



## **THE ELECTION WATCH COMMITTEE POST PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION REFLECTION SESSION**

### **COMMUNIQUE**

The Election Watch Committee (EWC), on the 20<sup>th</sup> of January 2022, held a Post-Election Reflection Session at the Metzy Residence Hotel, to engage with fellow Domestic Observers and CSO groups that played a major role during the recent 2021 Gambian Presidential Election. Through the reflection session, the EWC sought to engage with Gambian CSOs on the opportunities and lessons learned arising from their observations of the recent electoral activities. The deliberations also sought practical recommendations for implementation directed to the various major stakeholders particularly, the IEC, political parties and security, for a smoother electoral process ahead of the April 2022 parliamentary election. The event brought together fifteen (15) Domestic Observers and CSOs.

Moreover, the Election Watch Committee and the CSOs that were present commended the IEC for an efficiently conducted Presidential Election, the political parties for abiding by the laws and utilizing the prescribed legal process to pursue complaints and security officials for their valued service. It was unanimously agreed that IEC were able to deliver up to the country's expectations in terms of providing a transparent, free, fair and most importantly a peaceful Election on December 4<sup>th</sup>. However, the consortium of Gambian CSOs and the Elections Watch Committee proffer the following recommendations to the IEC, Political Parties and the security to consider ahead of the April 2022 Parliamentary Elections.

#### **Recommendations to:**

##### **THE IEC**

1. Should further break down polling streams to avoid long queuing and prolonging the voting process which may result in demotivating voters.
2. Should encourage and make arrangements for political party agents to be able to observe the transfer of ballot boxes to the collation centers to promote transparency
3. Should prepare a set criteria for priority voters to avoid abuse of the privilege.
4. Should upgrade its processes to respond to the changing electoral landscape. For example, digitalizing its voters' register.
5. Should make efforts to take actions on election observation reports and continue engaging with election observer groups.

6. Should provide gender disaggregation of voters' population to assist advocates get accurate statistics.
7. Should revise the structuring of the electoral calendar to ensure adequate time between nomination period and the campaign period to resolve potential nomination issues for candidates.
8. Although the public scrutiny is not a requirement of law, in the interest of citizen participation and transparency, the IEC should provide adequate time for individual scrutiny of candidate nomination documents.
9. Reconsider the process for allowing those on official duty, and not just security officers and polling officers assigned to a polling station assignment, the opportunity to vote. This includes observers, the media, and party agents participating in the election process.

### **Political Parties**

10. Should adequately train political party agents on the procedures of election day voting and appropriate actions to take in instances of wrong procedures observed.
11. Should actively discourage tribal remarks and propagation of tribalism by their respective party supporters.

### **Security Services**

12. Security officers should be trained on appropriate response to election related conflict before, during and after elections.
13. Security Officers should continue to demonstrate neutrality and professionalism in dealing with electoral related matters.