisations (CSOs).
3. Voter education programs and messaging targeted at special interest and marginalised groups (youth, women and people with disabilities (PWDs) is absent.
4. Youth and women groups are increasingly engaging the political space through public enlightenment and political campaigns.
5. The frequency of political party campaigns has increased across all LGAs observed.
6. There is minimal use of derogatory languages against candidates on the basis of their gender, age and faith.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS:
1. YIAGA entreats all political actors to intensify voter education activities or programs across the 21 LGAs using radio, community engagement and social media. There is need for audience-specific messaging targeted at special interest and marginalised groups.
2. YIAGA encourages INEC’s leadership to improve the monitoring of voter education activities at the local government level.
3. Political parties, traditional and religious leaders are urged to complement INEC by disseminating voter education messages to their followers.
4. YIAGA encourages candidates, members of political parties and citizens to continue to abstain from using hate speeches or incendiary language as election day approaches.
5. YIAGA encourages marginalised groups to continually engage the electoral process, to further the goal of political inclusion in Nigeria’s democratic space.
METHODOLOGY

YIAGA’s WTV has closely monitored the pre-election environment processes since September 27, 2017. This entailed deploying long-term observers (LTOs) in each of the 21 LGAs of Anambra State to gather systematic information about the pre-election environment, including early warning signs of electoral violence. To achieve this, YIAGA WTV LTOs are equipped with a checklist to observe and report on the electoral and political environment in the state. All YIAGA WTV LTOs are recruited from the LGAs within which they reside to observe electoral activities relating to voter education, political campaign activities, activities of marginalized groups (youth, women, and PWDs) and election-related violence in the pre-election period.

Their reports cover activities of the INEC, political parties, NOA, CSOs, women and youth groups. The observers report on their observation findings on a bi-monthly basis via coded text messages to a YIAGA data centre. Within reporting timeframes, observers also report on early warning signs and critical incidents demanding urgent attention as soon as they happen. The reports are compiled and shared with relevant election stakeholders for needed response.

YIAGA WTV PREO observation findings are not statistically representative of the entire state but does provide an indication of emerging trends during the pre-election period. Unlike the WTV election day observation methodology, YIAGA does not rely on sample-based observation to carry out its PREO observation. YIAGA, therefore, encourages users of this report to independently corroborate and respond appropriately to trends identified in this report.

MAIN FINDINGS

ELECTION-RELATED PREPARATORY ACTIVITIES BY INEC

During the reporting period, YIAGA WTV LTOs reported moderate level of election-related preparatory activities undertaken by INEC. For instance, about half (41%) of YIAGA WTV LTOs reported either observing or hearing one form of election preparatory activity undertaken by the Electoral Commission. Other related activities observed during the reporting period include distribution of permanent voter cards (PVCs). A little over a quarter (29%) of YIAGA WTV LTOs reported either observing or hearing of distribution of PVCs undertaken by INEC.
Voter Information Workshops/campaigns

Availability of voter information through voter education or campaign is an important means to ensure that eligible voters exercise their rights of universal and equal suffrage and should be made available to the broadest possible pool of eligible citizens without obstacles. INEC and NOA have a mandate to inform Nigerian citizens about the electoral process and their effort is complemented by CSOs. Accordingly, the WTV LTOs monitored the conduct of voter education workshops and voter information campaigns organized by these three electoral actors. The WTV LTOs findings reveals that there were few voter education or sensitisation programs conducted by all three electoral actors. Our findings reveal a minimal increase in the frequency voter education or sensitisation programs compared to the first reporting period. Notwithstanding, there is paucity of information on the upcoming election for voters’ use.

Voter information campaigns or workshop undertaken INEC, NOA and CSOs in both the first and second reporting period

**Voter information workshops by INEC:**

- **Period #1:** 4%
- **Period #2:** 11%

**Voter information campaign by NOA:**

- **Period #1:** 0%
- **Period #2:** 0%

**Voter information campaign by CSOs:**

- **Period #1:** 11%
- **Period #2:** 4%
PARTICIPATION OF MARGINALIZED AND DISADVANTAGED GROUPS (YOUTH, WOMEN AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES (PWDS))

WTV LTOs were also charged with the responsibility of observing voter information campaigns targeted at youth, women and PWDs. The observers reported low interventions aimed at enhancing the capacity or participation of women, youth and PWD candidates or voters in the upcoming election by both INEC, NOA and CSOs. Voter education message have been generic and do not respond to the needs of marginalized and disadvantaged groups. Only 4% of WTV LTOs observed or heard INEC conducted voter education targeted at women and none (0%) observed/heard NOA conducted voter education targeted at any of the three marginalized or disadvantaged groups. Similarly, all WTV LTOs (100%) reported they did not observe or hear CSOs conducted youth, women and PWD-specific voter education programs.

Activities of Youth, Women Groups

WTV LTOs reported to have observed youth groups actively involved in canvassing for votes in over a quarter (37%) of the 21 LGAs in Anambra state. More so, women groups were also seen or heard canvassing for votes in 33% of the 21 LGAs in Anambra state.

LGAs that reported to have seen youth groups actively involved in canvassing for votes

Aguata
Awka South
Dunukofia
Ekwusigo
Idemili South
Nnewi South
Orumba South
Ihala

POLITICAL PARTY ACTIVITIES IN ANAMBRA STATE

WTV LTOs also monitored political party campaign activities, from posting of party or candidates’ posters and media ads, party meetings and rallies in all of the 21 LGAs. WTV LTOs used a broad definition of rallies to include both party or candidate rallies and ward congresses organized within electoral districts. Overall, WTV observed an increasing level of party campaigns across the 21 LGAs, suggesting that political parties are engaging voters for electoral votes as the election approaches.
YIAGA’s pre-election observation also focused on observing the use of derogatory language or statements that incite hate or violence against a targeted individual or group by all electoral actors, especially political parties. This is to enable YIAGA identify early warning signs for conflict mitigation. The WTV LTOs observed major political activities such as: candidate rallies, political gatherings, media reports and statements by candidates and parties, directly and indirectly for inflammatory and divisive rhetoric directed at individuals based on their age, origins, gender, religion and/or physical disabilities. The LTOs reported to have heard violent physical or verbal attacks on street/town political campaign trails in two (2) LGAs and hate speech against candidates or people because of because of either their gender or faith in not more than two (2) LGAs.

CONCLUSION

Having observed the pre-election environment over a period of time, it is clear that election campaign period is now in full swing and the activities of political parties and INEC are increasingly dominating the political space in the state. YIAGA WTV therefore assures the public that it will continue to observe the Anambra 2017 pre-election environment and will duly share its findings with the public on periodically. Should any issue arise, YIAGA will expose it and call on the appropriate actors to resolve it.