



The Electoral Hub Statement on the Establishment of the Gender and Inclusivity Department in INEC

On the 22nd of April 2021, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) issued a statement that the Voter Education, Publicity, Gender and Civil Society Liaison Department (VEP) had been de-established. In its place, two new departments were established: The Voter Education and Publicity Department (VEP), and the Gender and Inclusivity Department (GID).

The Electoral Hub commends INEC on this development. We had earlier recommended in our publication ‘THE IMPERATIVE FOR A DEPARTMENT OF ELECTORAL INCLUSION IN INEC’ and electoral advisory ‘Electoral Hub Recommendations to INEC’, the creation of a Department of Electoral Inclusion aimed at promoting the inclusion of marginalised groups such as women, youth, persons with disabilities (PWDs), and internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the electoral process.

We, therefore, commend and appreciate the Commission for the establishment of a Gender and Inclusivity Department within the Commission. The VEP had previously been saddled with too many responsibilities, resulting in a poor state of electoral inclusion. The creation of two separate departments – one for voter education and another for electoral inclusion – should therefore lead to a clearer delineation of functions. We believe that the GID will provide room for deeper engagement and inclusion of women, youth, PWDs, IDPs, and other marginalised groups in the electoral process. This should uphold the fundamental principles of participation, inclusion, and representation on which a healthy representative democracy is based.

While hoping the purpose of the newly established department will also promote and increase the integrity and credibility of our electoral process, we call on INEC to review other recommendations in the advisory. These include uploading results sheets at ward, local government and state levels to the results viewing portal, uploading electoral data and materials on INEC’s website, enforcing COVID-19 protocols during elections, providing support to State Independent Electoral Commissions (SIECs), and deepening engagement with other stakeholders. Ahead of the 2023 elections, we believe that these recommendations will help to further strengthen the integrity and credibility of our electoral process in Nigeria.

The Electoral Hub is an organ of the Initiative for Research, Innovation and Advocacy in Development (IRIAD), aimed at strengthening electoral governance and accountability in Nigeria through the provision of data, critical and contextualised analysis and solutions to improve the credibility and integrity of the electoral process.

Signed

Princess Hamman-Obels

Team Leader

IRIAD-The Electoral Hub

Phone: +234 8077222801 and +234 9092068680

Email: electoralhub@gmail.com and electoralhub@iriadev.org

Social Media Channels

Twitter: @electoralhub; Facebook: electoralhubng

Website: <https://www.electoralhub.iriadev.org>