

CALL FOR CONTRIBUTION

Book Title: Civil Society and Democratic Resilience in Africa: Building Trust, Legitimacy, and Citizen Ownership of Electoral Governance.

Publisher: AU-ECOSOCC

Since the return to multiparty politics in Africa, election observation by domestic Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and international organizations has become an integral part of the electoral process. The post-election reports and voter education campaigns have become the indices for measuring the credibility of elections, locally and internationally. Owing to the global attention which elections attract and the role played by CSOs in entrenching democracy in Africa, their role in election observation has gained importance. The statements issued by both domestic and international observers after each election have become the yardstick for measuring how credible an election is.

In achieving the African Union's Agenda 2063, which aims at creating a prosperous, peaceful, and integrated Africa, with strong institutions and citizen participation, Civil Society Organizations need to play a crucial role in election governance by promoting transparency, accountability, and citizen participation. CSOs are considered vital stakeholders in ensuring free, fair, and transparent electoral processes, contributing to better democratic governance.

A number of African Union (AU) frameworks have recognized and encouraged the role of CSOs in electoral governance, particularly through election observation missions and promoting civic engagement. The AU's Constitutive Act for example, highlights the importance of building partnerships between governments and CSOs to strengthen democratic governance and peace and the AU Guidelines for Electoral Observation and Monitoring Missions, formally integrate domestic and regional CSOs alongside continental bodies into pre-election assessments, polling day observation, and post-election reporting

The African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (ACDEG) recognizes CSOs as indispensable actors in promoting democracy, constitutional governance, credible elections, human rights, accountability, and citizen participation.

Although the Charter does not contain any chapter devoted exclusively to CSOs, their role is woven throughout its provisions, reflecting the African Union's recognition that democracy cannot be sustained by governments alone. Article 12 obligates state parties to create favorable legal conditions for CSOs to operate freely. Article 27 explicitly directs governments to cooperate with civil society in promoting civic and voter education.

Despite the role of CSOs in shaping electoral governance, questions have arisen regarding the authority of CSOs to pass verdicts on the credibility of elections, especially if they are not actively involved throughout the electoral cycle.

This Edited book seeks to depict the role of CSOs in improving Africa's electoral system. It will bring to light provisions of AU legal frameworks that encourage CSOs to take part in electoral governance, especially the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Good Governance which has been hailed as a milestone in Africa's bid to promote and develop its governance systems.

As part of ECOSOCC's "Reimagining a Just and Resilient Democracy in Africa" initiative, designed to take the principles of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections, and Governance beyond policy spaces and into communities; fostering awareness, participation, and a shared commitment to democratic values at the grassroots level, this book will highlight the growing movement to strengthen democratic culture through dialogue, inclusion, and civic responsibility.

In publishing this Book, ECOSOCC seeks to give a platform for CSOs to share their experiences, outline their engagements and contribute to the AU's commitment to inclusive governance and sustainable development. The charters will help showcase the work of CSOs across the continent, foster continental unity, institutional resilience, and enhanced accountability mechanisms across Member States.

Proposed Themes

The book will cover a wide range of themes focusing on governance and election integrity in Africa, including:

- CSOs and Election Observation Missions;
- The Role of African Union Legislative, Judicial, Human Rights bodies and Consultative organs (PAP, AFCHPR, ACHPR and ECOSOCC) in Electoral Governance in Africa;
- Implementation of AU Normative Frameworks: *Why implementation succeeds or fails, National domestication, Monitoring compliance, Role of CSOs in accountability;*
- Regional Comparative Experiences and CSOs engagement: *ECOWAS, SADC, EAC, ECCAS, IGAD;*
- Political Party Democracy: *Candidate selection, Party primaries, Internal democracy, Party regulation;*
- Strengthening Electoral Management Bodies: *Constructive engagement with EMBs, Institutional reform, Capacity building, Transparency mechanisms*
- Electoral Justice and Dispute Resolution: *Election petitions, Strategic litigation, Legal aid, Alternative dispute resolution, Role of CSOs in protecting electoral rights*
- Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding: There is one theme on post-election violence, but conflict prevention deserves broader treatment: *Early warning systems, Mediation, Peace messaging, Community dialogue, Preventive diplomacy by CSOs*
- Digital Democracy and Electoral Technology: *CSOs and election technology oversight, AI, disinformation, deepfakes and social media, Parallel vote tabulation using digital tools, Cybersecurity and election integrity*
- Campaign Finance and Political Accountability: *Monitoring political finance, Transparency of campaign funding, Illicit financing, CSO advocacy for campaign finance reform*

- Electoral Inclusion: *Women in electoral governance, Youth participation, Persons with disabilities, Indigenous and marginalized communities, internally displaced persons and refugees*
- Future of Electoral Governance: *Democratic resilience, Democratic backsliding, Military coups and constitutional order, Citizen trust, Innovations for the next generation of elections.*

Proposed Structure

The book will be organized into six sections:

1. Normative and Legal Foundations
2. CSOs Across the Electoral Cycle
3. Innovation, Technology and Emerging Challenges
4. Inclusion, Participation and Democratic Culture
5. Comparative Country and Regional Case Studies
6. Future Directions for Electoral Governance in Africa

Manuscript Submission Information

Extended Abstracts and Manuscripts should be submitted by email to: Mr Bright Sefah via sefahb@africanunion.org ; and Dr. Abraham Asha through Abrahamah@Africanunion.org; and **copy Dr. Eyole Monono** via eyole.monono@yahoo.com / MononoE@Africanunion.org

Language: The publication will be initially published in **English and French.**

Timeline:

- **July 2026:** Launching the Call for Contribution
- **November 15th, 2026:** Deadline for the submission of Extended Abstract
- **December 15th, 2026:** Notification for Accepted Abstracts
- **January 15th, 2027:** Submission of Draft Chapter
- **February 2027:** Review Workshop with authors of selected chapters (Online)
- **April 10th, 2027:** Submission of Final Chapter
- **June 2027:** Publication of Book

Potential Partners:

- UNDP Regional Programme for Africa
- European Partnership for Democracy
- Centre for Research on Democracy and Development in Africa (CEREDDA)
- Reform Initiatives
- Cameroon Youths and Students Forum for Peace (CAMYOSFOP)
- Foundation for Peace and Solidarity

Scientific Committee

- **H.E Dr. Churchill Ewumbue Monono**, *President of CEREDDA / Cameroon Ambassador to Ethiopia, Permanent Representative to AU and ECA.*
- **Prof. Sone Patience**, *Vice Dean, Research and Cooperation, Faculty of Laws and Political Sciences, University of Buea*
- **Prof. Melvis Ndiloseh**, *International Relations Institute of Cameroon (IRIC) – University of Yaounde II*
- **Prof. Dorcas Ettang**, *UNESCO Co-Chair of Education for Peace and Transformative Education*
- **Dr. Robert Eno**, *Registrar, African Court on Human and People's Rights*
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Technical Committee

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