

## **DEPARTMENT OF MEDIA AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS (MER)**

### **Strategic objective of the Department**

Improve on NEC capacity to deliver credible elections and to create an awareness among stakeholders about NEC's electoral activities.

### **Structure and Staffing**

The Department is staffed by: one (1) Director, (1) Electoral Officer and (1) Assistant Electoral Officer

### **Functions**

The Department is charged with the responsibility of performing the following functions:

- Liaise with media institutions to disseminate information on the Commission's electoral activities.
- Liaise with national and international electoral partners in ensuring that the Commission's mission and vision statements are achieved in consonance with NEC's electoral legal framework.
- Coordinate all interactions between the Commission and elections stakeholders.
- Participated in the development of Political Parties Campaign Codes of Conduct and the Commission's media and communication strategy.
- Coordinated the process to develop and accredit procedures and codes of conduct for Political Party Agents/ Independent Candidate Agents.
- Act as the liaison between electoral stakeholders, development partners and NEC.
- Undertake public relations activities in ensuring that stakeholders understand NEC's electoral activities.

- Coordinate and monitor all activities for nomination of candidates in elections.
- Collaborate with the Department of Information Technology for the processing of nomination.
- Organise Press Conferences, Radio Interviews on relevant Elections issues.
- Prepare the Commission's news bulletin on a quarterly basis.
- Coordinate all media and protocol activities.
- Prepare in collaboration with relevant departments Nomination Manuals.
- Ensure effective handing of all client enquires/and see that they are addressed
- Maintain effective database of all stakeholders.
- Liaise with the Training and Capacity Building Unit to provide support for stakeholder training and sensitisation programmes for NEC's Client (Political Parties, Contestants) on the electoral process.
- Manage the Commission's website.

## **Accomplishments**

During the year under review, the department accomplished the following:

### **MEDIA**

- Published various NEC Press Releases regarding the conduct and announcement of Bye-election results;
- Facilitated media coverage of Polling and Announcement of results in for Bye-election;
- Liaised with media institutions in disseminating the Commission's Press Releases in relation to the cancellation and re-declaration of the date for the conduct of Constituency 050 Bye Election

- Strengthened the Commission's relation with media institutions in giving prominence to NEC related activities.
- Coordinated the live coverage of NEC Electoral activities (Polling activities, Tallying and Announcement of Election Results at District and National Levels).
- Published all NEC Press Releases.
- Coordinated airing of NEC recorded programmes on different radio stations and clarified key electoral issues on radio.
- Coordinated NEC meeting with SLAJ on the Boundary Delimitation Seats Allocation.

## **STAKEHOLDERS INTERACTION**

- Responded to queries from the public on the Commission's Strategic Plan 2015 – 2019, Challenges faced so far and way forward.
- Facilitated stakeholders meetings in the conduct of the following bye elections:
  - Ward 303 – Local Council Election – Moyamba District
  - Ward 172 – Local Council Election – Port Loko District
  - Constituency 001 – Kailahun District
  - Constituency 050 – Port Loko District
- Facilitated Political Parties Liaison Committee Meetings twice every month. Political parties were given the leeway to deliberate crucial electoral issues in this forum. The main aim of the forum is to strengthen interaction with registered Political Parties and to discuss the Commission's electoral activities.
- Coordinated NEC meeting with political parties Leaders and Secretary Generals on the Boundary Delimitation Seats Allocation.

## COURTESY CALLS

- Facilitated different Courtesy Calls made to the Minister of Local Government and Rural Development, Attorney General and Minister of Justice, Minister of Political and Internal Affairs and Diplomatic Corps.
  - **COLLABORATION**
- Collaborated with the Departments of Operations and Training, Voter Education and Procedures on the conduct of Nomination processes and conduct of the different bye elections (**Ward 303 – Local Council Election - Moyamba District, Ward 172 – Local Council Election – Port Loko District, Constituency 001 – Kailahun District, and Constituency 050 – Port Loko District**) conducted so far.
- Collaborated with the Department of Information Technology in the printing of accreditation cards for political parties’ agents, media and domestic observers during the conduct of the bye elections.
- The Director, Albert Massaquoi represented the CEC at the Commonwealth Electoral Network Biennial Conference held in Trinidad – Tobago.
- Collaborated with the Department of Research, Measurement and Evaluation during the PowerPoint presentations made during PPLC meeting and NEC’s meeting with SLAJ on the Boundary Delimitations Seats Allocation.
- Collaborated with IT staff in updating NEC Website with the Commission’s Press Releases, Adverts and pictures in relation to electoral activities.
- Collaborated with Political Parties Registration Commission (PPRC) to facilitate NEC meeting with political parties Leaders on the initial postponement of the conduct of Constituency 050 Parliamentary Elections and Boundary Delimitation Seats Allocation.

## **ACCREDITATION OF POLITICAL PARTIES AGENTS, DOMESTIC OBSERVERS AND MEDIA**

The Department distributed Accrediation cards to NEC Moyamba District office for accreditation of political parties agents, domestic observers and the media.

## **NEC NEWS BULLETIN**

The Department published quarterly NEC News Bulletin in all four quarters of the year under review.

## **NEC WEBSITE**

The Department has been collaborating with NEC IT Web Designer to publish the Commission's activities such as Press Releases, Ward 303 Local Council Bye Election results for Moyamba District on NEC website.